

IMPACT 2018: FUTURE IMPERFECT

BJP returning with a greater majority is highly improbable- so there's little point in discussing it. Next best case scenario is the party coming in with a reduced majority. In that situation ,it is likely that the CM becomes more autocratic to assert his authority. The third probability is Congress scraping in with a thin majority. In which case there would be a series of minor steps rather than any big bang initiatives. Most of the energy would be spent in sanitizing the state from BJP-RSS influence. An outside chance of Congress coming with a massive majority will mean a stumbling and fumbling approach since that victory would not be earned as the party did not struggle or lead any major movement but came in by default of anti incumbency and BJP implosion.

With a debt of 2 lakh crores and not too promising a national , global economic situation in the near future , the headroom for any government is going to be limited. That combined with populism is likely to force it into resource grabbing.

Thus we are staring at the possibility of a lameduck government with a stronger opposition ; a weaker yet more autocratic CM and a financially unsound treasury with an even more populist agenda. Consequently while a select

sections/ individuals may flourish , the state as a whole would stagnate ; short term gains for the powerful with a long term loss for the weak . Let us look at impact 2018 aspect wise.

For the first time , a Multipolar election in the true sense- with 5 parties (BJP, Cong , AAP, BSP & SAPAKS) fighting on all 230 seats.

IMPACT- Positive:
Differentiation of polity is a positive sign- maturing democracy
Negative- With competition the level of discourse goes down in underdeveloped regions like M.P. The identity narrative forces intellectual debates to focus on dark aspects/ whataboutery.

Way Out : Make the registration/ recognition of parties a little more difficult. Media and civil society have a greater role in ensuring that the narrative doesn't derail.

The twin electoral techniques are -controlling the data and managing the info / headlines. They are likely to become the governance tools

IMPACT: Positive: The enlightened voter has much more data/ info to theorise / analyse.

Negative - The passive voter is being converted to a robot and/ or moron.

Way Out : Safety measures for



Private data ; regulate one to one ; one to many data flow; ensure a greater flow of specialised ,niche data & marginalized , ostracized information.

Many more professionals & bureaucrats entering the fray- SAPAKS, AAP

IMPACT: Positive : The narrative improves.
Negative - With little or no cooling off period they're self serving than in the service of people.

Way Out : Make a cooling off period mandatory before fighting elections; enhance pressure groups.

Much more flow of cash (this is trend worldwide for some-

Shashidhar .S. Kapur

(time).

IMPACT: Positive: Weeds out non-serious candidates
Negative- Converting democracy into an oligarchy.

Way Out : Introduce some sort of state funding ; decentralize funds allocation.

Much greater use of social media

IMPACT: - **Positive :** Empowering tool for the marginalised , disenfranchised.

Negative- Midwifing dissent , spreading misinformation , vicious personal attacks - easier than ever before.

Way Out : More accountability of social media esp. about political and religious content; social media ought to complement and supplement socializing and not substitute it.

Enhanced Caste weightage in seat allocation.

IMPACT: Positive: Minor castes too get a voice as part of the Mahin gathbandhan (of smaller castes)

Negative- Shift onto passion politics is a sure recipe for populism.

Way Out : Create A Vidhan Parishad -it'll take care of most of the identity concerns; seats for castes rather than mere candidates.

Enhanced role of religion/ spirituality.

IMPACT: Positive : Polity veering towards Sarvadharm Sadbhava from the religion neutral/ negative secularism.
Negative- Hegemonic approach of a single religion would lead to a pseudo- theocratic state.

Way Out : Raising of religious issues and mixing public and religious functions be banned(going beyond merely not seeking votes in the name of religion);seers to be allowed only as independents.

Tribals using / being targeted via smartphones for

the first time in a big way.

IMPACT: Positive : Detribalisation / westernisation of the tribals.

Negative- Overaspirational politics may lead to discontent.

Way Out : Media/ social media education of the tribals.

No opposition party really built any movement nor created any struggles through the term.

Impact -No big changes or reforms would be possible

Way Out - Pick the issues- concerns of SAPAKS-JAYAS and address them to avoid them blowing in the government's face. Govern with Public agenda rather than Party agenda.

No serious debates / discussions over real issues - concerns.

Impact -There would be serious troubles in implementation

Way out-Carry out extended debates - discussions in Vidhan Sabha ;reach out to civil society in pre- legislative consultation.

All parties promising the moon in their manifestos.

Impact -Land and other resources would be monetized.

Way out -Have a collective governance agenda; common minimum programme.

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INDICATORS...

