



1989 Indian general election

General elections were held in India on 22 and 26 November 1989 to elect the members of the ninth Lok Sabha.^[1] The incumbent Indian National Congress (Indira) government under the premiership of Rajiv Gandhi lost its mandate, even though it was still the largest single party in the Lok Sabha.^{[2][3]} V. P. Singh, the leader of the second largest party Janata Dal (which also headed the National Front) was invited by the President of India to form the government.^[4] The government was formed with outside support from the Bharatiya Janata Party and Communist parties led by CPI(M).^[5] V. P. Singh was sworn in as the seventh Prime Minister of India on 2 December 1989.

Background

The 1989 Indian general election were held because the previous Lok Sabha had been in power for five years, and the constitution allowed for new elections. Even though Rajiv Gandhi had won the last election by a unprecedented landslide of 414 seats (mainly due to an overwhelming outpour of popular grief for to his mother's assassination), this election saw him trying to fight off scandals that had marred his administration.

The Bofors scandal, Gandhi's supposed attempt at shielding Adil Shahryar, who had been involved in the 1984 Bhopal tragedy, allegations of Muslim appeasement in the wake of the Shah Bano case, rising insurgency in Assam, insurrection in Punjab, Indian involvement in the Sri Lankan civil war were just some of the problems that stared at his government. Rajiv's biggest critic was Vishwanath Pratap Singh, who held the portfolios of the finance ministry and the defence ministry in the government.

But Singh was soon sacked from the Cabinet and he then resigned from his memberships in the Congress and the Lok Sabha. He formed the Jana Morcha with Arun Nehru and Arif Mohammad Khan and re-entered the Lok Sabha as an Independent MP from

1989 Indian general election



22 and 26 November 1989^[1]

529 of the 543 seats in the Lok Sabha
265 seats needed for a majority

Registered 498,906,129
Turnout 61.95% (▼ 2.06pp)



| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Leader | <u>Rajiv Gandhi</u> | <u>V. P. Singh</u> |
| Party | <u>INC(I)</u> | <u>JD</u> |
| Alliance | <u>INC (I)+</u> | <u>JD+</u> |
| Last election | 46.86%, 414 seats | 13.50%, 14 seats |
| Seats won | 197 | 143 |
| Seat change | ▼ 217 | ▲ 129 |
| Popular vote | 118,894,702 | 53,518,521 |
| Percentage | 39.53% | 17.79% |
| Swing | ▼ 7.33pp | ▲ 4.29pp |



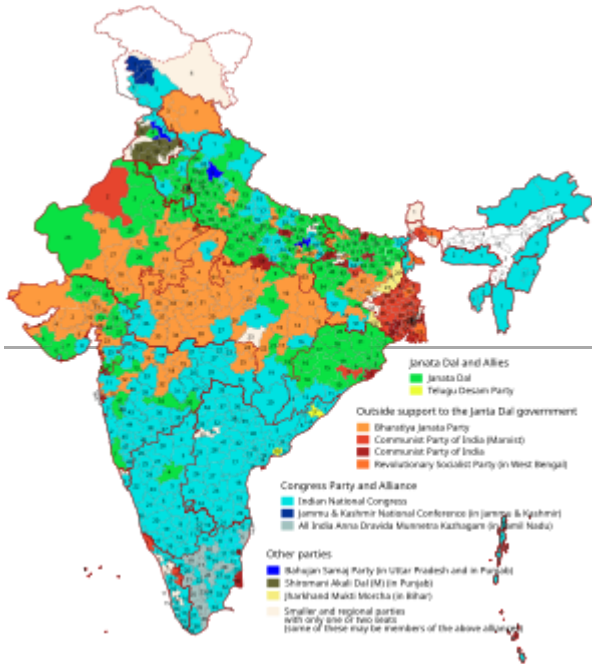
| | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| Leader | <u>L. K. Advani</u> | <u>E. M. S. Namboodiripad</u> |
| Party | <u>BJP</u> | <u>CPI(M)</u> |
| Alliance | | <u>LF</u> |

Allahabad. Witnessing V. P. Singh's meteoric rise on national stage, Rajiv tried to counter^[6] him with another prominent Rajput stalwart Satyendra Narain Singh but failed eventually.

