

Low voter turnout in Lok Sabha polls 2024: Advantage for BJP or Congress?

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In the initial phases of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, low voter turnout raised concerns for both the Election Commission and the political parties. Delayed data updates by the Election Commission raise mass confusion with experts divided on whether this poses a challenge for BJP or Congress.

Although the contested seats differ from the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the implications of low voter turnout have sparked debate. The controversy first started when the Election Commission delayed the voter turnout data for phase 1, which was conducted on April 19, by 11 days till April 30 followed by the delay of the voter turnout data for phase 2, which was conducted on April 26, by 2 days till April 28. Opposition parties criticised the delay, which led to the Congress president, Mallikarjun Kharge, to write a letter to all the parties, urging them to raise their voices and question against the Election Commission's move. Following this issue, voter turnout data for subsequent phases were uploaded faster.

Many experts interpret the low voter turnout in many ways. Some suggest that this could be a disadvantage for BJP while others believe that this might harm Congress even more. Both parties expressed their concerns, with BJP mentioning that its voters were present during elections.

The BJP, along with other opposition parties, and the Congress claimed that the low voter turnout would be harmful. Some expert suggest that BJP was heading for a huge win, causing the voters to become complacent. BJP leaders, along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, made several appeals to the voters requesting them to come out and vote. They claimed that it was the opposition voters who did not show up because they were sure of their defeat.

Comparing the 2019 and 2024 elections, the average voter turnout decreased from 66.54% to 65.54% till phase 6. Experts cite the intense heat wave during the 2024 elections and the earlier scheduling by 15 days compared to 2019 as contributing factors.