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Vol.127 No. 58 City Edition**

Chandigarh . New Delhi . Jalandhar . Wednesday, February 28, 2007

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24 + 4 pages . Rs 2

He's back



The dark and corrupt legacy of despotic dictatorship stands thoroughly rejected and defeated as Punjab embarks on a new journey of hope and optimism

— Parkash Singh Badal after his victory

INSIDE

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- **Khaira defeats Bibi Jagir Kaur** P 6

SAD FOR CONG

Urban shock does Amarinder in BJP claims unexpected successes

PRABHJOT SINGH
 TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 27

Upholding convention, the Punjab voter favoured a change, giving the SAD-BJP alliance a chance to govern the state after a fierce electoral battle.

With 45 per cent of voters below 35 years of age, many old warhorses of the SAD-BJP alliance and the Congress were defeated.

While the Akalis led by three-time Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal survived some anxious contests to improve its tally of 2002 by eight to 48, its alliance partner BJP roared to success in 19 constituencies against two (initially three) seats it held in the outgoing House, giving the combine a total of 68 out of 116.

For the BJP it has been its biggest ever tally in Punjab, the previous best being 18 in 1997. At that time SAD had 75 legislators in the 93-member ruling alliance.

Parkash Singh Badal, who was projected as chief ministerial candidate by the alliance, is expected to be sworn in as the head of the new government later this week for a fourth term. The BJP has already staked claim for deputy chief ministership.

Polling in Beas segment will be held on March 11. The ruling Congress managed to win 44 seats, elbowing out Akalis from their stronghold of Malwa.

If the doaba and the majha orchestrated the SAD-BJP collective win, Malwa gave the Congress respectability.

The results today clearly indicate the trend of alliance politics. Though last time the voters had given the Congress a clear verdict, returning 61 of its candidates, this time no party got a clear majority on its own.

Punjab has a history of coalition

governments, which, with the exception of the last SAD-BJP government, never completed term in office.

Many heads rolled in the battle of the ballot which witnessed a record polling of 76 per cent.

Interestingly, if former Finance Minister Capt Kanwaljit Singh of SAD won by more than 40,000 votes from Banur, Deputy Chief Minister Rajinder Kaur Bhattal scrapped past Prem Singh Chandumajra by only 254 votes.

Among the old stalwarts of the Congress who fell by the wayside were Shamsher Singh Dullu, Sardul Singh, Avtar Henry, Mohinder Singh Kaypee, Chaudhury Jagjeet Singh, Prof Darbari Lal, Gurchet Singh Bhullar, Malkiat Singh Dakha, Rakesh Pandey, Malkiat Singh Birmi, Amrik Singh Dhillon, Jagmohan Singh Kang, Jasjit Singh Randhawa, Dr Mohinder Kumar Rinwa and Dr Harbans Lal.

The Akalis, too, faced reverses. Those who failed to make it are Veer Singh Lopoke, Kuldip Singh Wadala, Bibi Jagir Kaur, Ragbir Singh, Bhag Singh Mallah, Ranjit Singh Talwandi, Jagdish Singh Garcha, Mahesh Inder Singh Grewal, Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal, Ajaib Singh



I am disappointed. The urban voter ditched me...
 — Amarinder Singh after defeat P 6

TALLY	
Total Seats	117
Elections held	116
Results declared	116
SAD	48
BJP	19
Congress	44
Others	5

Mukhmilpur, Harmel Singh Tohra, Raja Narinder Singh, Gaganjit Singh Barnala, Prem Singh Chandumajra, Baldev Singh Mann, Gurdev Singh Badal, Gobind Singh Kanjha, Malkit Singh Keetu, Gobind Singh Longowal, Hari Singh Zira, Tota Singh, Mantar Singh Brar, Sikander Singh Maluka and Balwinder Singh Bhunder.
Continued on page 17 col 1
● Edit: Congress loses Punjab



Sidhu humbles Singla

Report on page 5

■ **Price rise behind poll debacle: Cong** P 24

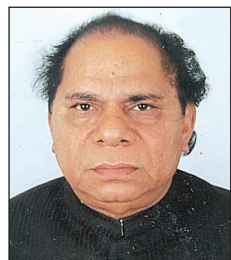
BIG guns lose



Bibi Jagir Kaur
 SAD (Bholath)



S.S. Dullu
 Cong (Khanna)



Jagjit Singh
 Cong (Kartarpur)



Jagmohan S. Kang
 Cong (Morinda)



Tota Singh
 SAD (Moga)

Badal kin saga continues

SARBJIT DHALIWAL/TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 27

It is a mixed bag as far as performance of close relations of political leaders is concerned. Capt Kanwaljit Singh from Banur won with a convincing margin but his son Jasjit Singh Bunny lost to Balbir Singh Sidhu from Kharar.

