

# BIG STORY

## big story

# Saffron surge talk of the town

When Narendra Modi and BJP started making waves in India, delirious supporters banged their drums and smothered each other in saffron paint. The size of Modi's victory was such that, it was stunning even for the BJP, not to mention the opposition Congress. As was the case with expatriates here too. Discussions went on and on in the community numbered at an estimated 400,000 out of the Kingdom total population of 1.3 million. Tribune talked to a few people here to find out what their reactions are.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (L) and president of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Amit Shah gesture as they celebrate the victory in India's general elections at the Bharatiya Janata Party headquarters, in New Delhi

**TDT | Manama  
Mohammed Zafran**

Indian election results dominated the discussions here yesterday in the Indian expatriate community as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's landslide win produced divided opinions.

The news of Modi winning a second term generated mixed reaction among the NRIs in Bahrain. While some were excited with the results, others were less than enthused.

As suggested by many exit poll surveys, Modi unleashed a massive saffron surge sweeping most parts of India yesterday to win another five-year term.

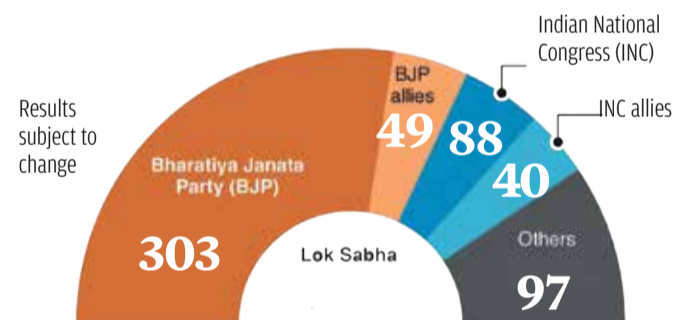
Although final results were yet to be published, a rolling vote count by the election commission showed the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) increased its majority with 303 out of 542 elected lower house seats.

The BJP's main rivals Congress were on just 51 seats, with Rahul Gandhi -- the great-grand-

son, grandson and son of three premiers -- conceding defeat and congratulating Modi.

"Thank you, India! The faith placed in our alliance is humbling and gives us the strength to work even harder to fulfil people's aspirations," Modi tweeted.

The main opposition alliance Congress party admitted defeat early on as the party headed by Rahul Gandhi lost stunningly. Over 600 million people are believed to have voted in the elections that spanned over 6 weeks.



"Smriti Irani (of the BJP) has won in Amethi and I congratulate her. The people of Amethi have given their mandate," Gan-

dhi told a news conference. Tribune spoke to a few Indian expatriates here to find out what their reactions are:

**Well orchestrated plan**

**M**odi executed a well-orchestrated plan through his election campaign. Ultimately, this is a huge defeat for Congress. While BJP managed to create a huge alliance which worked well to their favour, Congress remained grossly ineffective. I see this as a decisive factor. The alliances worked out well for BJP. Moreover, the opposition parties were not strong. There were 22 of them and all of them wanted Prime Minister's chair. Strategic alliances were lacking.

ABRAHAM JOHN

**Congress must learn the lesson**

**D**espite the strong support BJP enjoys, Modi should focus on gaining the confidence of minority communities and the NRIs. It is now clear that people of India trust the government and they feel that India is secure in Modi's and BJP's hands. Congress must take a lesson from this election and not just criticise leaders with baseless allegations. On the other hand, BJP government must take steps to secure the confidence of minority communities. The PM must interfere in certain issues of NRIs and gain their confidence

SUDHEER THIRUNILATH, SOCIAL WORKER

**Unexpected, unfortunate**

**B**JP's win is unfortunate and unexpected. This is a huge defeat to the Congress. Why this happened needs further analysis. I believe BJP and Modi have been cashing in on the communal differences by magnifying it. It remains to be seen how they will move forward. Modi has made statements about unity and moving forward as one, but only time could tell what will happen.

ABDUL RAHMAN ASEEL

**Played religious cards**

**M**odi has played the religious cards well. Modi knew what he was doing. He had a plan and executed it well. He also played the religious sentiments well during the campaign. Many things worked to his favour during the campaign including the confrontation and conflict with Pakistan. He used all of that to his advantage in the polls.

RAMSHAD ABDULQADER