

# THE FALL OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS: THEN AND NOW



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Indian National Congress, [founded in 1885](#) is believed to be one of the **oldest political parties** in the world. An organization that has the distinction of cooperation in providing independence to India.



A party which is embellished with great souls like **Mahatma Gandhi, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi** and many more.

With such a great legacy, the Congress party prominently proved itself by heading the central government for more than 54 years since Independence.

Although the situation has not always been fruitful, from 1952 to 2019, the party has gone through a rollercoaster ride. The sands saw how the congress was torn apart and how Indira Gandhi emerged as the supreme




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leader.

The challenge was never less in front of the congress, but with the strength and courage of its leaders, the party always managed to stand and fight again. But now that spirit and leadership in the party is starting to look blurred. The reasons are many...

# The Rise and Fall of Congress

## History

The Congress remained in power for **thirty consecutive years** post-independence. After the murder of Gandhiji in 1948, and the death of Sardar Patel in 1950, Nehru was the only remaining iconic national leader, and soon the situation demanded Nehru to be the key to the political potency and future of the Congress. In the **first general election** held in 1952, the Congress swept to power. Nehru led the Congress to consecutively majorities in the elections of 1957 and 1962.



Jawaharlal Nehru with young Indira.

After the death of Nehru in 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri remained PM till his own mysterious death in 1966.

The first serious challenge to Congress was in 1967 when a united opposition challenged Indira. The conflict led to a division, and Indira launched a separate Indian National Congress.

In 1977, for the first time since independence, India saw a **non-congress government**. As a result of resentment of the excesses caused during the Emergency, the people uprooted the Congress.

After the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, his son **Rajiv Gandhi** took over the congress and led the party to the greatest height. Winning a total of 404 seats out of 541.

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In the 1998 general elections, the Congress won 141 seats in the Loksabha, it's the lowest tally until then. The party urged Rajiv's widow, **Sonia Gandhi**, to assume the leadership. After that, the party has not seen a significant change in leadership.

### Present

Congress has now reached the **lowest level** of its so long political history. Even during the Post-Emergency period the party didn't suffer that much which it is suffering currently. The 2014 general election was most devastating for it. The party got 44 seats in total which was just 8% of the total seats compared to 69% in 1980's.

