

Making and Breaking of Coalitions: A Study of Bihar Politics with special reference to Nitish Kumar and since 2005 Assembly Elections

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Bihar has traditionally been a politically matured as well as volatile landscape, with state politics having a profound impact at the national level. The state has been at the forefront of coalition politics, as it was one of the nine states which produced non-Congress governments following the assembly elections of 1967. The first coalition government was formed in Bihar in 1967 under the umbrella of Samyukta Vidhayak Dal with Mahamaya Prasad Singh as Chief Minister from Jan Kranti Dal and Karpoori Thakur of Samyukta Socialist Party as the Deputy Chief Minister.ⁱ Since then, coalition experiments nurtured in Bihar politics with different permutations and combinations. The focus of this paper is to analyse coalition politics in Bihar with special reference to Nitish Kumar and his JD(U). Nitish Kumar sided with the BJP since 1996 general elections of the Lok Sabha. He has been a cabinet minister in Vajpayee-led governments between 1998 and 2004, leading major portfolios like Railways. However, he made his debut in the state politics and for the first time took oath as Bihar's Chief Minister in March 2000 with the help of the BJP.ⁱⁱ He resigned shortly as he could not garner the required majority. However, since 2005 he has been dominating the politics of Bihar and proved his importance in 2025 assembly elections also and was sworn in as Bihar Chief Minister for the record tenth time. He changed his loyalties many times and moved with the BJP and the RJD as per his convenience to remain in power in Bihar. This paper starting with the 2025 general elections for the Bihar Legislative Assembly analyses and throws light on coalition arithmetic since 2005.

1. Assembly Elections of 2025 and Government Formation

The general elections for the 18th Bihar Legislative Assembly were held on 6 and 11 November 2025 and results were declared on 14 November 2025. The main contest

was between two pre-poll alliances—NDA and the Mahagathbandhan. The NDA comprises of the BJP, JD(U), LJP(RV), RLM and HAM (Secular). On the other hand, the Mahagathbandhan comprises of the RJD, INC, VIP, Left Front and some other smaller parties.ⁱⁱⁱ Table 1 shows that the NDA won 202 seats out of the total 243-members assembly with 46.52 percent vote share. The BJP won 89 seats out of 101 seats it contested and received 20.08 percent of the popular vote share. The party became the single largest party for the first time in Bihar Legislative Assembly. It had 74 seats in the 2020 assembly elections. Similarly, JD(U) of the incumbent Chief Minister Nitish Kumar won 85 seats out of 101 it contested, and got 19.25 percent of the vote share. The party performed very well in comparison with 2020 elections, when it won 43 seats only. The LJP(RV) won 19 of the 29 seats it contested with 4.97 percent of the vote share. Another ally of the NDA, HAM(S) got 5 out of 6 seats it contested whereas RLM won 4 out of 6 it contested. In this way, coalition arithmetic worked well for the NDA and Nitish Kumar took oath as Bihar Chief Minister on 20 November 2025. Besides the Chief Minister, 26 Cabinet Ministers also took oath, of whom 14 were from the BJP, eight from the JD(U), two from the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), and one each from Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM). It was his record tenth swearing-in, as he took first oath as Chief Minister on 3 March 2000, however remained as so for seven days only.^{iv}

Table: 1
 Performance of Political Parties and Alliances in Bihar Vidhan Sabha Elections 2025

Alliance	Political Party	2025			2020		
		Seats contested	Won	Vote share (%)	Seats contested	Won	Vote share (%)
NDA	BJP	101	89	20.08	110	74	19.46
	JD(U)	101	85	19.25	115	43	15.39
	LJP(RV)	29	19	4.97	-	-	-
	HAM(S)	6	5	1.18	7	4	0.89
	RLM	6	4	1.03	-	-	-
	Others	-	-	-	VIP (13)	4	1.52
	Total	243	202	46.52		125	37.26
Ma	RJD	143	25	23.00	144	75	23.11
	INC	61	6	8.71	70	19	9.48

