TLDR: I want to give you benchmarks and scientific processes to understand the outcome of the 2024 election without any prejudice.

There are many opinion polls and analyses that are giving extreme predictions of 2024 outcome like one from Parakala Prabhakar predicts ~150 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJ6J3-j5xiA seats for BJP and some others predict 375. Coming from a family of politicians .Without any prejudice let me explain how the process works and how to get a correct sense of the election.

Thumb rules: I will give a detailed explanation later, but please keep these rules in mind.

1. Elections are won by grassroots cadres who bring voters to the voting booth. You cannot win elections unless that happens.
2. Voters vote in their best interest and they have clarity on that and the illiterate/poorly educated ones have better clarity. Voters are not stupid or could be fooled or people's mandate can be stolen.

वक़्त करता है परवरिश बरसों, हादसा एक दम नहीं होता : Things doesn’t happen all of a sudden, it happens over a while. Likewise, people don’t change their minds just because X incident has happened. Let's say on a weighing scale while pouring peanuts on one pan, on the 100th peanut scale tilts on its side so we cannot categorically say that the 100th peanut was historic or there is something special about it.

Media and money cannot buy votes.

EVMs cannot be hacked/manipulated.

In God we trust, others bring data.

Let’s say you go to a Mercedes showroom and say to the salesman that you have a strong feeling that I should own this Mercedes and even all my friends feel the same. You are not going to get that Mercedes unless the sum total of the money in your bank is more than what the price of the car. If not, then the salesman would ask you to get lost, the same thing you should tell anyone who analyses something based on their feeling. This is why analysis of Parakala P can be dismissed as he has mentioned in the beginning that it is his feeling.

Next in line are charlatans like Yogendra Yadav who with their sweet talk mix data with their feelings. He is taking data from previous elections and mixing his feelings to predict the outcome. I would trust the analysis of Pradeep Gupta or News24 Today’s Chanakya. These people have a very high rate of predicting election outcomes correctly, we need to understand their methods and how they can predict them correctly.

To understand their methods, we must first understand how people arrive at a decision to vote for a specific party.

Every party has 3 distinct types of voters:

1. Core voters: These voters will vote for a given party even if the sun rises in the west.

A classic example is BSP. Its core voters are the SC/ST community and without any effort or presence in media or SM in the 2022 UP election, they got ~13% vote. Every major party has 10-20% (of the total eligible voters).

The core voter base will vote for a party even without a leader, even if leaders engage in crimes or corruption, it doesn’t matter. Long back I asked an old man who would vote for in a gram panchayat polls? He said, Indira Gandhi. At that time, I thought the old man was delusional however, I now understand that he voted for Congress because he felt obligated to vote for Indira Gandhi even if she died 3 decades ago.

A core voter feels a lifetime obligation towards a specific party for any specific incident that has changed their life. E.g. Core voters of Shiv Sena voters vote because Shiv Sainiks saved their lives in the riots post Babri demolition or BSP voters vote for Kanshi Ram because he educated them about their constitutional rights and gave them a dignified life.

1. Loyal voters: These voters are loyal to a specific party/leader however, they have a defined fault line and if their party/leader crosses that fault line they vote against that party/leader. E.g. a BJP voter has a fault line of Hindutva or nationalism and if they feel that fault line is crossed they would vote against BJP to express their anger because that fault line is crossed.

As long as the fault line is not crossed the party/leader engaged in crime or corruption doesn’t matter. The percentage of loyal voters changes each election, but you cannot win unless you have ~15-20% loyal voters.

1. Floating voter: This voter would vote based on his criteria and perception however this kind of voter is usually in the range of 5% of the total voters.

Core voters form the bulwark of the party and support the party voraciously even at it’s lowest point, these voters keep the party alive in its bad days, but you cannot win the elections without the support of the loyal voters. These voters along with the floating voters help the party cross the finish line which is usually 30-45%.

When an incumbent party loses elections with a major loss, it usually means the loyal voters have voted against them. Floating voters matter when there is regime change because, in that kind of a fight, every vote counts.

Bhau Torsekar https://www.amazon.in/s?i=stripbooks&rh=p\_27%3ABhau+Torsekar&ref=dp\_byline\_sr\_book\_1 , a Marathi journalist had accurately predicted 2014 and 2019 results without any survey and wrote books on he arrived at these figures. Let me summarise his methodology.

He has identified swing seats, i.e. a constituency where the difference between the 1st and 2nd candidate should be less than 15% or BJP had won that seat in recent part, which he calls fight seats, i.e. seats where a party has a realistic chance of winning. That number was close to 300 and with Modi as PM candidate and Amit Shah as strategist of UP state that swing of 15% was achieved and in some cases even more and that is how the majority was won. Anyone who was closely involved in that election would know what fever was there to elect Modi. I personally remember that my family members who were loyalists of Congress had been angry with Congress since 90s and would say that they would now vote for Vajpayee just before going to vote and for Congress. Despite the disgruntlement and a charismatic leader like Vajpayee, they voted for Congress. The breaking point came when the Congress leadership behaved in a very high-handed manner with my Uncle and refusing to meet him, which was considered as a big insult by his supporters. BJP leadership grabbed the opportunity with both hands, had a series of meeting and scales were titled in 2014 election. 5 lakh voters switched from Congress to BJP and they became loyal voters of BJP. This fever I had seen in my colleagues and neighbours. With all the scandals of the world, bad publicity and wide-scale protests, Modi’s allure, and Shah’s micromanagement, unprecedented rise of 8% in the polls, the BJP’s vote share rose by just 12%. For India alliance to come tilt the scales, they will have to raise their vote share by at least 10% and I see no signs of that happening.

Having disgruntled voters is one part, but disgruntled voters are not going to switch parties unless the opposition has addressed all the needs of the voters.

Predicting 2024 elections:

Please watch this video before making any opinion. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwnnn1M-T5U . Here Shekhar Gupta speaks his observations on how he saw that Modi was able to deliver social benefit schemes to people.

Most voters in India are directly dependent on the government’s social benefit schemes and it used to be a struggle to get those benefits from Sarkari babu. Modi turned the tables and made the Sarkari Babu struggle to deliver the promised benefit. The voters is mostly voting for his issues like water, food, social justice, and security. He is not bothered by Modi being a dictator or a democracy in danger. For them, issues can range from getting 5 Kg of free rice to road from village to highway. If that is done he is happy to vote for the leader who has done that.

Please take these factors into account

1. 55 swing seats are there for BJP.
2. The vote share of the India alliance will fall. Why? Because the cadre is leaving these parties.
3. The vote share of the BJP will rise because the above cadre has come to the BJP. Tag this with streamline and tight control of central leadership. While most people will call Amit Shah as Chanakya, I see him as a top class administrator who has set processes for the BJP karyakartas to execute their task which is mind-boggling. These guidelines come with minute details like font size. There are leaders like Amit Shah or better in other parties however, they have not given a thought of putting down their experience on paper making guidelines, creating a robust feedback system, etc. You can consider BJP like McDonald's which has detailed processes to replicate the success in every franchise, while the other parties are like top restaurants in your city which are top class where they operate but cannot take their success beyond that restaurant because they have not made their restaurant process oriented.

The best-case scenario for BJP is 355 however, 325 would be a rational figure.