

STATE PARTY SYSTEM IN HARYANA: REGIONAL OUTFITS

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The Party System in Haryana has been shaped by its historical, geographical, social, cultural and economic and political environment on the one hand and by the impact of National political party system on the other hand. We notice in Haryana's Party System both convergence and divergence from the National Party System. But despite its location on the threshold of NT of Delhi the party system of Haryana has acquired on autonomy of states. But at the same time it has not been insulated completely from it. Moreover the party system has been in a state of flux and has yet to acquire a stable pattern even five decades after the formation of the state of Haryana.

At the time of the formation of the state Haryana had inherited the dominance of Congress party in 1966. As a matter of fact the opposition did not virtually exist in the state because the MLAs of the then non-Congress outfits—Repressive Independents Party, Haryana Lok Samiti and the SSP—had joined the Congress. Only the Jana Sangha had the status of a notional opposition party.

But the post 1967 election developments brought about a qualitative change and the politics of defection pushed Haryana into a Bi-Polar Three Party System: the two poles being the Congress and the Vishal Haryana Party and the third party being the JanSangha.

The 1968 midterm elections led to the emergence of the stable One Party Dominance. The Congress emerged as the majority party and the Vishal Haryana Party as the main opposition. But soon defections from the Congress by the supporters of Bhagwat Dayal Sharma led to the emergence of stable One Party Dominance of the Congress as most of the oppositions MLAs defected to the Congress. At the same time, Haryana became an authoritarian one party dominant system under Bansi Lal.

In 1975, Haryana was unveiled into one party with Non-Competitive Party system as the opposition was not allowed to function. But Youth Congress became more important than the Congress party under the leadership of Surinder Singh son of Bansi Lal.

The Janata wave created an unstable One Party Dominance of the Janata Party under the leadership of Devi Lal and later on under Bhajan Lal till the split in the Janata party converted Haryana into a Bi-polar three party system—the Janata Party, Jana Sangha and Congress.

In 1980, enmass defections converted the state into a Two Party plus System—the Congress and Lok Dal as major parties and the Jana Sangha as a minor party. In 1982, Haryana started with a Bi-polar Three Party system the Congress, Lok Dal and BJP. But defections converted it into a Congress dominance System.

In 1987, the Naya Yudh by Devi Lal, led to the emergence of a Unipolar three party system Lok Dal being the major pole and the Congress and BJP the minor two parties.

In 1990, it was converted into an unstable Multi-party system—the S.J.P as the major party, the Janata Dal, BJP and The Congress as the minor parties.

The 1991 elections witnessed the emergence of the dominance of the Congress with SJP as the main opposition party and The BJP as the minor opposition party.

The 1996 elections led to Bi-polar Multi-party System. Haryana Vikas Party and INLD as the major

poles, BJP (alliance with HYP) and Congress as the minor parties.

The 2000 elections witnessed the emergence of INLD dominance system, The Congress as the opposition party and the BJP as neither in power nor in opposition.

The 2005 elections have led to the emergence of the One Party Dominance of a bipolar Multi-party system the Congress and the INLD as the main poles and BJP and BSP as the minor parties.

In 2014 elections, the polarization between the Jats and the non-Jats may led to the emergence of HJC and BJP alliance to power and may delegate the congress to the third position if INLD is able to keep its vote bank among the Jats intact. Thus it may be said that the Party system is in a state of flux and has not been able to acquire a set pattern.

From the period of the enactment of the Indian Constitution and the subsequent declaration of India; as a Sovereign, Social, Secular & Democratic Republic, the political governance and the related dynamics of the party system of India, have gone through several crucial transitions. With the parliamentary form and federal structure, the party based governance of India has transited from One Party Dominance System to Bi-Polar Multi-party system, from national dominant power structure to regional-state based power domain and from national coalition governance to state coalition governance. The reasons can be attributed to the combined effects of modernisation, polarisation, economic liberalisation, globalisation, and privatisation and most importantly, it can be attributed to the regionalisation of the Indian politics on the basis of religious, cast, language, culture and geographical diversities (Baru, 2000).

The transition into the bi-polar multi-party and coalition based governance marked the emerging dominance of state party system both in numbers and power domain, and ultimately resulted the decline of single party dominance of Congress (Yadav, 1999). With the emergence of several regional parties, the year 1989 marked the collapse of the Congress dominance at the national level and growth of BJP, and marked a turning point in the history of party politics in the country. After that, it has been a story of coalitions that established emergence of bipolarities in the States and at the Centre.

At present, the political space was occupied by three forces: the Congress, BJP and other state and region based parties with limited presence in national domain. The vivid examples of such parties are BSP & SP in UP, BJD in Orissa and AGP in Assam etc. At present, though the numbers of regional parties have crossed 50 figure mark, the election commission of India has recognized 7 parties as national parties and 39 parties has state parties (Yadav, 2004; Suri, 2005).

Indian polity has reached a situation where no single party is in a position to form government at the national level, without the help of regional parties.