	CPI(ML)L	20	2	2.84	19	12	3.16
	VIP	12	0	1.38	-	-	-
	CPI	9	0	0.74	6	2	0.83
	CPI(M)	4	1	0.60	4	2	0.65
	IIP	3	1	0.37	-	-	-
	Total	252*	35	37.64		110	37.23
Others	AIMIM	25	5	1.85	20	5	1.24
	BSP	130	1	1.62	78	1	1.49
	JSP	238	0	3.44	-	-	-
	AAP	99	0	0.30	-	-	-
	Others	-	0	-	-	2	-
	Total		6			8	-

Source: Compiled and Tabulated from the Data available on the Website of the Election Commission of India, www.eci.gov.in, The Hindu, 15-11-2025 and the Indian Express, 15.11.2025.

1.1 Performance of Mahagathbandhan (MGB) in 2025 Elections

The Mahagathbandhan won 35 seats with 37.64 percent of the vote share. The Rashtriya Janata Dal won 25 seats out of 143 it contested with the vote share of 23 percent. Notably, the RJD was the single largest party in 2020 with 75 seats. Thus, the party performed very low in 2025 in comparison with 2020. The Congress got six seats only out of 61 it contested. In 2020, the Congress won 19 seats out of 70 it contested. The CPI(ML)L won two seats out of 20 it contested. The CPI(M) and the IIP won one seat each. Its allies the Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) and the CPI could not contribute even a single seat to the Mahagathbandhan. In this way, the Mahagathbandhan could manage 35 seats only, much less than the 110 seats it won in 2020. Thus, the Mahagathbandhan fell far short of forming the government.

1.2 Performance of other Parties

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), led by Asaduddin Owaisi, with a 1.85 percent vote share, won five seats. The same number it got in 2020 also. The Bahujan Samaj Party, a national party, won only one seat out of 130 it contested with 1.62 percent of the vote share. Another national party, Aam Admi Party, could not open its account and all the 99 candidates fielded by the party forfeited their deposits. It got only 0.30 percent vote share even much lower than NOTA which polled 1.81 percent of

votes.^v Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party failed to win even a single seat in its electoral debut.^{vi} No other party or independent could join the list of successful candidates.

1.3 Coalition Dynamics in NDA and Mahagathbandhan

The NDA made seat distribution very smoothly in 2025 elections. Under the seat allocation formula, both the BJP and JD(U) have been allocated 101 seats each, while Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) got 29 seats. The Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) led by Upendra Kushwaha and the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) led by Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi were allocated six seats each.^{vii} Notably, the LJP(RV) was not a constituent of the NDA in 2020 and contested independently without any alliance and won 1 seat out of 135 it contested, getting vote share of 5.66 percent. The VIP was an NDA constituent in 2020 and won 4 seats. The RLM had contested independently in 2020, winning 1.77% of the vote share, however no seat was won by the party.

In the Mahagathbandhan, the seat sharing arrangement was much confusing and some of the candidates of the allies contested against each other, which was named as 'friendly fight.' The RJD contested 143 seats and the Congress 61, while other allies the Left Front and the VIP also fielded their candidates without coordination in the alliance. Total chaos and poor coordination were visible between allies of the Mahagathbandhan and they could not maintain cohesion throughout the campaign process. Candidate selection, resource sharing, and district-level planning repeatedly ran into friction. The rift widened enough for the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) to walk out over seat-sharing disagreements.^{viii} At the final stage, the allies of the Mahagathbandhan parties contested against each other on 12 seats, creating so-called "friendly fights."^{ix}

In this way, the NDA contested the elections in full coordination with unified strength. On the other hand, visible gaps and lack of coordination was apparent in the Mahagathbandhan. In the election process, shifting loyalties and making and breaking of alliance has remained a common phenomenon which remained visible in Bihar 2025 elections.

