International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

Strategic alliances or political compulsions? An analysis of bjp's alliances with regional parties in indian politics

Ruwad Tangar Appun Gam
M.A. Department of Political Science,
ruwadgam66@gmail.com

Abstract
This study sought to understand the dynamics of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alliances with regional political parties in India, especially the reasons for the formation of such alliances; that is, whether the alliances are due to electoral politics or political compulsions brought about by changes in political landscape. The multi-party-political system of India along with the regionally diverse nature of India has necessitated the use of electoral alliances in the process of democratic governance. The study explored the history of the evolution of BJP-led alliances, determinants of alliances and changing relationship between BJP and its regional allies. Special emphasis was laid on 2014, 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections to understand the variations in BJP electoral performance and its dependency on regional allies. This study adopted a qualitative, descriptive and analytical research approach and depended solely on secondary sources of data from academic journals, books, reports of Election Commission, government documents and political analyses. It was observed through analysis that the BJP alliances had taken place out of consideration of electoral politics, ideology, regional interests, seat sharing and negotiation between the party leaders. While BJP managed to utilize its alliances to increase its electoral power and enhance its political standing during electoral supremacy periods, in 2024 regional partners gained parliamentary significance due to lack of independent majority won by BJP. The study concluded that the BJP alliance strategy with regional parties is the product of both political planning and political necessity. This study also emphasized the significance of regional parties in coalition politics, parliamentary decision making and Indian federalism.

Keywords: BJP, Regional Parties, Coalition Politics, Political Alliances, Electoral Strategy, Indian Democracy

1. INTRODUCTION

The parliamentary democracy in India is marked by a multi-party-political system, where both national and regional parties vie for support from voters at different levels of governance. The multiplicity of society in terms of socio-cultural and linguistic aspects in the country has facilitated the formation of political parties representing particular geographical regions or community interests. While the national parties have sought to develop a strong political presence throughout the country, the regional parties continue to be influential in various states owing to their addressing of local aspirations and regional issues.

The trend of coalition politics assumed particular significance during the 1980s and 1990s, with the decline of the domination of single parties facilitating the involvement of regional parties in influencing national governments. Over time, political alliances have become an important tool in

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

attempts by national parties to consolidate their voter support and the efforts by regional parties to have more representation in national policy-making.

One of the most significant participants in this changing landscape has been the BJP. While the party succeeded in expanding its electorate significantly during the 1990s, its political spread on the national level was closely connected with the formation of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The political alliance consisted of parties representing different regional interests, political backgrounds and ideologies in a single electoral and governmental structure.

The victory of the BJP in the general elections held in 2014 and 2019 has marked a substantial change in the political sphere of India. The party has received an independent majority in both elections, providing the impression that the necessity for coalitions has become less relevant in this period. However, the ongoing involvement of the regional allies has proved that such alliances remain pertinent even in times of national party dominance.

The 2024 general election has once again proved the relevance of regional allies. While the BJP has become the biggest political party, receiving 240 seats but failing to secure an independent majority (requiring 272 seats), the alliance of NDA received 293 seats in total. Consequently, the participation of the allied political parties remains important for forming a government.

1.1 Evolution of Coalition Politics in India

The process of formation of coalition politics in India went through various political periods. In the first years after gaining independence, the Indian National Congress enjoyed a prominent position in national politics. With the development of the rivalry between opposition parties and state political organizations, as well as regional political movements, political competition began to grow.

The election of 1989 was a significant turning point, as it marked the end of the era of the continuous dominance of the Indian National Congress in national politics. After that, more and more governments had to rely on the cooperation and support of a number of political parties.

The BJP gradually became an important national political organization because of the growth of the popularity of the party in Northern, Western, and Central India. But because of the weak electoral presence of the party in some Southern and North-eastern states, the BJP had to form political coalitions with some regional parties.

The formation of the NDA led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee was one of the significant steps in this process. This showed how different ideological and regional political organizations could cooperate with each other using various elections and governmental goals. Electoral dominance of the BJP in the future did not mean the abandonment of this method.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

1. To examine the historical development of BJP's alliances with regional political parties in India.
2. To analyse the strategic, ideological and electoral factors influencing alliance formation.
3. To examine the changing relationship between the BJP and its regional alliance partners during the 2014, 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections.
4. To assess the political implications of BJP's alliance strategy for regional parties, coalition governance and Indian federalism.