1 Understanding Historical Aspect of Regional Parties

The inherent weakness of the Haryana party system is the vivid absence of strong regional parties in the pre 1980 period. Some regional parties like Zamindara a party (1947) and Haryana Lok Samiti (1962), got merged with congress. The Visal Haryana Party was formed in 1967.

Fragmentation of Lok Dal at central level gives impetus to rise of regional parties in Haryana for the first time. The genesis of regional parties in Haryana may be traced back to the formation of the Unionist Party in 1923. Non-agriculturalist class. This act was enacted to prevent the transfer of the lands of agriculturist class to the moneylenders. This created a social divide between agriculturists and non-agriculturists. It was this social cleavage which contributed to the social base of Unionist

Party. Secondly, the genesis of Unionist Party has to be traced on the division of Punjab Legislative Councils in 1921 into the urban and the rural seats. Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh constituencies were divided into urban and rural constituencies. This creates the urban-rural divide which still persists in the electoral politics of the state. Unionist Party was formed by the elite to protect and promote rural interest and identity. After elections they formed rural block under the leadership of Fasl-e-Hussain which included Hindus, Muslims and Sikh members. It was converted into Unionist Party by Fasl-e-Hussain in 1923.

The emergence of Chhotu Ram as a regional leader and his success in the mobilisation of Hindu agriculturist class in general and Jats in particular broadened the base of Unionist Party in Haryana. Unionist Party remained dominant in Haryana region from 1923 to 1946.

After independence the seminents of Unionist Party formed Zamindar League or party under the leadership of Chottu Ram's Nephew Choudhary Sri Chand, but the logic of universal Adult Franchise worked against it because the backward and scheduled classes were also enfranchised and the agriculturist class including, HC, BC And SC voted in favour of Congress and against Zamindar Party. After its defeat in 1952 elections Z.P. raised the demand of 'Haryana Prant' and formed Haryana Prant Front under the leadership of Pandit Shree Ram Sharma. The Front consisted of:

1. Zamindara Party
2. Gandhi Janata Party (that had been formed by dissident MLAs of Congress)
3. Socialist Party

This Front mobilised public opinion in favour of the demand of Haryana Front. It joined hands with Akali Dal because of the popular demand for the formation of Punjabi Suba and had lead to automatic formation of Haryana state.

They demanded Haryana state on the ground that historically, socially and culturally Haryana was different from Punjab and it had been tagged with Punjab in 1857 as a punishment for the participation of princes and people of Haryana in The Revolt of 1857. They demanded separation from Punjab and included in it part C state of Delhi, Agra and Meerut region of U.P, Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur area of Rajasthan. But the demand was denied by state Reorganisation Committee on the ground that real or imaginary problems of economy backwardness could not be solved through its creation. The Haryana Prant Front organised conferences against the recommendations of state reorganisations committee. But when 'regional formula' was made in 1956 as a result of negotiations between the central government, Akali Dal and Haryana Prant Front. Haryana Prant Front was merged with Congress. This led to the end of regional parties in Haryana for awhile.

But in 1961 Professor Sher Singh, a dissident congress leader organised Haryana Lok Samiti. The Samiti alleged discrimination against Haryana region in the matters of economic development, recruitment in services and share in council of ministers. When Parliamentary Committee in Punjabi Suba was appointed in 1965 for a fresh examination of demand of Punjabi Suba, Haryana Lok Samiti joined hands with Progressive Independence Party (headed by Devi Lal) a group of independent MLAs

after 1962 elections. This was followed by the formation of Joint Action Committee which demanded that Haryana state be formed by including in it Haryana region of Punjab, U.T. of Delhi, Agra and Rajasthan. If that was not possible Haryana region of Punjab may be given statehood. The demand was accepted on March 9, 1966. This led to the merge of Haryana Lok Samiti and Progressive Independence Party into the Congress before the formation of Haryanastate.

After the formation of Haryana state, regional parties were conspicuous by their absence in 1967 parliamentary and assembly elections. But the post 1967 elections developments lead to the formation of Sanyukt Vidhayak Dal Govt Under the leadership of Rao Virender Singh as a result of politics of defection, Rao Virender Singh set up Vishal Haryana Party to institutionalise and broaden its support base, there party revived on the demand of Vishal Haryana or greater Haryana that had been demanded in 1953 and 1965. In 1968 mid-term elections this part emerged as the main opposition party by promising remuneration prices of agricultural produces and an account its support base among Ahirs. In 1971 parliamentary elections VHP won Mahendergarh but in 1972 assembly elections the support base of the party was badly eroded. The 1977 Haryana assembly elections enabled the party to revive itself by taking advantage of the mistakes of Janata in fielding weak candidates. In 1978 after the split of the Congress party VHP was merged into Congress because Rao Virender Singh felt that there was no future for regional parties in Haryana. This marked the end of the era of regional parties for the secondtime.

But regional parties were once again revived in Haryana in post 1980 period. Lok Dal merged as a leading regional party on the eve of 1982 assembly elections. It has not only survived but also thrived in the post 1982 period not withstanding ups and downs in different elections. It became ruling party of the states in 1999 and remained in power till 2005. Even now it is the main opposition party in the state under the name of INCL. The success of INLD has to be assigned to the following reasons:

1. Legacy of anti congressism among a major section of Jats since the Unionist Partydays.
2. Personality of Devi Lal and his role in the formation of the Haryana states and in Haryana SangarshSamiti movement against PunjabAccord.
3. His strategy of building a collision of agriculturist class as a support base. His advocacy of the cause of the peasantry and his politics ofpopulism.