1.4 From Fragmentation towards Bipolarity

Bihar's political landscape has historically been characterised by fragmentation, with multiple parties competing vigorously across constituencies. A decisive shift began

with the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, when the consolidation of Bihar's political forces into two principal alliances, the NDA and the MGB, reduced fragmentation. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections demonstrated the electoral potency of consolidated alliances. With LJP (RV) back in the NDA fold and facing the same alliance structure that would persist into 2025, the ENOP^x fell to 2.41. The 2025 Assembly elections maintained this bipolar structure, though with a slight increase in fragmentation (ENOP of 2.65) due to the entry of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party (JSP). India's electoral system rewards concentrated vote shares in bipolar contests. When the party system features only two major alternatives, the leading alliance not only wins more seats, it often sweeps constituencies. This is the fundamental arithmetic that delivered the NDA's triumph: a combination of alliance consolidation, which concentrated anti-establishment votes within the MGB, and the strategic fragmentation of that opposition vote by the JSP and AIMIM, which prevented the MGB from capitalising fully on anti-incumbency sentiment. The NDA reaped the benefits of this consolidation, dominating in Assembly segments across the state.^{xi}

Now we will discuss and analyse the dynamics of coalitions and shifting loyalties of Nitish Kumar in the political landscape of Bihar also in the context of given scenario of national politics vis-à-vis the NDA.

2. First NDA Government in 2005: Bihar Experiment of the BJP

In February-March general elections of 2005, the people of Bihar gave fractured mandate and no party or an alliance could form government. Therefore, President's Rule was imposed and another election was held in October-November 2005. The NDA won a majority where the JD(U) won 88 seats out of 139 seats it contested and the BJP 55 out of 102. Nitish Kumar was sworn in as Chief Minister on 24 November 2005 and Sushil Kumar Modi of the BJP was made Deputy Chief Minister.^{xii} For the BJP, it was the first successful experiment in the state politics of Bihar. The government lasted for full five years term. Table 2 shows that the RJD-led alliance with the Congress and CPI(M) could win 64 seats only. The RJD could secure 54 seats only out of 175 it contested. The

Congress was marginalised in Bihar; it won 9 seats only out of 51 it contested. The CPI(M) contested 10 seats and won one seat only. The LJP-CPI alliance also could not do much; as the LJP could won 10 seats out of 203 it contested. The CPI won 3 seats out of 35 it contested. Other parties like CPI(ML(L)-5, BSP-4, SP-2, NCP-1 could not perform well. Thus, in the triangular alliance contest of Bihar, the NDA emerged victorious and ended the 15-year rule of Lalu-Rabri; and with this, Nitish Kumar established his foothold in the politics of Bihar; whose political strength was also seen in 2025 elections.

Table: 2
 Performance of Political Parties and Alliances in Bihar Vidhan Sabha Elections October 2005

Alliance	Party	Seats Contested	Seats Won
NDA	BJP	102	55
	JD(U)	139	88
	Total	241	143
RJD+	RJD	175	54
	Congress	51	9
	CPI(M)	10	1
	Total	236	64
LJP-CPI	LJP	203	10
	CPI	35	3
	Total	238	13
Others	Other Parties	-	13
	Independents	746	10

Source: Election Commission of India and Lokniti-CSDS

3. Assembly Elections of 2010 and Coalition Dynamics

The assembly elections of 2010 were held in October-November and the results were declared on 24 November 2010. It was a triangular contest with the NDA contesting alongside the RJD-LJP alliance and the Congress. Within the NDA, the JD(U) fielded 141 candidates, while the BJP fielded 102. The RJD fielded 168 candidates, while the LJP fielded 75. The Congress fielded candidates in all 243 seats. Some other parties like the BSP, SP, NCP, JD(S) and left parties also made their presence felt during the campaign.