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ruparelia (2015) discussed the process of formation and operation of coalition governments in India. The paper considered the issues of political fragmentation, formation of several political parties and the influence of such changes on political decision-making and the process of government formation and governance. The work emphasized the importance of negotiations, political compromises and cooperation of political parties with different ideologies and interests. The paper provided an important theoretical perspective on the issues of coalition formation and its influence on political power of political parties in India. The work could serve as an important starting point for studying the relationship between national parties and regional players in the Indian parliament.

Ziegfeld (2016) analyzed the process of formation, development and electoral success of regional political parties in India. The paper analyzed the factors that played a vital role in formation of regional parties, in particular, the role of political elite, clientelistic relations and political competition at the level of state. The study explained how regional political parties were able to form their political power by satisfying local political interests and maintaining connections with certain electorate. The paper provided important theoretical analysis of the reasons for which national political parties, including the BJP, needed cooperation with regional organizations to enhance their electoral success.

Kailash and Arora (2016) discussed the changing patterns of political affiliations and coalitions within the federal political structure of India. The work analyzed how political parties were changing their political allies by switching from one political group to another depending on certain political situation and electoral considerations. The authors stressed the importance of federalism and political competition at several levels to explain such changes in the relationships between political parties. The researchers concluded that alliance switch should not be viewed as mere political instability or individual political opportunism since regional political interests and competition had an impact on such decisions as well. Thus, the paper provided an important perspective on the changing relationships between the BJP and regional political parties, in particular, on forming and breaking up of political alliances.

Chhibber and Verma (2018) analyzed the relationship between ideology, political identity and electoral competition in Indian politics. The paper questioned the hypothesis that electoral politics in India is based only on material considerations and political patronage. The authors stressed the importance of ideological differences, leadership, political recognition and identity issues for political preferences and electoral politics. In addition, the work analyzed the evolution of political ideology of major political parties in India, in particular, the BJP, and ideological consolidation of political parties in India.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF BJP'S ALLIANCE STRATEGY

This section defines the difference between strategic partnerships and political pressures that provide an analytical context for examining the shifting alliances of the BJP in India.

3.1 Concept of Electoral Alliances and Coalition Politics

Electoral alliances could be termed as a political alliance that is made by two or more political parties for improving their electoral performances. The alliance involves coordination with regard

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

to seats, electoral campaigns, political program, and division of political tasks. Coalitions are characterized by collaboration amongst different political parties in order to form a government or sustain a government in power. Electoral alliances and coalition politics are similar but not quite the same.

Alliances in India's Parliamentary system have become quite essential because under first past the post system of electing representatives, electoral alliances become quite relevant. As the parties that run against each other share their vote bank, they end up making a bad situation for themselves in terms of their electoral performance. Alliances could decrease the competition amongst the parties by dividing the constituencies amongst the various parties. Alliance politics for BJP has been serving many objectives.

3.2 Historical Development of BJP and NDA Alliances

The alliance policy of the BJP evolved along with the emergence of the BJP as a national political party. In the 1990s, the party realized that its influence on the elections was unequally distributed in various states. Cooperation with regional parties became the key strategy of forming the political coalition of the BJP. The NDA appeared to be one of the significant political arrangements formed under Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This coalition comprised parties from different regions and ideological orientations and served as an organizational form of electoral competition.

Thus, the alliance policy illustrated the significance of political compromise. The regional partners managed to preserve their political identity while cooperating with the BJP in the national sphere of politics. The political position of the BJP changed dramatically after 2014. Due to the independent majority of the BJP in parliament, the party did not need its allies immediately. Nevertheless, the political coalition remained a wider form of cooperation with regional parties. The 2024 general election proved the relevance of this organizational form of cooperation, as the BJP needed its parliamentary support again.

3.3 Major Regional Alliance Partners of the BJP

The BJP has maintained relationships with several regional political parties, although the nature and continuity of these relationships have varied.