On 11 October 1988, the birth anniversary of Jayprakash Narayan, V. P Singh made Jana Morcha merge with the Janata Party & some of its breakaway factions like the Janata Party (Secular), Lok Dal & Congress (Jagjivan) to form the Janata Dal. Singh then formed the National Front consisting of the Janata Dal, Congress (Socialist) of Sarat Chandra Sinha, TDP of N. T. Rama Rao, DMK of M. Karunanidhi & AGP of Prafulla Mahanta. The National Front also received outside support of Lal Krishna Advani from the Bharatiya Janata Party (which had also been formed out of the Janata Party) & Jyoti Basu from the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

To remove the allegations of Muslim appeasement against the Congress (I) party, Rajiv Gandhi took the step of unlocking the gates of the disputed Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in 1986,^[7] which inadvertently caused increased public consciousness about the dispute over the site. The BJP was able to galvanize significant support from the country's Hindu majority towards itself by its electoral promise of constructing a Hindu temple at the site after tearing down the mosque.

| | | |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Last election | 7.74%, 2 seats | 5.87%, 22 seats |
| Seats won | 85 | 33 |
| Seat change | ▲ 83 | ▲ 11 |
| Popular vote | 34,171,477 | 19,691,309 |
| Percentage | 11.36% | 6.55% |
| Swing | ▲ 3.62pp | ▲ 0.68pp |

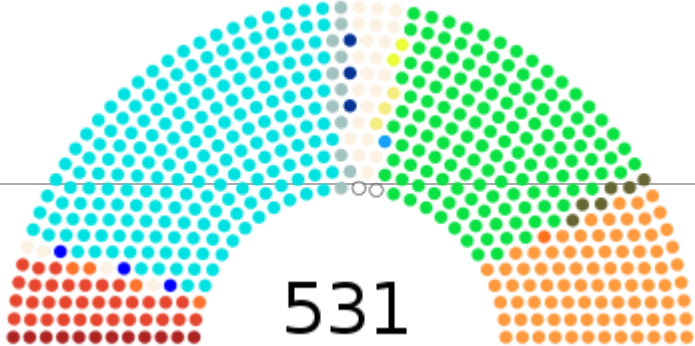


Results by constituency

| Prime Minister before election | Prime Minister after election |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Rajiv Gandhi INC(I) | V. P. Singh JD |

Voting was not held in Assam due to rising unrest and a rebellion of Bodos, culminating into a massacre of 535 people at Gohpur. Moreover, the Union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu was bifurcated into Goa and Daman & Diu with Goa retaining its 2 seats and the latter gaining 1 seat. Thus the total Lok Sabha seats increased by 1 to a total of 543. Since Assam never went to the polls, the total seats contested in this election was down to 529.

Results

|  | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------|-------|--|
| Party | Votes | % | Seats | |
| <u>Indian National Congress (Indira)</u> | 118,894,702 | 39.53 | 197 | |
| <u>Janata Dal</u> | 53,518,521 | 17.79 | 143 | |
| <u>Bharatiya Janata Party</u> | 34,171,477 | 11.36 | 85 | |
| <u>Communist Party of India (Marxist)</u> | 19,691,309 | 6.55 | 33 | |
| <u>Telugu Desam Party</u> | 9,909,728 | 3.29 | 2 | |
| <u>Communist Party of India</u> | 7,734,697 | 2.57 | 12 | |
| <u>Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam</u> | 7,196,099 | 2.39 | 0 | |
| <u>Bahujan Samaj Party</u> | 6,213,390 | 2.07 | 3 | |
| <u>All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam</u> | 4,518,649 | 1.50 | 11 | |
| <u>Janata Party</u> | 3,029,743 | 1.01 | 0 | |
| <u>Shiromani Akali Dal (Simranjit Singh Mann)</u> | 2,318,872 | 0.77 | 6 | |
| <u>Revolutionary Socialist Party</u> | 1,854,276 | 0.62 | 4 | |
| <u>Pattali Makkal Katchi</u> | 1,561,371 | 0.52 | 0 | |
| <u>Doordarshi Party</u> | 1,338,566 | 0.45 | 0 | |
| <u>All India Forward Bloc</u> | 1,261,310 | 0.42 | 3 | |
| <u>Jharkhand Mukti Morcha</u> | 1,032,276 | 0.34 | 3 | |
| <u>Indian Congress (Socialist) – Sarat Chandra Sinha</u> | 978,377 | 0.33 | 1 | |
| <u>Indian Union Muslim League</u> | 974,234 | 0.32 | 2 | |
| <u>Indian People's Front</u> | 737,551 | 0.25 | 1 | |
| <u>Peasants and Workers Party of India</u> | 636,589 | 0.21 | 0 | |
| <u>All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen</u> | 617,376 | 0.21 | 1 | |
| <u>Lok Dal (Bahuguna)</u> | 602,110 | 0.20 | 0 | |