Even if one were to believe government statistics as true - that agriculture which employs 70 percent grew at 20 percent and the state grew at 10 percent . It means that the remaining 30 percent of the population grew at a lower than national average of 7-8 percent .The very fact that road connectivity is still far less than developed states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and per capita income remains among the lowest - much lower than national average shows the figures look impressive since they began on a low base - the reality is still bleak. There could be some solace in the fact that MP ranks at the top among the BIMARU states.The ground reality however shows that disproportionate populism has merely changed the state has changed from BIMARU to populist rather than truly developing.

Mishaps / Accidents

- 2013 Ratangarh stampede in Datia district in which 115 people died.
- 2014blast at Petlawad in Jhabua district in September this year that claimed more than 89 lives. .
- 2015 Blinding of cataract patients , Badwani.
- 2016 Encounter of SIMI jail break undertrials.

Scams

- Vyapam
- Simhastha- exponentially inflated numbers and expenses.
- Power purchase scam.-Lanco buyback.
- E-tendering
- Crony contractorship.

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CITIZENS' OUTLINE....

To sum, Madhya Pradesh will have to have a vision as well as mission - the former for growth and the latter for development. It'll have both a trickle down & grassroots up approach- for vision and mission respectively. Merely having infrastructure growth will not suffice - it'll have to have matching Human Resource development too.The way of evaluating the success (or failure) of the vision and mission should not merely be the GDP but also GDW(Gross domestic well being - as initiated in UK) & GDH (Gross Domestic Happiness - a parameter devised by the Bhutanese King).GDP is measured in the regular indices of rise in income (incl. per capita),inflation, deficit etc; its tangential indicators are sport & S&T. GDW is a way of evaluating deliverance - it measures the delivery aspect through major indicators of development (infrastructure development in particular), law and order situation , investment etc. Perhaps the way the existing resources are utilized is

also a pointer. Say, for instance Tourism- In Madhya Pradesh it ought to be evaluated on the basis of- internal ,local & international Tourism - in that order of weightage . Success of the vision is also symbolized by the way it is perceived - work should not only be done but also be seen to be done ;succour should not merely be provided but must be timely and in a just manner. One of the indicators of this perception is GDH -as reflected in major HDI (Human Development Indices)-healthcare; education (esp. female literacy, primary education) etc.; financial self - reliance; a pristine environment (Conservation);preserving local culture and democracy(has it become inclusive and reduced disparity); reduction in disparity is reflected in the state of the weakest and most vulnerable- in this case women , tribals , elderly and children .

My Take is that GDP should be calculated at the pan state level, GDW by taking the erstwhile states as units (esp. for check-

ing regional imbalances) and GDH by taking the cultural regions as basis (evaluating in particular for disparity-economic as well as social). Furthermore, the state government to be judged by GDP & GDW getting equal weightage and GDH being a secondary indicator .

The point is that in Madhya Pradesh neither the Punjab Model nor the Kerala approach will work - the state has to design its own model and evolve its tailor made approach (of course you have to take into note the best practices of other states too but you simply can't transplant them).

If some or all of what has been suggested is implemented, Madhya Pradesh has a good chance to be a leader in select areas (Internal tourism, manufacturing, technical education etc.) and wooden spooner in none . In sum , it has the potential to be a model state (a state with its unique model of development) and shedding the Bimaru tag.

This issue is dedicated to Dr. S.C. Pandey

Late Dr. S.C. Pandey was a Professor of English at IIT Kanpur , and a linguist. He spent some year at a University in U.S.A. too. Post retirement , he settled in Bhopal and occasionally taught at Barkatullah University. He was a bibliophile and a regular at the British library. Besides , he was a connoisseur of arts -theatre and films in particular. Dr. Pandey also loved Urdu poetry. Somewhat idiosyncratic , he was a man of routine and loved long walks and his evening cup of tea. Above all , he was a great human being and a thorough gentleman who helped many people incognito.



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POPULISM WOULD BE....

NAMO SHIVAYA OR SCINRAGA...

Positives

- Removed the dark areas of maximum people- thus anti incumbency to the minimum.
- Gave a free hand to RSS - so there is a committed cadre.
- Kept the central leadership in good humour.
- Great media management
- Clean image.
- People's politician - continuously among people.
- Co-opted the opposition.
- Great Communication.

Dark

- Resentment against Modi
- Poor delivery in relation to promises.
- Inner party sabotage- Kailash in Malwa , Prabhat Jha in Madhya Bharat , Nand

- Kumar Chauhan in Nimar ; Babulal Gaur in Bhopal ; Sartaj Singh in Hoshan-gabad , Lakshmi Kant Sharma , Raghav Ji -in Vidisha Sironj.
- Indore lobby unhapp-;py; no representation in cabinet
- Unity in opposition
- Wrath of Upper castes-core BJP supporters
- Various scams - both central and state
- Resentment against dedicated bureaucrats
- By -election losses
- Industries unhappy
- Rampant corruption at bureaucratic levels
- Younger and fresher faces with the opposition
- Resentment against all government contracts going to a select few.