Table 1: Major Regional Parties Associated with BJP-Led Alliance Politics

Regional party	**Major state of influence**	**Political significance**
Janata Dal (United)	Bihar	Important support in Bihar and parliamentary coalition formation
Telugu Desam Party	Andhra Pradesh	Important regional organisation and parliamentary partner
Shiv Sena	Maharashtra	Historically significant ideological and electoral partner; later experienced a split
Shiromani Akali Dal	Punjab	Historically important alliance based on regional and ideological cooperation
Lok Janshakti Party and successor factions	Bihar	Support among particular social and electoral constituencies
Asom Gana Parishad	Assam	Regional political influence and state-level alliance support

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party	Nagaland	Important partner in northeastern regional politics
Sikkim Krantikari Morcha	Sikkim	Regional political influence and cooperation with the NDA

The table above shows that there is geographic diversity amongst the coalition partners of the BJP. These partners function in states with different political cultures and social structure. Hence, the formation of the alliance cannot be understood within a single political formula.

3.4 Factors Influencing BJP's Alliance Formation

There are many reasons that affect the decisions of the BJP in forming alliances with regional political parties. Electoral considerations: Political alliances allow the BJP to ensure that there is no vote-splitting among political parties that have similar voter bases. The seat-sharing agreement increases their chance of winning those seats.

- **Political influence in the region:** Regional parties have organizational structures already set up and linkages at the local level. Cooperation among them could allow national parties to increase their political influence in regions where their organizational strength individually would be weaker.
- **Similarity of ideologies:** Similarity of ideologies has traditionally been conducive to cooperation between BJP and some regional parties. However, it is not always essential for forging alliances.
- **Government formations:** Allies at the regional level become crucial for having a majority in Parliament. Their alliance could affect the formation of the government, policy-making and stability of coalition governments.
- **Personal politics and negotiations:** Personal relationships among political leaders, seat sharing arrangements and disagreements about state level political authority can critically affect alliances.

3.5 Strategic Alliances versus Political Compulsions

Differentiation between strategic alliance and political compulsions forms the basis of this research. Strategic alliances tend to be formed when there is recognition by the political parties of common electoral interests and possibilities of future cooperation in politics. Such an alliance may persist irrespective of the increased electoral strength of one of the parties. In contrast, political compulsion refers to situations where political parties need outside assistance due to their weak positions or regional political environment. Nevertheless, both these concepts often overlap in Indian politics.

Table 2: Comparative Framework of Strategic Alliances and Political Compulsions

Basis of comparison	Strategic alliances	Political compulsions
Primary objective	Long-term electoral and political cooperation	Immediate electoral or parliamentary advantage
Nature of relationship	Relatively stable and coordinated	Often dependent on political circumstances
Ideological considerations	Greater emphasis on shared objectives	Ideological differences may be accommodated

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

Seat-sharing	Based on negotiated political strength	Influenced by immediate electoral requirements
Leadership relations	Cooperation and mutual accommodation	Bargaining and power negotiations
Government formation	Partnership based on common political programmes	Support required to establish or sustain government
Continuity	May continue across multiple elections	May change with electoral circumstances

This division is one of analysis, not absolutism. The alliance might start out as purely strategic but evolve to be a political necessity, while an alliance which starts out as purely political compulsion could evolve into a more sustained relationship.

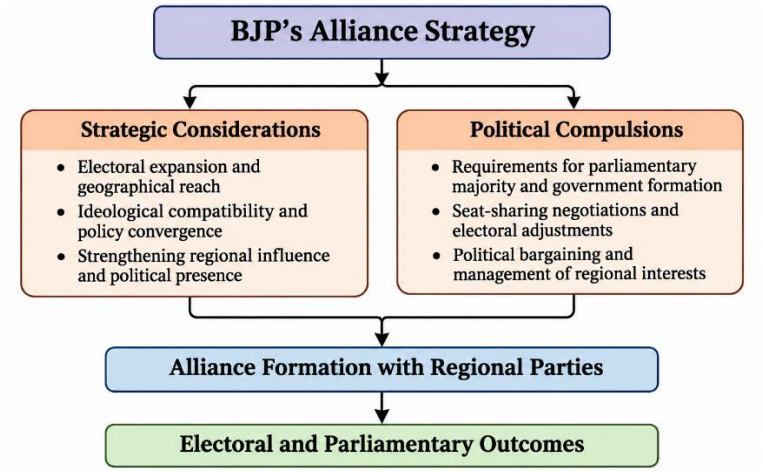


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of BJP's Alliance Strategy

The figure represents the two key determinants for alliance strategy of the BJP: strategy and politics. The two play an important role in alliance making with regional political parties in India.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken in order to analyze the political and institutional aspects of alliances that the BJP made with regional political parties in India. This was done in order to find out if the political alliances made by the BJP were for electoral reasons or because of political compulsion due to political changes.