3.1 Performance of the alliances and Parties

The NDA comprising of the BJP and the JD(U) made a clean sweep, winning a total of 206 seats. The JD(U) of Nitish Kumar won 115 seats out of 141 it contested, whereas the BJP won 91 out of 102 it contested (See Table 3). The JD(U) performed remarkably well, falling just seven seats short of a majority in the 243-member assembly. Notably, the BJP registered highest strike rate of 89.21 percent. The RJD could manage only 22 seats and the LJP 3 only and thus, RJD-LJP alliance miserably failed in 2010 Bihar elections. The performance of the Congress remained very disappointing which could win 4 seats only and 216 of its candidates got their deposits forfeited. The CPI and the JMM won 1 seat each. The independents won 6 seats whereas, other parties like BSP, SP, NCP, JD(S), CPI(M) could not open their accounts. Nitish Kumar of JD(U) retained his position in Bihar and was sworn in as Chief Minister again on 26 November 2010.

Table: 3

Performance of Political Parties and Alliances in Bihar Vidhan Sabha Elections 2010

Alliance	Party	Seats Contested	Seats Won
NDA	BJP	102	91
	JD(U)	141	115
	Total	243	206
RJD-LJP	RJD	168	22
	LJP	75	3
	Total	243	25
UPA	Congress	243	4
Others	Other Parties	1087	2
	Independents	1342	6

Source: Election Commission of India and Lokniti-CSDS

3.2 Dissent and Defection in 2013

Nitish Kumar snapped ties with the NDA in June 2013, when Narendra Modi was announced chairman of the BJP campaign committee for the Lok Sabha polls 2014. On 16 June 2013, the JD(U) formally separated from the NDA and the ministers from the BJP were dropped from the Nitish Kumar cabinet. Since the JD(U) was already having 115 MLAs in the assembly, the government continued with the outside support of the Congress and CPI. However, the JD(U) performed poorly in the Lok Sabha elections 2014, where the party won two seats only out of 38 it contested in Bihar. Nitish Kumar resigned from the post of Chief minister on 17 May 2014, taking the moral responsibility

of his party's dismal performance in the election. Jitan Ram Manjhi was made the Chief Minister of Bihar by the JD(U) who was a very close confidant of Nitish Kumar.^{xiii}

4. Assembly Elections of 2015 and Bihar Coalitions

Nitish Kumar replaced Jitan Ram Manjhi and again assumed the position of Bihar Chief Minister on 22 February 2015 on the backdrop of the coming 2015 assembly elections. Nitish Kumar and his JD(U) formed a grand alliance named 'Mahagathbandhan' with the RJD and the Congress to counter the BJP and the NDA in 2015 elections.^{xiv} The elections were held in October-November and the results were declared on 8 November 2015.

4.1 Performance of the Two Alliances and Government Formation

The Mahagathbandhan won 178 seats and the NDA won 58, as shown in Table 4. Other parties won 7 seats which include CPI(ML) 3 and independents 4. Table 4 shows that the RJD became the single largest party winning 80 seats followed by the JD(U) 71. The Congress got 27 seats. In this way, the Mahagathbandhan made a clean sweep and Nitish Kumar was sworn-in as Chief Minister on 20 November 2015 for the fifth time with Tejaswi Yadav as Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar. This was Nitish Kumar's fifth swearing in as Bihar's Chief Minister, and for the first time with the backing of the RJD and the Congress.

Table 4: Performance of Mahagathbandhan and NDA in 2015 Bihar elections

Mahagathbandhan (MGB)			National Democratic Alliance		
Party	Seats contested	Seats won	Party	Seats contested	Seats won
RJD	101	80	BJP	157	53
JD(U)	101	71	LJP	42	2
Congress	41	27	RLSP	23	2
	-	-	HAM(S)	21	1
Total	243	178		243	58

Source: Election Commission of India and Lokniti-CSDS

4.2 Nitish Kumar and his JD(U) left Mahagathbandhan

Nitish Kumar and his JD(U) left the Mahagathbandhan in July 2017 and joined the NDA again. Tejaswi Yadav was upping the political heat as a 'leader next in line'.