Chautala (Devi Lal's son) has inherited the legacy of Devi Lal. The strategy of alliance with the BJP also helped INLD in 1982, 1987, 1999, 2000elections.

Haryana Vikas Party was formed by Bansi Lal in 1991. It was able to come to power in alliance with BJP in 1996 because Bhajan Lal and Congress govt had been discredited UO on account of corruption during 1991-96 and the Lok Dal or INCLO had lost its acceptability due to 'Maham Episode' and activities of green brigade during the period of 1989-1991, But the base of HVP which has been built over image of Bansi Lal as a builder of Haryana got damaged due to policy of probation and his style of leadership. The defeat of HVP-BJP alliance in 1998 parliamentary elections on account of the above reasons led to the withdrawal of BJP from the coalition and defection of a group of two MLAs followed by the formation of Chautala lead INLD govt. in1999.

This dilemma or paradox merits examination why the regional parties could not flourish in Haryana from 1947 to 1982. What were the factors and forces that created objective situation which enabled Lok Dal in emerging a stable and significant regional party after 1980 parliamentary elections? Was it the dissection of the support base of Congress in 1977 due to the Janata wave? Was it due to the legacy of the colonial period, Could it be ascribed to the rural-urban and agriculturistnon-agriculturist divide? Could it be ascribed to the role of personality in a state where party organizations have always remained weak and were despite of politics of ideology the politics of

personalities, politics of caste have remained relatively important? Could it be attributed to the relative weak freedom struggle in Haryana and the consequent failure of region or state in acquiring its values? While analyzing the State Politics of Haryana we are in a position to say that the failure of regional parties can be attributed to all above said factors.

2 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 bagged 2 seats namely Meham and Rori.

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 receded

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 three 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 Jindralies.

However 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 percent 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 Ahirbelts.

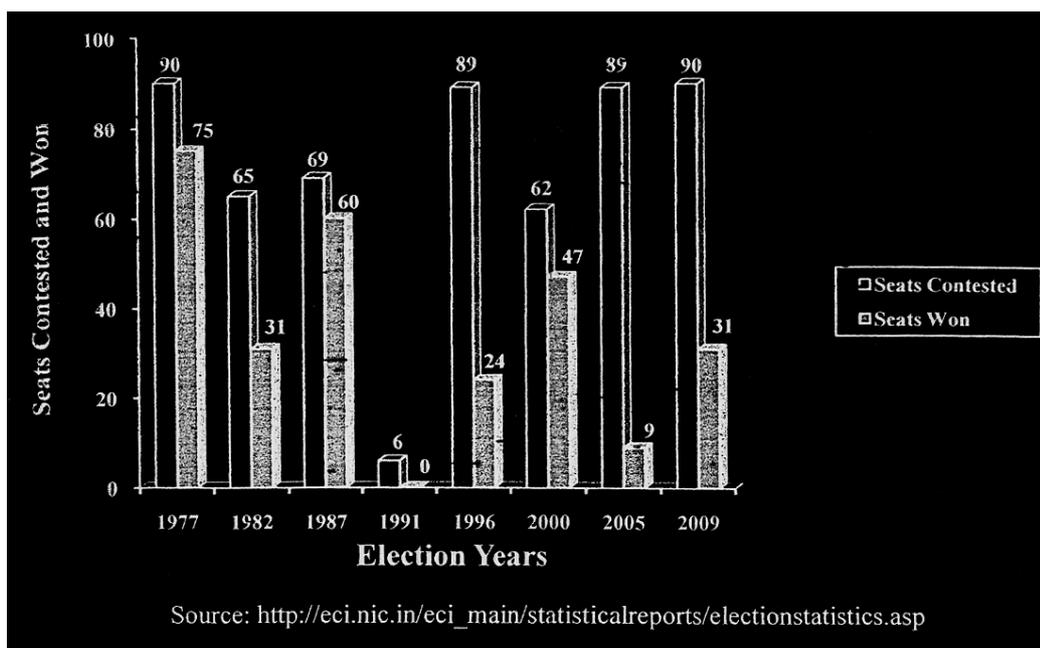
But Lok Dal neither was able to repeat its electoral performance in 1991 elections nor was able to keep its support base intact. Lok Dal contested 1991 elections under the name of Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP) and could retain only 15 seats out of its 60 seats that it had won in the previous assembly 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 to 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 downslide of Congress.