4.1 Research Design

Qualitative, descriptive and analytical methods of research were used in the current study. In this study, political and institutional issues relating to the alliances of BJP with regional parties were studied rather than studying the attitude or behavior of individuals through primary surveys.

Descriptive methods of research were employed in describing the historical background and partners in the political alliances of BJP. Analytical methods of research looked into the motivation for forming such alliances, how the relationship has evolved and the consequences that have ensued from such coalitions. Historical and comparative methods of research were used especially in relation to the 2014, 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

4.2 Nature and Sources of Data

The study was conducted using only secondary sources of data. All relevant information was gathered and analyzed from different secondary and available sources to learn about the political

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

events, election-related and institutional factors involved in BJP's alliance with regional parties. The main sources of secondary information were:

- Election reports and statistical publications of the Election Commission of India.
- Academic books and research articles relating to Indian party systems and coalition politics.
- Published studies on BJP's electoral expansion and regional political parties.
- Government publications and parliamentary documents.
- Political analyses and reports published by recognised research institutions.
- Official party documents and publicly available election-related records.

The secondary information provided the historical, institutional and electoral foundation for examining BJP's alliance relationships and understanding their changing political significance.

4.3 Selection of the Study Period

Though the time frame of the study mainly included the years 2014-2024, events from the 1990s and past coalition governments were also analyzed in order to determine the context of the alliance politics of BJP.

The selection of this period was based on three important political developments:

1. 2014: The BJP secured an independent majority in the Lok Sabha, marking a significant change in national party politics and strengthening its position within the NDA.
2. 2019: The BJP further strengthened its parliamentary position by securing another independent majority, demonstrating its continued electoral dominance.
3. 2024: The BJP fell short of an independent majority, increasing the importance of regional alliance partners in government formation and parliamentary stability.

These three general elections provided a comparative basis for examining the changing importance of regional allies and understanding the relationship between electoral strength and coalition dependence.

4.4 Methods of Data Analysis

Secondary data gathered were analyzed using techniques of descriptive, comparative, thematic, and historical analysis. This provided insights into the political variables that affected the formation of the alliances, as well as changes in the relationship between the BJP and its regional allies.

The following methods were employed:

- **Descriptive Analysis:** This method was used to explain the historical development, political characteristics and major features of BJP's alliances with regional parties.
- **Comparative Analysis:** This method was used to compare alliance arrangements and electoral outcomes across the 2014, 2019 and 2024 general elections.
- **Thematic Analysis:** This method was employed to identify major themes, including electoral strategy, ideological accommodation, regional leadership, seat-sharing arrangements and political bargaining.
- **Historical Analysis:** This method was used to examine changes in BJP's relationships with regional parties over time and understand the political circumstances influencing alliance formation and dissolution.

Tables comparing data were also compiled to categorize information related to elections, analyze the electoral performance of BJP and NDA, and interpret the altered status of regional allies.

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: BJP'S ALLIANCES WITH REGIONAL PARTIES

This segment discusses the political and electoral significance of alliances of the BJP with regional parties in detail, including the evolving nature of these alliances.

5.1 BJP's Alliance Strategy During the 2014 General Election

The 2014 general elections marked a watershed moment in Indian political history. Leading the BJP, Modi won the elections and got 282 seats in the Lok Sabha, thereby becoming the first political party in the last three decades to secure an independent parliamentary majority. While having an independent majority, the BJP campaigned for the 2014 general elections as the major party of the National Democratic Alliance. Various regional and state political parties were part of the alliance which made up the broader coalition.

The significance of these alliances was clear in regions where regional parties had an existing political network with the potential to influence certain segments of voters. For instance, in Maharashtra, Bihar, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh, the alliance arrangements enabled the BJP to compete electorally with other political organizations. The 2014 general elections showed that the BJP did not campaign using alliance arrangements only due to parliamentary necessities. Rather, the alliances also represented the intention of the BJP to create an electoral coalition with a much wider geographic spread.

The outcomes showed that a national political party can form a parliamentary majority without forsaking regional political alliances.