Nitish Kumar's party men side-lined by a more dominant partner the RJD, with his 'ears to the ground' he warmed upto his former ally BJP crafted a plan with his sights set on the impending 2019 General Elections.^{xv} When charges of corruption were levelled against the Deputy Chief Minister and RJD leader Tejaswi Yadav, Nitish Kumar asked him to resign from the cabinet which he refused. Then Nitish Kumar himself resigned on 26 July 2017 and formed another cabinet on the same day with BJP support and Sushil Modi (BJP) as Deputy Chief Minister. It was Nitish Kumar's sixth swearing-in as Bihar Chief Minister.^{xvi} He continued with the NDA and contested 2015 elections as a part of the NDA.

5. Bihar Coalitions and 2020 Assembly Elections

The 2020 Assembly elections were held in three phases in October–November and the counting of votes took place on 10 November 2020. Table 1 shows that the ruling NDA won 125 seats and the Mahagathbandhan got 110 seats. In the NDA, the BJP won 74 seats out of 110 it contested. The JD(U) won 43 seats out of 115 it contested. The other NDA constituents, HAM(S) and VIP got 4 seats each, contesting 7 and 13 seats respectively. In this way, the NDA crossed the majority mark of 122 by a very small margin. Nitish Kumar was made Chief Minister of Bihar by the NDA and he took oath as such on 16 November 2020, despite his party JD(U) marginalised to 43 seats in the assembly. In Mahagathbandhan, the RJD won 75 seats, the Congress 19, and the left parties 16. Thus, the RJD-led opposition alliance fell short of 12 seats to achieve a majority.

5.1 Nitish Kumar left NDA

The dynamics of the coalition changed with the walk-out of the JD(U) from the NDA in August 2022. The Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar resigned on 09 August 2022 and Janta Dal (United) severed ties with the BJP. He formed a new alliance with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and the JD(U) became a part of the Mahagathbandhan (MGB). Subsequently, Nitish Kumar took oath again as the Chief Minister of Bihar on 10 August 2022, whereas Tejaswi Yadav of the RJD was made the Deputy Chief Minister.

5.2 Nitish Kumar rejoined NDA

Nitish Kumar again changed political landscape when he left the Mahagathbandhan and rejoined the NDA in January 2024, ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. On 28 January 2024, Janata Dal (United) officially left the Mahagathbandhan, Nitish Kumar resigned as Chief Minister of Bihar and on the same day took oath again. This was his ninth swearing-in as Chief Minister of Bihar and his third formal tie-up with the BJP since 2000. It is said that Nitish Kumar left the Mahagathbandhan because he felt insulted by Tejaswi Yadav who was portraying himself as '*vikas ka masiha*' and tried to be heavy in the alliance as well as in the government. The chasm between the two leaders came to fore at the Republic Day state function in Patna's Gandhi Maidan on 26 January 2024, where Bihar governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar unfurled the national flag. Though chief minister Nitish and his deputy Tejashwi Yadav shared the stage—their chairs separated by a few feet—for close to 90 minutes, the silence between them was deafening.^{xvii}

6. Bihar's Political Landscape and Making and Breaking of Coalitions

Bihar's political landscape has revolved around caste and community. It is also personality based and mainly dependent upon leader's caste and equations with other castes and communities. Nitish Kumar belongs to the Kurmi caste and the JD(U) as a party is considered a Kurmi and Koeri dominated party, which represent extremely backward classes. Lalu Prasad Yadav and his son Tejashwi Yadav come from Yadav community and the RJD as a party has evolved MY equation which refers to Muslim and Yadav communities. Ram Vilas Paswan and after him his son Chirag Paswan represent the Dalit community and the LJP is considered to have a hold on the Scheduled Caste community. The BJP traditionally represents the forward class namely Rajput, Kayastha, Brahmin, and Bhumihar castes(Chowdhury, 2023). The Congress has lost its hold on its traditional vote-bank of the Dalit-Muslim category after emergence of the RJD and the LJP.

