



Important Vocab for the Editorial

- **import (noun)** – meaning, implication, signification.
- **accomplishment (noun)** – achievement, attainment, feat.
- **wield (verb)** – exercise, exert, manage/control.
- **disproportionate (adjective)** – out of proportion to; inordinate, excessive.
- **discourse (noun)** – discussion, conversation, debate.
- **prop up (phrasal verb)** – support, assist, maintain.
- **on the back burner (phrase)** – having low priority.
- **beyond the pale (phrase)** – outside the limits of acceptable performance; improper, irregular.
- **anti-incumbency (noun)** – a situation which is against elected officials currently in power; discontent against ruling government/ party in power.
- **spirit (away) (verb)** – run away with, carry off, snatch/seize.
- **breakaway group (noun)** – separatist, secessionist, dissenting group.
- **pursue (verb)** – look into; go in for; search for.

Small arena, big win: on the BJP victory in Tripura

There is a reason that the Bharatiya Janata Party is disproportionately pleased with its [performance in Tripura](#), which sends only two members to the Lok Sabha. From zero to 35 seats in the 60-member Assembly in five years is unarguably no mean electoral accomplishment. But having done this by beating the Left Front, its strongest ideological opponent, even if not the biggest political threat nationally, has given Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah a special satisfaction. Mr. Modi wanted a victory in Tripura to be celebrated as much as the victory in Uttar Pradesh, which sends the largest number of members to the Lok Sabha. Mr. Shah saw in Tripura a reason for his party workers in West Bengal and Kerala to be extremely happy. The BJP likes to imagine that the Left has wielded a disproportionate influence on political discourse, resulting in pushing the entire Sangh Parivar into a place of political isolation and unacceptability. It is true that the BJP's difficulties in finding allies for much of the eighties and the nineties had a lot to do with the Left, particularly the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which propped up an effective secular platform for regional parties opposed to the Congress. If the BJP kept its core Hindutva issues on the back burner during the Vajpayee years in government, then it was in no small measure due to pressure from its allies who were earlier part of a Left-backed grouping that treated the Congress as the biggest enemy and

the BJP as beyond the pale. The real story in Tripura is of course the collapse of the Congress vote-bank. Clearly, the anti-Left, anti-incumbency vote, which includes the tribal vote, has moved completely to the BJP. A tie-up with the Congress, therefore, would not have been the answer to the Left's loss in Tripura, where it ruled for 25 years. What it needs to do is win back some of the tribal votes that the Indigenous People's Front of Tripura spirited away to the BJP.

The [BJP has something to cheer about in Nagaland](#) as well: it won 11 seats and is in a position to form a government with the support of its ally, the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party, a breakaway group of a former ally, the Naga Peoples Front. The smaller northeastern States, heavily dependent on the Centre for funds, have a tendency to back the party ruling at the Centre. Like the Congress earlier, the BJP is currently the beneficiary. In Meghalaya, the Congress managed to emerge as the single largest party, but the BJP, with two members, is helping the National People's Party form the government. After being denied in Manipur and Goa last year, when it could not form the government despite being the single largest party, the Congress actively pursued alliances, but with little luck. The Northeast is in no position to help any party win the battle for the Lok Sabha, but the winner of the battle for the Lok Sabha is in the best position to win the Northeast