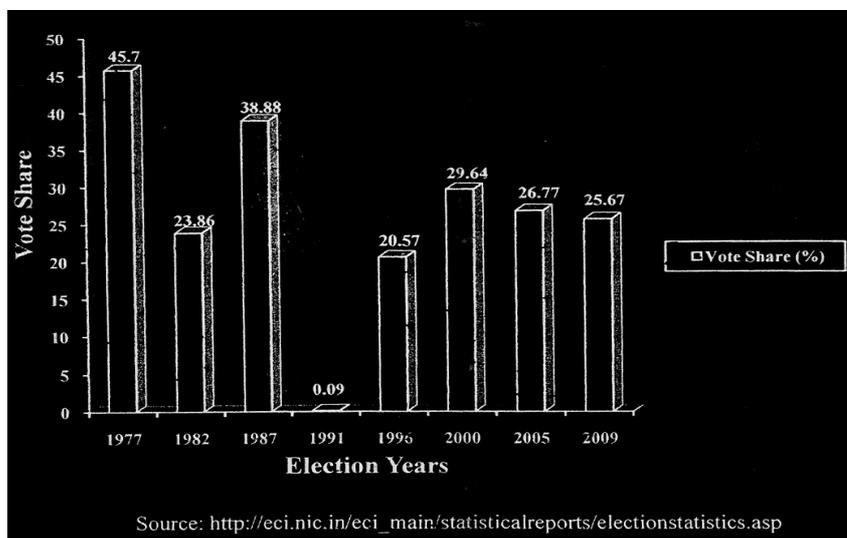
Figure No. 1

Performance of J P/ BLD/INLD in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1977

(A) Seats Contested and Won



(B) Vote ShareSecond



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 fell 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 Haryana 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 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 it stally 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. 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 alipanics, 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.

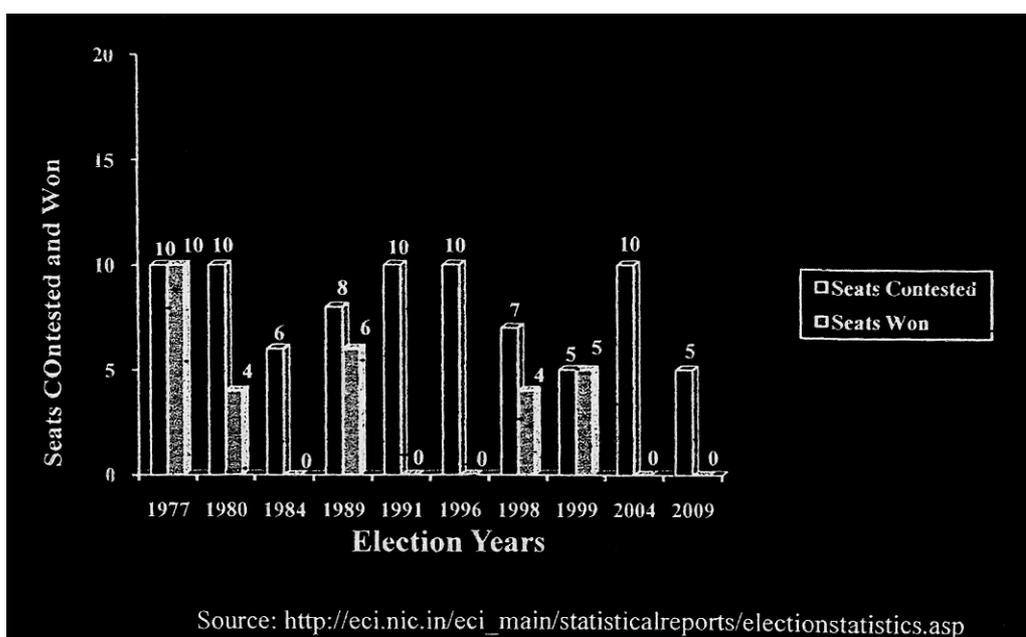
However, in the legislative elections of 2009, INLD has gained enormously when compared to 2005 when it could secure just nine seats but that time the party have gained 22 seats while winning 31 seats. Although, its share has dropped to just 1.10 percent, from 26.8 percent in 2005 assembly election to 25.8 percent in 2009. But and the formation of 2 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.