In this caste and community based political landscape of Bihar, Nitish Kumar and his party the JD(U) has been ruling the state since 2005 October-November assembly

elections. There are five aspects of making and breaking of coalitions by Nitish Kumar which made him continued as a dominant Chief Minister since then: (i) leaving the NDA in June 2013, (ii) contesting the 2015 assembly elections with the RJD and Mahagathbandhan, (iii) leaving the RJD and rejoining the NDA in 2017, (iv) leaving the NDA and again joining the Mahagathbandhan in August 2022, and (v) break-up with the Mahagathbandhan and again aligning with the NDA in January 2024.

Nitish Kumar and his JD(U) and before that the Samata party has been a natural ally of the BJP and remained with the NDA since Vajpayee-era. The immediate reason of severing ties with the BJP in 2013 was emergence of Narendra Modi as BJP's tallest leader and his becoming campaign committee chairman and later as prime ministerial candidate. The JD(U) connected him with Godhra riots of 2002 when he was Chief Minister of Gujarat and it was a fear of losing the Muslim vote bank from the JD(U). So, Nitish Kumar cited ideological differences and his party's secular credentials to sever ties with the BJP. "*Mitti mein mil jaayenge, BJP ke saath wapas nahi jaayenge* (We will perish but won't join forces with BJP again)," Nitish Kumar openly declared. Calling for a "Sangh-mukt Bharat," he said the BJP's leadership no longer reflected the secular image the NDA once held (Mukherjee, 2025).

In 2015 elections, Nitish Kumar sided with Lalu Prasad Yadav from whom he broke up in 1994 to form the Samata Party with George Fernandes and others. The Mahagathbandhan comprising of the RJD, JD(U) and Congress yielded tremendous result with 178 seats in their favour. His association with Tejashwi Yadav as his deputy always remained in limelight and severe charges of corruption were levelled against him resultantly, he was asked by Nitish Kumar to resign from the cabinet. On his refusal, Nitish Kumar broke away from Mahagathbandhan and again sided with the BJP in July 2017 (Mukherjee, 2025). He contested 2020 assembly election with the NDA and became Chief Minister despite his party the JD(U) was marginalised to 43 seats only. However, he ended the alliance in August 2022 accusing the BJP of trying to destabilise his party and government. He then rejoined the Mahagathbandhan.

In January 2024, just before the Lok Sabha polls, Nitish Kumar realigned with the NDA leaving the RJD and Mahagathbandhan. The immediate reason was his isolation in

the INDIA bloc and the manner in which the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra was launched by the Congress. Nitish Kumar saw that he was not given his position in the INDIA bloc despite he chaired its meeting in Patna on 23 June 2023. It was believed that Nitish Kumar wanted the opposition faction to make him the convener of the alliance.^{xviii}

In this way, Nitish Kumar's frequent alliance shifts are not just a Bihar story—they have disrupted national opposition strategies, unsettled BJP-Congress dynamics, and altered the arithmetic of anti-BJP coalitions. In Bihar, each realignment resets governance priorities and voter trust. To some, Kumar is a master strategist navigating fractured mandates; to others, an opportunist looking to seize power at every turn (Mukherjee, 2025).

7. Conclusion

Nitish Kumar has been at the forefront of Bihar politics since 2005 and his party JD(U) has been remained in power with different alliances since then. Caste has been a dominating factor in the politics of Bihar throughout and different caste and community combinations have been created and propagated by the four major parties of Bihar. Similarly, Bihar's political parties have been personality based, with a single person or family dominating the parties in all aspects.