Almost all close relations of Parkash Singh Badal won from various segments. His nephew Manpreet Singh Badal won from Gidderbaha and his son-in-law Adesh Singh Kairon from Patti. His other relative Birkram Singh won from

Dalit biggies bite dust

Majitha and Janmeja Singh Sekhon from Ferozepore. Jagbir Singh Brar won from Jalandhar cantonment.

Swarna Ram from Phagwara and his son Mohan Lal from Banga also sailed through. Rajinder Kaur Bhattal and his brother Kuldeep Singh Bhattal won from Lehra and Dhanula segments.

However, Simranjit Singh Mann and his son Iman Singh were defeated. Vidhan Sabha Speaker Dr Kewal Krishan's son Rajnish Kumar lost to BJP candidate Arunesh Shakar in Mukerian.

Tej Parkash Singh, son of the late Beant Singh, won from Payal but his sister Gukanwal Kaur was defeated in Jalandhar cantonment. Partap Singh Bajwa won from Kahnauw but his brother Fateh Jang was defeated in Hargobindpur.

Senior Dalit leaders also suffered defeat. The most important among them is Shamsher Singh Dullu, who lost to little-known SAD candidate Bikramjit Singh Khalsa in Khanna. Choudhury Jagjit Singh and his brother Santokh Singh were defeat-

ed in their respective constituencies. Mohinder Singh Kaypee also suffered defeat in Jalandhar. Sardul Singh lost to Malkiat Singh in Jandiala. Malkiat Singh Dakha has lost.

Senior Akali Dalit leader, Mr Gurdev Singh, has been defeated in Panjgrain. Other Akali Dalit leaders who were defeated are Gobind Singh Kanjha, Satwant Kaur Sandhu, Satinder Kaur Dhaliwal and Gura Singh Tungwali. The only Christian candidate, Abraham Irshad, put up by the Congress in Dhariwal lost to Sucha Singh Langah. Many relatively young Dalit leaders such as Makhan Singh emerged winners.

Manipur for Cong-CPI

IMPHAL, FEBRUARY 27

Manipur offered a consolation prize to the Congress as the party in alliance with the CPI gained absolute majority in the ninth assembly elections. Halting the anti-incumbency wave in Punjab and Uttarakhand, the Congress on its own won 30 seats in a house of 60 while the Communist Party of India bagged four. Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh's charisma proved magic for the party as it snuffed out the Opposition challenge convincingly. — UNI

Photo on page 2

TALLY	
Total seats	60
Seats declared	60
Congress	29
NCP	06
CPI	04
RJD	03
Manipur People's Party	05
National People's Party	03
Independents	10

BJP whacks Congress in Uttarakhand

RAJU WILLIAM/TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DEHRADUN, FEBRUARY 27

But for the one seat the BJP, which has emerged as the single largest party, fell short of getting majority in the Uttarakhand Assembly elections. Faced with hung verdict, the party has become dependent on the outside support to form the new government. The BJP led the final tally by winning 34 seats out of 69 Assembly constituencies whose results were declared here today. The Congress, which had 40 members in the previous Assembly, was voted out of power as it won only 21 seats this time.

The BSP won eight seats while three seats each went to the kitty of the Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (UKD) and the independents. In the 70-member Assembly, election for the Bazzpur constituency was countermanded due to the death of the Congress candidate in a road accident.



B.C. Khanduri: likely CM

The final picture would have been different, had the BJP won from the Pauri constituency where its candidate Tirath Singh lost by just 11 votes to an independent, Yashpal Benaam, despite recounting. But the state BJP chief and former Chief Minister Bhagat Singh Koshyari told TNS that they

TALLY	
Total seats	70
Election held	69
BJP	34
Congress	21
BSP	8
Independents	3
UKD	2
Outstanding	1
Total	69

had been assured of the outside support to form the government.

The verdict showed the voters confidence in the BJP, he said before rushing to Delhi for the meeting of his party high command to discuss the nitty-gritty of the government formation.

Former Union minister B.C. Khanduri is likely to be the Chief Minister of the
Continued on page 17 col 1
● Edit: Uttarakhand goes to BJP

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