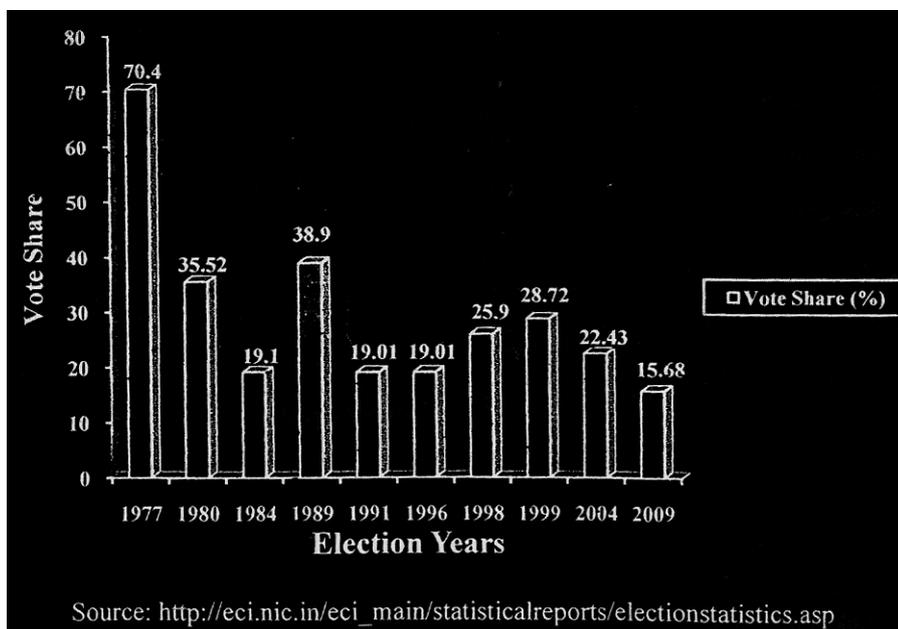
Figure No. 2

Performance of J P/ BLD/INLD Lok Sabha Elections Since 1977

(A) Seats Contested and Won



(B) Vote Share



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.

2.1 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 writing 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 Satluj-Yamuna Link very strongly.

2.2 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 to 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 and 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 got 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 exhibit 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.

3. Haryana Vikas Party

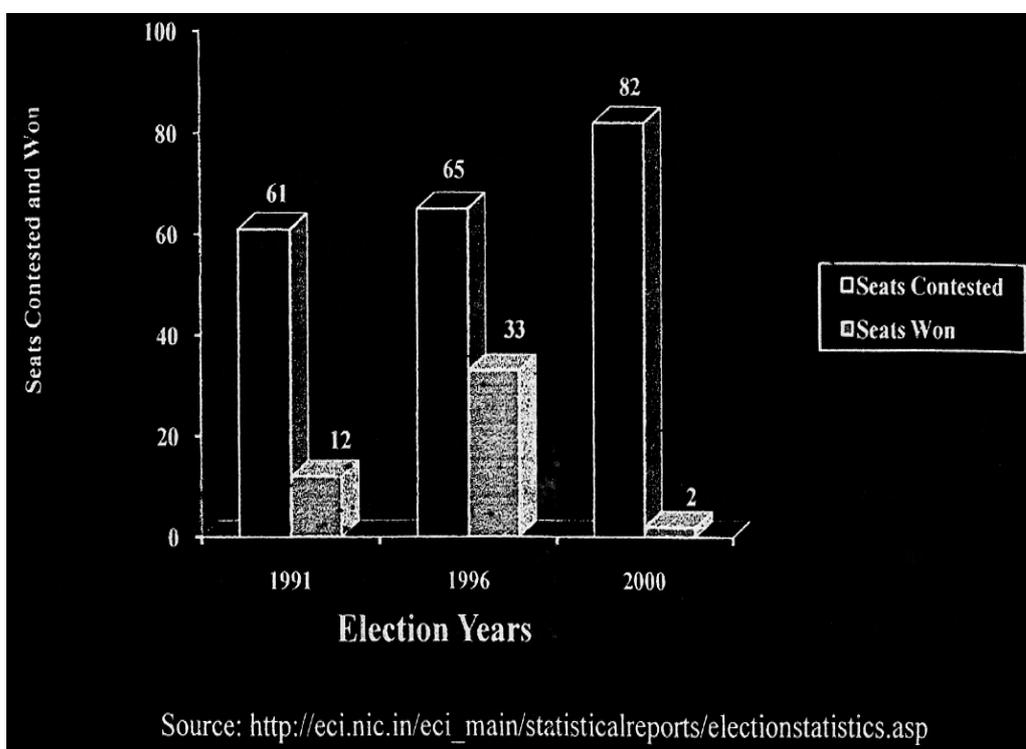
In the 1990s, Haryana has got one more regional party-the Haryana Vikas Party. This party was floated by Bansi Lal after he left Congress in 1990 on account of his opposition to the leadership of Bhajan Lal who enjoyed the support of the Congress high command. The party contested 1991 Lok Sabha and Assembly 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

Performance of Haryana Vikas Party in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1991