| | | | |
|--|---------|------|---|
| Bharatiya Republican Paksha | 572,434 | 0.19 | 0 |
| Karnataka Rajya Ryota Sangha | 495,565 | 0.16 | 0 |
| Republican Party of India (Khobragade) | 468,615 | 0.16 | 0 |
| Gorkha National Liberation Front | 435,070 | 0.14 | 1 |
| Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) | 427,609 | 0.14 | 0 |
| Jharkhand Dal | 367,838 | 0.12 | 0 |
| Kerala Congress (M) | 352,191 | 0.12 | 1 |
| Shiv Sena | 339,426 | 0.11 | 1 |
| Marxist Co-ordination Committee | 247,013 | 0.08 | 1 |
| Nagaland People's Council | 239,124 | 0.08 | 0 |
| Hindu Mahasabha | 217,514 | 0.07 | 1 |
| Manipur Peoples Party | 147,128 | 0.05 | 0 |
| Republican Party of India | 129,300 | 0.04 | 0 |
| Humanist Party of India | 122,947 | 0.04 | 0 |
| All India Dalit Muslim Minorities Suraksha Mahasangh | 120,159 | 0.04 | 0 |
| Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party | 116,392 | 0.04 | 1 |
| Kuki National Assembly | 108,085 | 0.04 | 0 |
| Shiromani Akali Dal | 100,570 | 0.03 | 0 |
| Marxist Communist Party of India (S.S. Srivastava) | 100,300 | 0.03 | 0 |
| People's Party of Arunachal | 96,181 | 0.03 | 0 |
| Uttar Pradesh Republican Party | 91,740 | 0.03 | 0 |
| Sikkim Sangram Parishad | 91,608 | 0.03 | 1 |
| Amra Bangali | 80,834 | 0.03 | 0 |
| Jammu & Kashmir National Conference | 71,194 | 0.02 | 3 |
| Mizo National Front | 70,749 | 0.02 | 0 |
| Kerala Congress | 68,811 | 0.02 | 0 |
| Tharasu Makkal Mandaram | 64,885 | 0.02 | 0 |
| Democratic Party | 43,667 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Shoshit Samaj Dal | 42,282 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Uttarakhand Kranti Dal | 39,465 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Communist Party of India (Marxist–Leninist) | 38,937 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Muslim Majlis Uttar Pradesh | 25,839 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Proutist Bloc Of India | 23,331 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Jammu & Kashmir Panthers Party | 22,625 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Bharatiya Jana Sangh | 22,446 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Karnataka Gana Parishad | 19,593 | 0.01 | 0 |
| Socialist Party (Lohiya) | 17,639 | 0.01 | 0 |

