

How the BJP overcame crisis in farm sector

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In spite of a national agrarian crisis, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) not only emerged victorious in the 2019 general elections, but even expanded its voter base in rural areas, suggests new research.

According to a new study, the BJP has managed to consolidate votes among the rural poor and farmers, while shedding its image of being an urban party.

In the study, Diego Maiorano uses post-poll survey data collected by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) to show that the BJP's support base in rural areas cut across class and castes, with

the party gaining the most among big farmers and agricultural labourers, the extremes of the class ladder.

He argues that the BJP's popularity in rural areas suggests that the party can no longer be categorized as an urban and upper-class party. He suggests that this 'ruralization and proletarianization of the BJP' is a long-term trend, which began in the 1990s.

In the recent elections, the BJP was able to secure such a large rural mandate even as an

agrarian slump triggered nationwide farm protests because it succeeded in conveying the party's commitment towards the welfare of the rural poor and farmers.

This welfare took the form of programmes, such as cash

transfers to farmers, providing cooking fuel and electricity connections, and constructing toilets and houses.



BJP has managed to consolidate votes among the rural poor and farmers, shows a study.

Other major factors, such as Narendra Modi's popularity, the party's financial resources and the opposition's inability to capitalize on major issues

and the convergence of the rural-urban divide also worked in favour of the BJP.

Also read: *The 2019 Indian Elections and the Ruralization of the BJP* (bit.ly/2CWGogq)

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