(A) Seats Contested and Won



(B) Vote ShareSecured

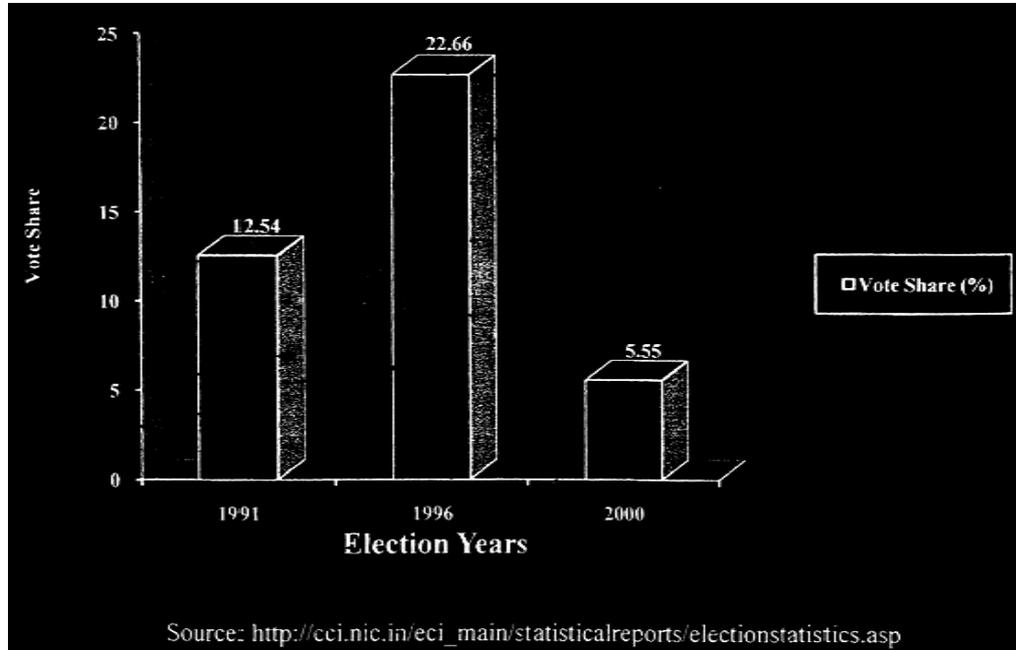
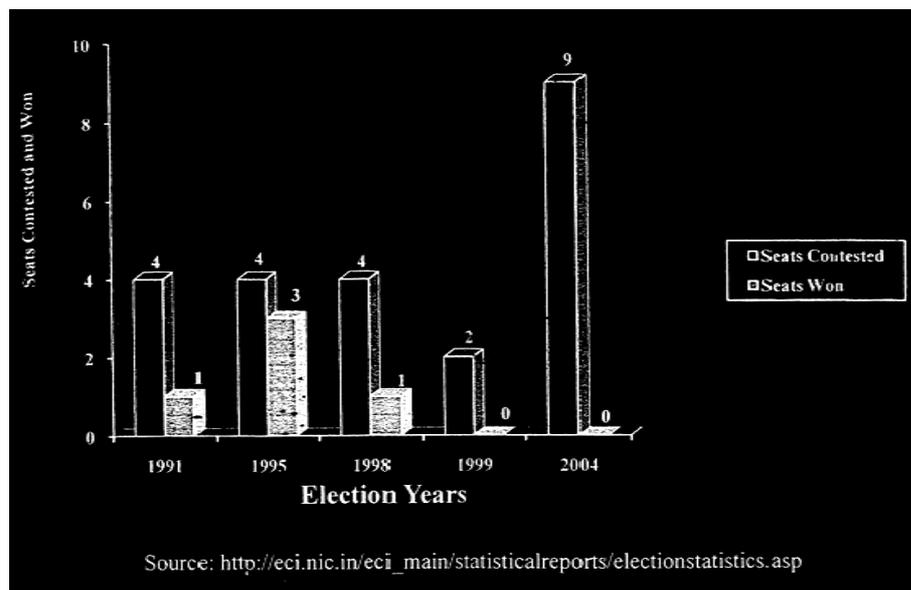


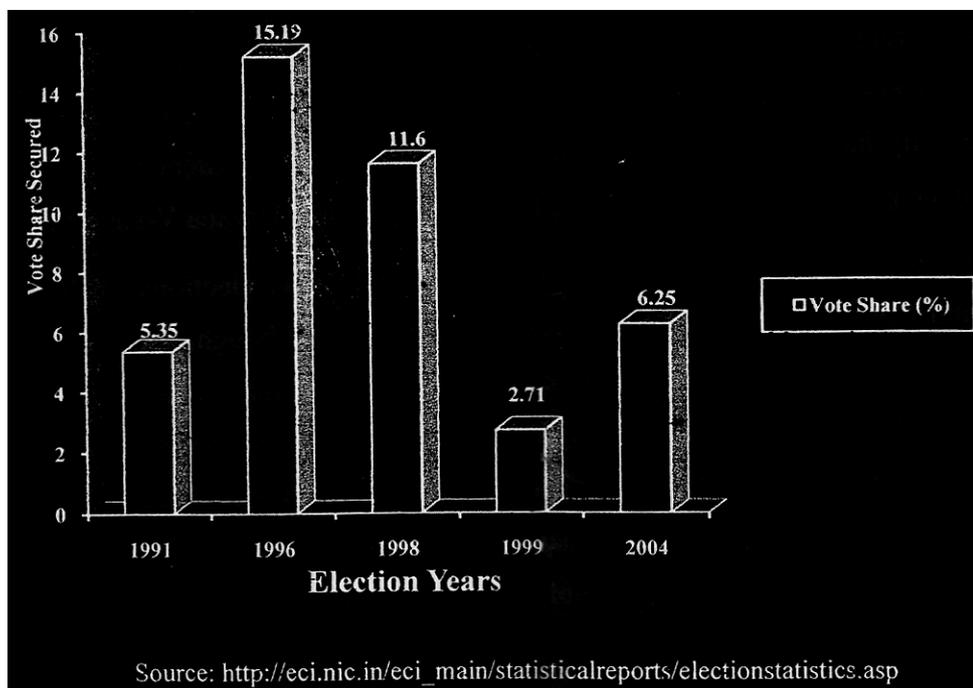
Figure No. 4

Performance of Haryana Vikas Party in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1991

(A) Seats Contested and Won



(B) Vote Share Secured



Once BJP withdrew its support, the HVP tied up an alliance with BSP. And (he 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 loser 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 Rd Congress before 3 February, 2005 Assembly elections.

