

PUNJAB POST POLL - SURVEY





PEOPLES PULSE
an ear to the ground

POST-POLL SURVEY

PUNJAB REPORT

(23rd February to 1st March, 2022)

PEOPLES PULSE

Flat No. 402, Surabhi Complex, Opp. Lotus Hospital, Lakdikapul, Hyderabad - 500 004
peoplespulse.hyd@gmail.com

SAMPLE PROFILE:
TOTAL SAMPLE - 2500

| GENDER | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Male | 53 % |
| Female | 47 % |

| AGE | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| 18-25 years | 25 % |
| 26-35 years | 30 % |
| 36-45 years | 25 % |
| 46-60 years | 15 % |
| 60 & Above | 5 % |

| RELIGION WISE SAMPLE | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Sikhs | 58 % |
| Hindus | 40 % |
| Others | 2 % |

| COMMUNITY WISE SAMPLE | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| SC | 30 % |
| Jat Sikhs | 20 % |
| OC | 12 % |
| OBC's | 30 % |
| Others | 8 % |

AAP HOLDS THE EDGE IN PUNJAB

The cyclical election results in Punjab after almost every Assembly election would take in an exception where the AAP is holding the edge in the 2022 Assembly elections. It might well be the first time that a regional party would be in power in two different states.

AAP is set to win 59 to 66 Assembly seats this time in a House of 117 members. The Congress to win 23 to 28 seats. The Shiromani Akali Dal would win 17 to 21 seats. The BJP would get two to six seats.

Coming to the vote share the AAP is leading over the Congress by ten per cent – 40 per cent to 30 per cent. The SAD and allies would poll around 20 per cent. The BJP and allies would be around eight per cent. The others would be at two per cent.

When compared to the 2017 elections the AAP has boosted its vote share to 40 per cent from 23 per cent with a net gain of 17 per cent. The Congress vote share has shrunk to 30 per cent from 38.5 per cent, a reduction of 8.5 per cent.

It is important to mention that in any survey a five per cent plus or minus error needs to be factored in both the projection of seats and vote share.

Hyderabad based political research organisation, Peoples Pulse, and satellite news channel, K News India, conducted a post-poll survey in Punjab from 23 February to 1 March.

Peoples Pulse conducted the post-poll survey in 25 Assembly constituencies. The Probability Proportional to Size methodology was adopted. Five polling stations were selected in each Assembly constituency by systematic random sampling method. A sample of 20-25 voters were selected from each polling station with representation reflecting the situation on the field. Face to face interviews and secret ballot formed the content of the survey.

On the issue of choice for the next chief minister, Mr Bhagwant Mann of AAP is leading the pack with 39 per cent of the respondents preferring him. The Congress Mr Charanjit Singh Channi comes next with 30 per cent. The SAD's Mr Sukhbir Singh Badal is at 20 per cent. Capt Amrinder Singh is at 3 per cent. Navjot Singh Sidhu is at 6 per cent.

The main election issues are Price rice, unemployment, MSP, delivery of justice in the sacrilege cases, illegal sand mining, liquor mafia, drug menace, corruption and rising states debt.

Of the three regions, the AAP is leading in Malwa region, the AAP is holding the Congress in a tight contest in Doaba region and AAP and SAD are facing off in Majha region.

AAP is apparently gaining strength from the predominant voter sentiment of 'Badlav' (change). Another aspect that demands attention is there are 63 per cent swing seats that change every election.

What seemed to be working in AAP's favour is the anti-incumbency against the Congress and also against the SAD. These two parties which have been in power since the state's formation. The AAP has not been in the power and has most of the party candidates being new to politics bring in freshness. The party has also tried to sell its 'Delhi model' of growth, promising to improve education and health. The party was the first to raise the drug issue in big way in 2014 and then in 2017.

The Congress and the SAD lack this freshness which brings to the voter's memory their alleged acts of omission and commission when they were in power. AAP this time has also learnt a lesson from the last time as it has kept away from the Canada or USA based non-resident Indians and Sikh diaspora. The party has also projected as the chief minister candidate, Mr Bhagwant Mann, a Jat Sikh who is a two time MP with no baggage of allegations. This clarity has helped AAP as there is no apprehension that Kejriwal, a Haryanvi, would be the chief minister.