5.2 BJP's Alliance Strategy During the 2019 General Election

The 2019 general elections gave another boost to the political strength of BJP in India. BJP won 303 Lok Sabha seats which marked an increase in their parliamentarian strength since 2014. NDA as a whole won 353 seats. In 2019 elections, BJP had alliance with different regional parties where the importance of constituency-level alliances was deemed necessary.

But this period also brought controversies and changes in alliances. Some regional parties were skeptical about seat sharing arrangements and the rising influence of BJP in the coalition. The alliance between BJP and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra was one such example. While the two parties contested the 2019 general elections as a part of alliance, the controversy that emerged post-elections led to the collapse of the alliance in the state.

5.3 BJP's Alliance Strategy During the 2024 General Election

The 2024 general election proved yet another important development in coalition politics under BJP leadership. As opposed to the previous two elections, the BJP did not win an independent majority. While the BJP won 240 seats, the NDA together won 293 seats. Hence, the role of regional allies became indispensable in forming the government at the national level. There were two especially important alliance partners in this respect – Telugu Desam Party (TDP) from Andhra Pradesh and Janata Dal (United) in Bihar. The entry of TDP into NDA along with the presence of JD(U) alliance helped consolidate the BJP electoral alliance in strategic states. At the same time, they played an important role in determining the parliamentary strength of NDA. Thus, the 2024 election showed how the bargaining power of regional parties might be restored when the leading party of the coalition lacks an independent parliamentary majority.

5.4 Comparative Analysis of the 2014, 2019 and 2024 General Elections

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

A comparison of the three general elections provides an understanding of the changing relationship between the BJP and its regional allies.

Table 3: Comparative Electoral Performance of BJP and NDA (2014–2024)

General election	BJP seats	NDA seats	BJP's independent majority
2014	282	336	Yes
2019	303	353	Yes
2024	240	293	No

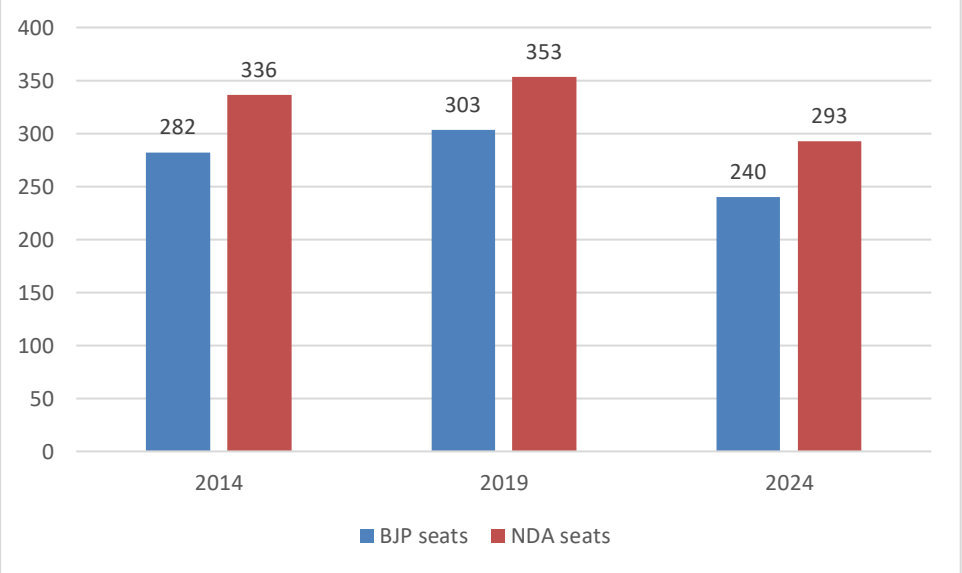


Figure 2: Graphical presentation of Comparative Electoral Performance of BJP and NDA (2014–2024)

This table illustrates the fact that the BJP had its independent parliamentary majority in the years 2014 and 2019. But in 2024, due to low performance of the BJP, the role of alliance partners was vital in forming a government. Seats won in the 2014, 2019 and 2024 General Elections Comparison between parliamentary seats won in the 2014, 2019 and 2024 General elections Results show that the importance of alliance partners grew in 2024. Although the BJP continued to be the largest party in the Lok Sabha.

5.5 Changing Relationship Between BJP and Its Regional Allies

The BJP's relationships with regional parties have not followed a uniform pattern. Some partnerships have continued across several elections, whereas others have experienced disagreements, separations and subsequent political realignments.