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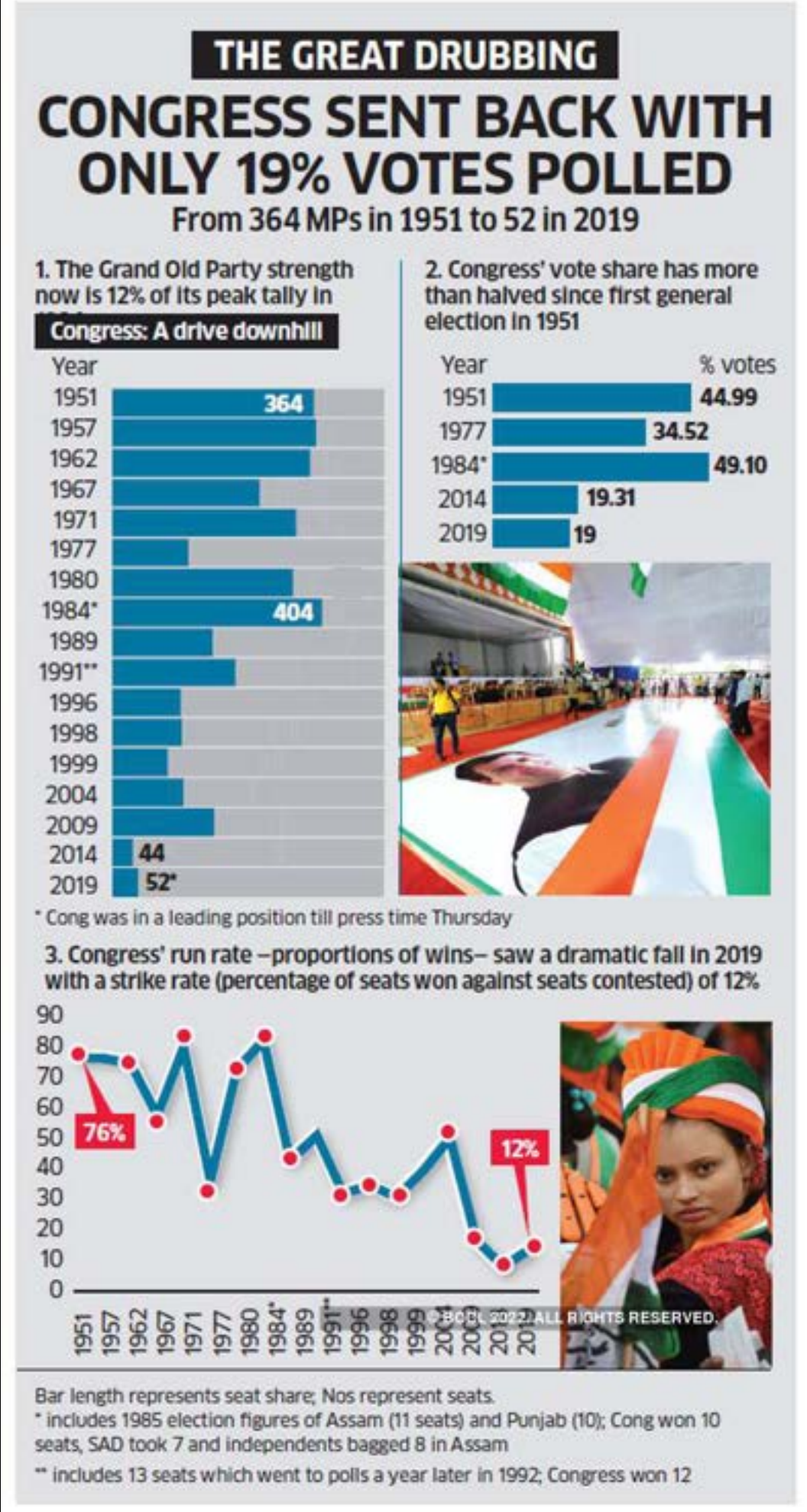
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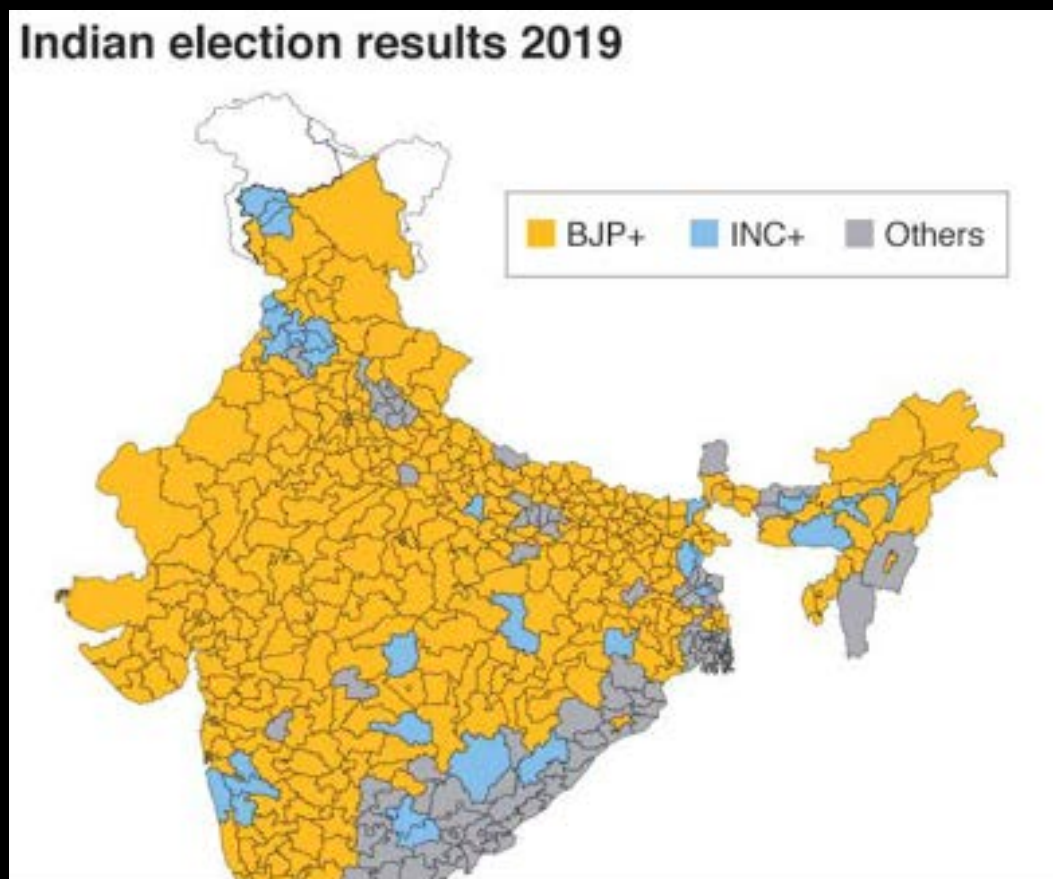






party got vanished all across India, the northern as well as the southern part.