Five general elections of Bihar legislative assembly have been held since October-November 2005 and in all elections Nitish Kumar and his party formed the government and thus the JD(U) has been dominating all government formations since then. Four times, JD(U) contested as a constituent of the NDA, however, 2015 elections it contested with the RJD as a part of the Mahagathbandhan. Every time, JD(U)-led alliance has won the elections. The frequent makings and breakings of coalitions in Bihar has once again proved the saying that there are no permanent friends and enemies in politics. At the same time, this very trend leads the theory of political opportunism in practice.

Ten oath taking ceremonies have been conducted in Bihar since October-November 2005 assembly elections and all ten swore in by the JD(U) nominee. For the nine record times, Nitish Kumar has taken oath as Bihar's Chief Minister. Once Jitan Ram Manjhi took oath in May 2014 when Nitish Kumar resigned after his party's defeat in 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The BJP and the RJD, in alliance with the JD(U), never staked claim for the chief ministerial berth, despite winning more seats than the JD(U)

from time to time and thus it is the JD(U) which has given chief ministers since 2005. Nitish Kumar has been sworn in six times with the NDA having BJP deputy chief ministers; whereas twice he sided with the Mahagathbandhan with a RJD deputy chief minister.

In Lok Sabha elections, the JD(U) and before that Samata Party has been a constituent of the BJP-led alliance and this combination has yielded good results every time except 2004 when the alliance won 11 seats out 40. Only once in 2014, the JD(U) contested Lok Sabha elections separately and it got 2 seats only. Thus, the JD(U) performed well in Lok Sabha elections only as a part of the NDA.

The Congress party, which dominated Bihar politics until 1990, has been completely marginalised in Bihar since its defeat by the Janata Dal in the 1990 general elections for the Bihar Legislative Assembly and before that in the 1989 Lok Sabha elections. In the present assembly after 2025 general elections, the Congress has six legislators only.

It can be conclusively said that coalition politics has become a necessity in Bihar's contemporary political environment. This political shaping has also shifted Bihar politics towards bipolarity, with the BJP-led NDA and the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan in the forefront.

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ⁱⁱⁱThe Hindu. (2025, October 21). *Cold calculations: On rival fronts, preparing for the Bihar polls*. The Hindu. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/cold-calculations-on-rival-fronts-preparing-for-the-bihar-polls/article70182665.ece>.

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^{vi} "Jan Suraaj Earned a Lot of Limelight, Not Enough Votes | India News." Hindustan Times, 15 Nov. 2025, www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/jan-suraaj-earned-a-lot-of-limelight-not-enough-votes-101763148328260.html.

^{vii} The Hindu (2025, October 22). *NDA seat-sharing deal: Full breakdown of seats among allies for Bihar Assembly Election 2025*. The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/elections/bihar-assembly/nda-seat-sharing-deal-jdu-bjp-bihar-assembly-election-2025/article70189038.ece>

^{viii} India Today (2025, November 14). "Vote chori" charge, friendly fights: 5 reasons behind Mahagathbandhan's Bihar rout. India Today. <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/assembly/story/mahagathbandhan-bihar-poll-result-tejashwi-yadav-rjd-congress-nda-nitish-kumar-2819770-2025-11-14>

^{ix} India TV News (2025, October 24). *Bihar Elections 2025: Mahagathbandhan to have "friendly fights" on 12 seats, two candidates withdraw*. India TV News. <https://www.indiatvnews.com/bihar/news-bihar-elections-2025-india-alliance-friendly-fights-on-12-seats-key-nominations-withdrawn-2025-10-24-1014230>

^x Effective Number of Parties

^{xi} Radhakrishnan, V. (2025, November 14). Bihar Assembly Election Results 2025: How alliance consolidation, vote fragmentation gave the NDA a landslide win. The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/data/how-alliance-consolidation-vote-fragmentation-gave-the-nda-a-landslide-win-in-bihar/article70279313.ece>

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