Table 4: Selected BJP–Regional Party Alliance Relationships

Regional party	Important political development	Nature of relationship
JD(U)	Separation in 2013, return to NDA in 2017, exit in 2022 and return in 2024	Changing partnership influenced by political circumstances
Shiv Sena	Longstanding alliance, separation in 2019 and subsequent party split	Ideological association accompanied by leadership and power-sharing conflicts
TDP	Earlier NDA partnership, separation in	Electoral and regional strategic

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

	2018 and return in 2024	partnership
Shiromani Akali Dal	Longstanding NDA partnership, separation in 2020	Partnership affected by policy disagreements
Asom Gana Parishad	Cooperation with BJP in Assam through different electoral periods	Regional and electoral cooperation

The above table shows that the formation of alliance is dependent upon more than one political factor. There is no doubt about the fact that ideological similarity can help in the formation of alliance, but it cannot be taken as a guarantee for its longevity.

The case of JD (U) in the context of political alliances in the state of Bihar shows that the alliances among the political parties are dynamic in nature. It means that the joining and leaving of the JD (U) from the NDA alliance was based on certain political and national political conditions. Likewise, the political relations between BJP and Shiv Sena show the importance of power-sharing and political leadership issues in the weakening of alliances, even those which have been historically strong in nature. Again, the rejoining of TDP in the NDA alliance in 2024 shows that even regional political parties can change their political alignments based on certain political circumstances.

5.6 Regional Political Interests and Electoral Calculations

The regional political interests have been a key factor in the formation of BJP alliances. The regional political parties usually know more about the local political issues, network of leadership, caste politics and state-specific political situation. The BJP may use their organisational and political strengths by entering into alliances with regional parties. In turn, regional parties may gain greater access to national political bodies and get chances to influence policy-making.

The significance of regional interests can be illustrated by such cases as Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Punjab. The case of Bihar is that the alliance with JD(U) was very important due to the regional organisation and political power of this party. The TDP has been an important regional political party in Andhra Pradesh. BJP-Shiv Sena cooperation in Maharashtra shows the importance of ideology and election politics in alliance formation. Thus, the alliance formation process is directly linked with the political features of particular states. The strategy that works in one state may not be effective in another state.

5.7 Impact of Alliance Politics on Regional Parties

Alliance politics has offered regional parties the chance to be involved in making decisions in the country's political process. By entering into electoral alliances with other large parties, regional organizations have been able to expand their parliamentary presence and their political influence outside their own states. Yet alliances may pose problems for regional parties as well. In cases when a national party has grown much stronger, smaller parties will face problems in negotiating seat-sharing pacts and maintaining their own political distinctiveness.

The question of the possibility of an inequality of relations arises especially when one party dominates the alliance in terms of its electoral performance and organizational structure. Thus, regional parties should find a compromise between gaining from cooperation at the national level and protecting their independence in terms of their electoral base. The 2024 elections showed that regional parties could restore their bargaining power once again when their parliamentary presence was required for forming the government.

International Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)
An International Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Refereed Journal
Impact Factor: 7.2 Website: https://ijarmt.com ISSN No.: 3048-9458

5.8 Implications for Indian Federalism and Coalition Governance

The strategic alliance that BJP has entered into with the regional parties has its own significance in relation to the working of federal system of India. In the federal system of India, the regional parties can play their role as the representatives of their respective regions by participating in the elections and running political organizations in India. These parties may speak on behalf of their respective regions about their requirements of economic development, financial aid, infrastructure, linguistic and cultural issues and autonomy in governance.

But the actual power of these regional partners of the BJP would depend upon their own parliamentary strengths and bargaining power in relation to BJP. In the 2014 and 2019 election, BJP proved that it can run the government without any support from the regional parties. But the 2024 election brought back the parliamentary dependency between BJP and the regional parties.

5.9 Strategic Alliances or Political Compulsions? Overall Assessment

The findings suggest that the alliances of BJP with regional parties cannot be termed as strictly strategic alliance or political necessity. Both elements have played role in the making of alliances as well as the maintenance of alliances.