4. Haryana Janhit Congress

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 a tactical move.

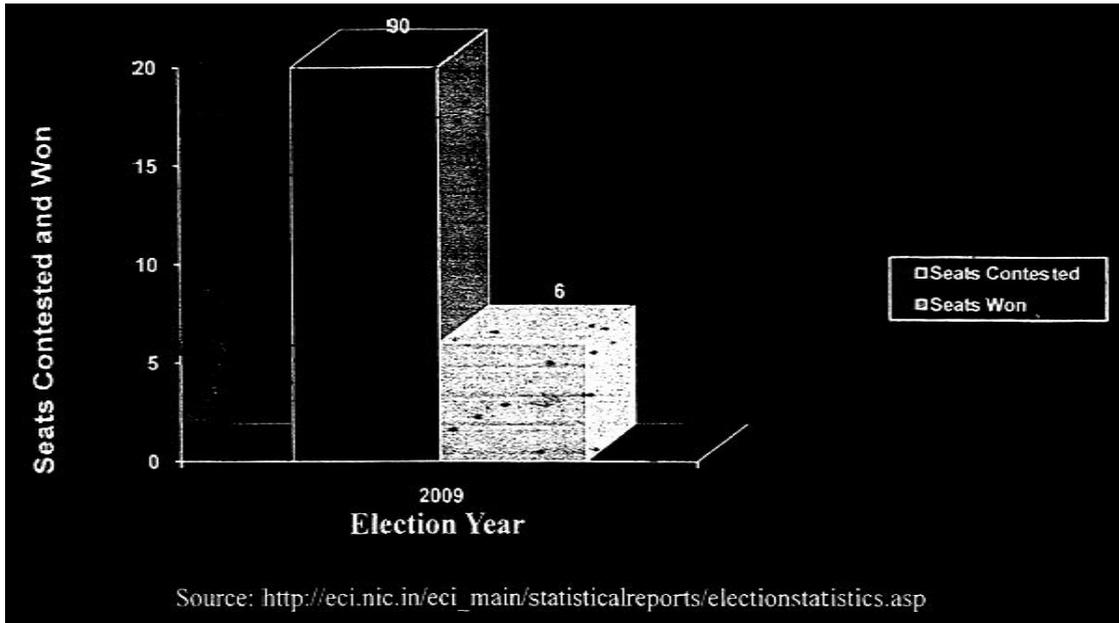
The history of regional parties in the state, however, shows that regional parties formed by leaders after parting ways with their parent parties especially from Congress, usually have short life and also got merged into their parent party. The examples can be given in the form of Vishal Haryana Party 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 manuled in the bi-elections, the HJC has announced the arrival of a third alternative to the peoples of Haryana with its maidenvictory.

Figure No. 5

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



(A) Seats Contested and Won

(B) Vote Share Secured

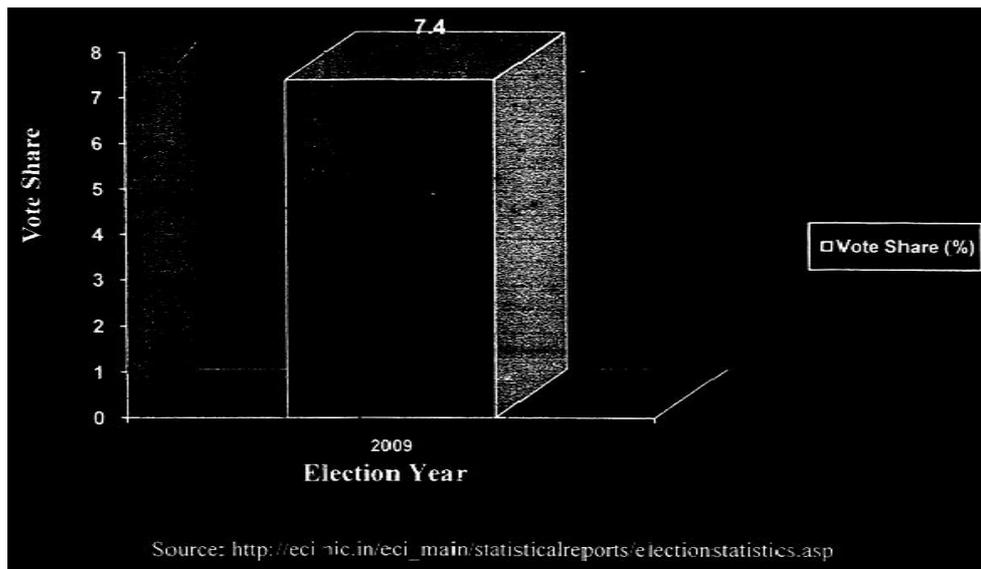
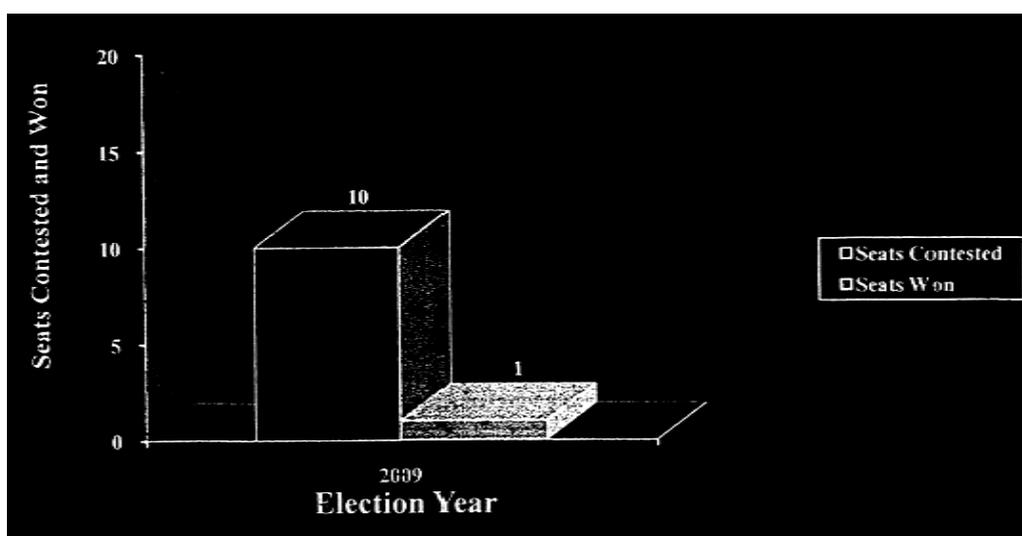