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|---|--------|------|---|
| Tamilar Kazhagam | 12,859 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Rising Sun Party</u> | 12,858 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Indian Congress (J) Trikha Group</u> | 12,539 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Socialist Party</u> | 12,430 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Socialist Unity Centre of India</u> | 8,747 | 0.00 | 0 |
| All India Garib Congress | 7,635 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Hul Jharkhand Party</u> | 6,663 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Bhatiya Krishi Udyog Sangh | 5,895 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Lok Party | 4,731 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Akhil Bhartiya Gorkha League (Budhiman Gurung)</u> | 4,426 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Shoshit Samaj Party | 3,756 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Scientific Vedic Revolutionary Party | 3,470 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Deseeya Karshaka Party | 3,059 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Akhil Bharatiya Ram Rajya Parishad</u> | 2,998 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Barat Desam Labour Party | 2,944 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Progressive Hul Jharkhand | 2,890 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Republicon Presidium Party | 2,791 | 0.00 | 0 |
| West Orissa Peoples Front | 2,682 | 0.00 | 0 |
| West Bengal Socialist Party (Biman Mitra) | 2,411 | 0.00 | 0 |
| All India Shiromani Baba Jiwan Singh Mazhbi Dal | 2,368 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Akhil Bhartiya Hindustani Krantikari Samajwadi Party | 2,263 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Green Party of India | 2,142 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Akhil Baratiya Pichhra Varg Party | 2,055 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Tamil Nadu Peoples Welfare Association | 1,964 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Sadharam Rajya Parishad | 1,928 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Indian National Congress (O) Anti-Merger Group | 1,735 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Gujarat Janata Parishad | 1,577 | 0.00 | 0 |
| All India Justice Party | 1,428 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Peoples Democracy of India | 1,392 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Punjab Peoples Party | 1,374 | 0.00 | 0 |
| <u>Hindustan Janata Party</u> | 1,361 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Bharatha Makkal Congress | 1,357 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Deccan Congress | 1,332 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Akhil Bhartiya Lok Tantrik Party | 1,272 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Vijaya Shakti | 1,093 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Bhartiya Loktantrik Mazdoor Dal | 1,035 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Pandav Dal | 918 | 0.00 | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------|------------|
| National Republican Party | 839 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Bhartiya Loktantrik Mazdoor Sangh | 703 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Mahabharat Peoples Party | 694 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Indian Union Muslim League (IML) | 687 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Manipur Peoples Council | 677 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Vishal Bharat Pary | 621 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Republican Party of India (Gavai Group) | 539 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Punjab Kairon Dal | 493 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Peoples Party of India | 478 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Indian Labour Party | 406 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Socialist Labour League | 391 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Bharatiya Krantikari Kisan Sang | 367 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Kamaraj Desiya Congress | 322 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Punjab Naya Front | 314 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Hindu Shiv Sena | 160 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Bhartiya Lok Kalyan Dal | 145 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Labour Party of India | 99 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Independents | 15,793,781 | 5.25 | 12 |
| Nominated <u>Anglo-Indians</u> | | | 2 |
| Total | 300,776,423 | 100.00 | 531 |
| Valid votes | 300,776,423 | 97.32 | |
| Invalid/blank votes | 8,274,072 | 2.68 | |
| Total votes | 309,050,495 | 100.00 | |
| Registered voters/turnout | 498,906,129 | 61.95 | |
| Source: ECI (https://eci.gov.in/files/file/4120-general-election-1989-vol-i-ii/?do=download&r=9761&confirm=1&t=1&csrfKey=0a53970c570a9414c865fa27dd5a8267) | | | |

Aftermath

V. P. Singh, who was the head of the Janata Dal, was chosen leader of the National Front government with outside support of the BJP & CPI(M).^[8] The alliance broke down after Singh supported Bihar's Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav's step to arrest Advani in Samastipur to stop his Ram Rath Yatra, which was going to the Babri Masjid site in Ayodhya on 23 October 1990. Following this incident, BJP withdrew their support to Singh government, causing them to lose parliamentary vote of confidence on 7 November 1990.^[9]

Chandra Shekhar broke away from the Janata Dal with 64 MPs and formed the Samajwadi Janata Party in 1990. He got outside support from the Congress(I) and became the 8th Prime Minister of India. He finally resigned on 21 June 1991, after the Congress(I) withdrew its support alleging that the Chandra Shekhar government was spying on Rajiv Gandhi.

See also

- [V. P. Singh ministry](#)
- [Chandra Shekhar ministry](#)
- [List of members of the 9th Lok Sabha](#)
- [Election Commission of India](#)
- [1987 Indian presidential election](#)

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2. Krishna, India since Independence (2011), p. 343.
3. Sumeda (6 April 2024). "How the 1989 Lok Sabha election changed Indian politics" (<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/1989-election-coalition-politics-india-congress-loss-victory-rajiv-gandhi-vp-singh/article67679186.ece>). *The Hindu*. ISSN 0971-751X (<https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0971-751X>). Retrieved 19 May 2024.
4. Krishna, India since Independence (2011), p. 349: "The Rashtrapati Bhawan communiqué that evening was a commentary on the fractured nature of the mandate: "Since the Congress (I), elected to the Ninth Lok Sabha with the largest membership, has opted not to stake its claim for forming the Government, the President invited Mr. V. P. Singh, leader of the second largest party/group, namely the Janata Dal/National Front to form the Government and take a vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha within 30 days of his assuming office.""
5. Krishna, India since Independence (2011), p. 347.
6. Philip, A. J. (7 September 2006). "Opinion: A gentleman among politicians" (<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2006/20060907/edit.htm>). *The Tribune (Chandigarh)*. Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20061013081719/http://www.tribuneindia.com/2006/20060907/edit.htm>) from the original on 13 October 2006. Retrieved 1 January 2016.
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External links

- "Elections 1989: Congress(I) faces prospect of being routed in Bihar" (<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/elections-1989-congressi-faces-prospect-of-being-routed-in-bihar/1/324190.html>). *India Today*. 30 November 1989.
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