When the BJP was performing well in elections, it had been using alliances to extend its geographical coverage and contesting election from a coordinated constituency level position. Alliances have also helped the regional parties to get involved in coalition politics at the national level. But when the independent parliamentary strength of the BJP has decreased, the regional allies became more important for government formation and coalitions. The example of 2014, 2019 and 2024 elections are very revealing in this regard. In the first two elections, the independent majority of BJP made it less dependent upon alliances, while in 2024, the results made the allies more important through bargains.

Table 5: Overall Assessment of BJP's Alliance Strategy

Analytical dimension	**Observed political pattern**	**Interpretation**
Electoral expansion	Cooperation with parties having strong regional bases	Strategic consideration
Seat-sharing	Negotiations based on state-level electoral strength	Strategic and situational
Ideological compatibility	Cooperation despite some political differences	Flexible political accommodation
Government formation	Support from regional allies in 2024	Political necessity
Alliance continuity	Entry, exit and re-entry of regional partners	Changing political calculations
Regional representation	Participation of state-based parties in national governance	Coalition-based accommodation
Parliamentary bargaining	Increased importance of allies when BJP lacked a majority	Political compulsion

The overall assessment suggests that BJP's alliance strategy is pragmatic and adaptable. It reflects the party's efforts to maintain national political dominance while accommodating the requirements of India's diverse regional political environment.

6. CONCLUSION

This present study looked into the nature of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alliances with the regional political parties in India and how the political considerations and electoral/parliamentary compulsions shaped these associations. It has been observed that despite the BJP's dominance in general elections in India, alliance politics continued to be an important part of its overall political strategy in India. The general elections in 2014 and 2019 proved that BJP had maintained its independent parliamentary majority at the same time continued to engage with regional political parties in order to increase its electoral presence. In 2024 General Election, the BJP won only 240 seats and relied upon its NDA partners in order to come to power. This study also showed that apart from ideological similarities and differences, the factors like electoral calculus, seat sharing, regional considerations, leadership considerations and power-sharing considerations also played important role in alliances formation and continuity. It has been shown how the relationship between BJP and political parties like JD(U), Shiv Sena, TDP and Shiromani Akali Dal changed with time and the nature of coalitions politics proved to be flexible depending upon circumstances.

REFERENCES

1. Aiyar, Y., & Sircar, N. (2020). Understanding the decline of regional party power in the 2019 national election and beyond. Contemporary South Asia, 28(2), 209–222.
2. Chhibber, P. K., & Verma, R. (2018). Ideology and Identity: The Changing Party Systems of India. Oxford University Press.
3. Diwakar, R. (2024). The party system. In S. Ganguly and E. Sridharan (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Indian Politics. Oxford University Press, 249–270.
4. Jaffrelot, C. (2021). Modi's India: Hindu Nationalism and the Rise of Ethnic Democracy. Princeton University Press.
5. Jaffrelot, C. (2024). The BJP's ideology, structures, sociology, and strategies. In S. Ganguly and E. Sridharan (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Indian Politics. Oxford University Press, 179–194.
6. Jaffrelot, C., & Verniers, G. (2020). A new party system or a new political system? Contemporary South Asia, 28(2), 141–154.
7. Kailash, K. K., & Arora, B. (2016). Federal coalitions in India: Strategic calculations and revolving-door partners. Studies in Indian Politics, 4(1), 63–76.
8. Ruparelia, S. (2015). Divided We Govern: Coalition Politics in Modern India. Oxford University Press.
9. Schakel, A. H., Sharma, C. K., & Swenden, W. (2019). India after the 2014 general elections: BJP dominance and the crisis of the third party system. Regional & Federal Studies, 29(3), 329–354.
10. Sridharan, E. (2024). Coalition politics in India. In S. Ganguly and E. Sridharan (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Indian Politics. Oxford University Press, 271–288.
11. Sridharan, E. (2025). India's 2024 election and the renewal of coalition politics. In The Hoover Institution's Survey of India. Hoover Institution Press.

12. Vaishnav, M., & Hintson, J. (2019). The Dawn of India's Fourth Party System. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
13. Ziegfeld, A. (2016). Why Regional Parties? Clientelism, Elites, and the Indian Party System. Cambridge University Press.
14. Ziegfeld, A. (2019). Alliance politics amid the BJP's rise: More continuity than change in 2019. Studies in Indian Politics, 7(2), 191–205.
15. Ziegfeld, A. (2024). Regional parties. In S. Ganguly and E. Sridharan (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Indian Politics. Oxford University Press, 211–224.