Figure No. 6

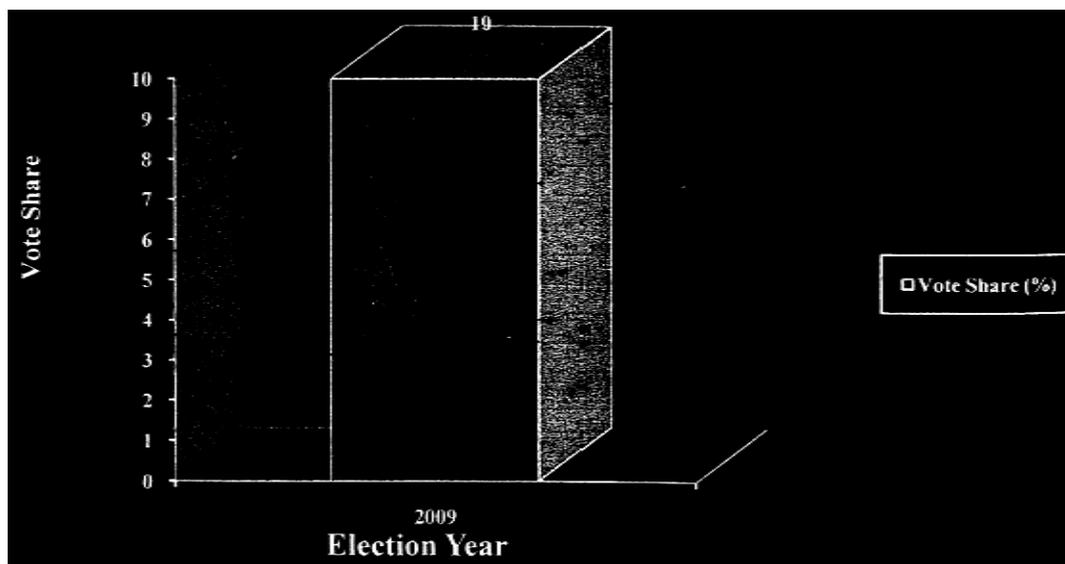
Performance of Haryana Janhit Congress (BL) in Lok Sabha Elections Since 2009

- Seats Contested and Won



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

- Vote Share Secured



Source: <http://eci.nic.in/eci+main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp>

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:

Significance of the regional parties cannot be discarded all together but the phenomenon of regionalization of Indian politics could not contribute in the formation of a strong and stable regional party system in Haryana. It has been discussed here why the regional parties could not flourish in Haryana from 1947 to 1982. Regionalization of Indian politics can not be linked with regionalization process in Haryana. The major regional parties such as HVP, INLD and Haryana Jan Hit Congress have been studied here reflecting the divergence from the national trend.

Haryana Vikas Party was floated by Banshi Lal after defecting from Congress. The support base of HVP mainly comprised of loyalist of Banshi Lal from Bhiwani region of the state and the Jat elites. In 1996, Banshi Lal became the Chief Minister with the help of BJP. BJP withdrew from HVP in 1999 resulting in decline of HVP. INLD is an outcome of Devi Lal's lokdal party and still is a beneficiary of the agriculturist Jat community. Haryana Jan Hit Congress is formed by Bhajan Lal in 2007. After Bhajan Lal's death party is taken over by his successor Kuldeep Bishnoi. Haryana Jan Hit Congress is trying to make inroads in non-Jatelectorate.



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