2. After the loss of 1977, the party managed to get its roots back in just a period of 3 years and grabbed a total of 374 seats in the 1980's election, which was sufficient enough to get a majority in the lower house of the parliament. But from 2014 to 2020, Congress has to get constantly defeated. Punjab, Rajasthan, MP and Chattisgarh are the only exceptions. In fact, in the recent Bihar election its ally RJD, behind the scenes, criticized the INC for it's very poor performance and regretted that why it gave that many seats to Congress.
3. In '70s, the opposition was not that strong to match the level of the ruling Congress party. But today the scenario is totally reversed, the current opposition of congress i.e. the BJP is strong enough to get a majority in general elections on its own.



## Problems with Congress

- The party has lost its plot.

Congress has always been known as a party with which an average Indian feels connected. But now the party has turned its way to a location which no one knows. As an organization, it has **failed to grab the sentiments** of an Indian. Leader's **disputed speeches** further damage the image of the party.

In the 2019 Lok sabha election, the party promised in its [manifesto](#) that no change in the constitutional position of **Article 370 in J & K** would be allowed and **AFSPA**, which gives some special powers to the army, would be reviewed. It seemed as if the party leaders forgot that they had to fight elections all over India and not just in Kashmir.

- The organization lacks the proper roadmap for restructuring the whole system. Leaders don't have a clear and effective plan to offer the voters.



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- The party lacks a charismatic leader like Narendra Modi in the BJP, who can directly convey his message to the citizens.
- One Family Party Tag

The BJP always criticized the INC over this issue. Tot this date Congress has seen many more heads outside the Nehru-Gandhi family, but the party again failed to counter the allegation.



Rather than work on its own weakness the party continuously tries to blame BJP and its ally. The politics of Congress has now been limited to encircling the BJP led NDA only. The party is also seen opposing the issues and laws that it once supported.

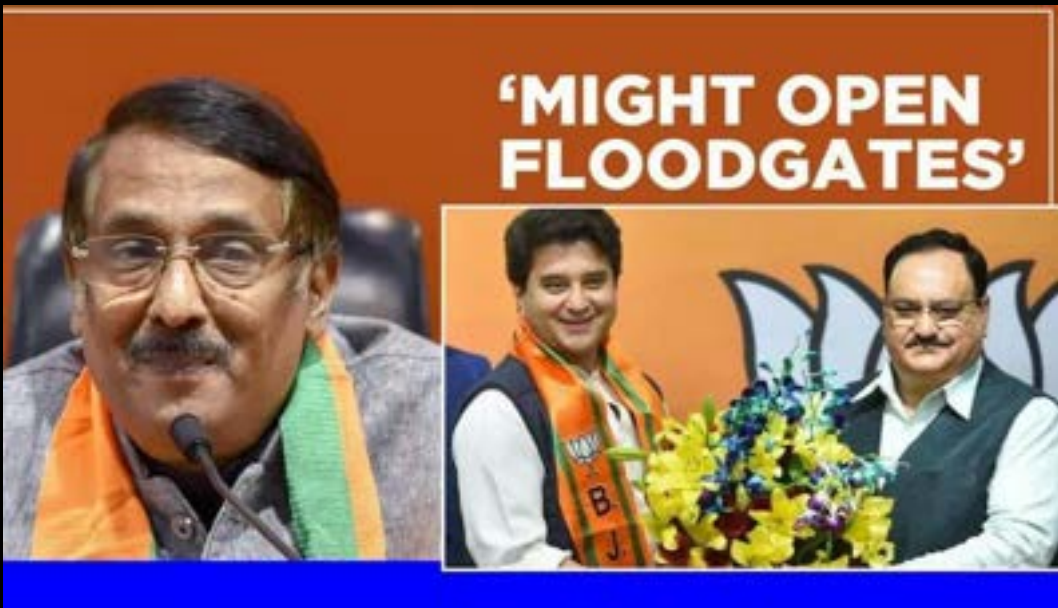
- INA’s Appeasement Policies

The party has always been accused of appeasement, appeasement of minorities, apparently **appeasement of Muslims** and the satirical part is that the party never seriously tried to prove this fact wrong.

Senior party leader and former defense minister of India, **A.K Antony** too have admitted that the party has suffered a lot due to this tag.

- Party Leaders Being Dissatisfied

The most common headache for INC. We saw how **Jyotiraditya Scindia**, **Sachin Pilot** adopted a rebellious attitude. Even **Tom Vadakkan**, once a key aide to Sonia Gandhi, left the party for its stance over the Balakot airstrike and joined BJP.



CONCLUSION

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The party needs leadership, a leader with whom the people can feel connected. Congress has now **nothing to lose** but a lot to gain. How the party changes itself over time will be seen. People’s trust will be gained only then the oldest party of the country will once again stand up and contribute to the governance of this **great Republic**.

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