The attitude of ruling parties particularly in states facing cyclical elections is a smugness that come what may, they will come to power the next time. But there comes a time when such take-it-for-granted attitude puts them out of the picture.

Would Channi Factor work in favour of the Congress?

Mr. Charanjit Singh Channi is the 'accidental' chief minister of Punjab. He was declared as the chief minister face of the Congress party, hoping that he would get numerically strong scheduled castes (32 percent) consolidated/mobilised in favour of the Congress. There are 54 constituencies where Dalits are more than 30 per cent. However, the scheduled castes divided in to 39 castes and having different religious allegiances do not seem to have voted en masse in favour of the Congress.

The Dalit vote so far has remained fractured mainly along religious lines, going to the Congress and Akali Dal whereas the other claimant, the BSP has been in a state of terminal decline, polling less than 5% of the vote and no seat in the last three and four Assembly elections, respectively.

Congress party strategy to present the Channi government as a new government and blaming the non-performance of the party during the 4 years and 8 months of its rule on the leadership of Captain Amarinder Singh hardly enthused the electorates.

The Congress would be getting majority only if the Dalits get around behind Channi. Does not look like happening. Dera Sacha Sauda has helped the SAD. At the same time Dera Sacha Ballan, a Ravidassia Dera, is reportedly went in favour of the Congress in Doaba region mainly due to Channi factor. However, in Doaba region, having strong presence of Dalits, the Congress would surely gain in the region.

Shiromani Akali Dal

Shiromani Akali Dal even last time got 24 percent of the vote facing huge anti-incumbency factor. So it would be incorrect to rule out SAD completely. This time it was in alliance with the BSP but not with the BJP. So caste Hindu votes might have not gone for the Panthic party but due to the BSP factor and also on its own must have got the Dalit Sikh votes.

What goes in favour of the SAD is the party having clear leadership in the form of Badals so no factional fight in the party unlike the Congress. Moreover, the hundred years old party has organisational presence in the rural Punjab. Being the historically recognised as the party which would be self-proclaimed the only party to stand for the social, religious and political cause of the Sikhs not only in Punjab but elsewhere also. So the party is bound to gain Sikh votes especially Jatt Sikhs.

What goes against the party is the accusation of some of the party leaders being complicit in drug and sand, transport, cable mafias. Then the incidents of sacrilege followed by firing on protesting Sikhs continue to haunt the party.

The party when in NDA had supported the three contentious farm laws. Though the party did the course correction by breaking away and extending support to the farmers movement still face the blame of not standing with the Sikh landholding farmers, considered the core social constituency of the party in the earlier elections. The party leader Sukhbir Badal has not been able to gain the leadership effect like his ageing father Parkash Singh Badal. The nepotism within the party as Badals and other leaders promoted their own families undermine the party image as a cadre based party.

The party performance when in power during 2007 to 2017 was not up to the mark and this would continue to harm the party electorally. Rise of the AAP and the party getting Sikh vote in Malwa region is going to harm the SAD most as these Sikh votes were not expected to go the Congress way.

BJP

The BJP could not make much headway in the state in terms of the broadening of its support base even after sharing the power with the SAD during 1997-2002 and during 2007 -2017. The party was kept confined to 23 seats and could never get more than 10 percent of the vote. Even the urban Hindu votes have been going to the Congress. The farm laws brought by the Modi government and the farmers movement brought the farmers on the street against the BJP leaders whose houses became the places of dharana and sloganeering. The breakup with the SAD has allowed the party to contest from more than 60 seats for the first time. The urban Hindu voters have been mobilised by the party on the issue of national security and terrorism.

Samyukta Samaj Morcha (SSM)

The farmers movement saw twenty two farmers unions of the state entering into electoral arena alone after the talks with the AAP failed to materialise. The performance of the SSM may have electoral implications in a multi-cornered contest as in the last Assembly election, there were 16 constituencies where the margin of win was less than two percent in 2017 assembly elections. The vote to SSM would harm the Akali Dal as well as the AAP.

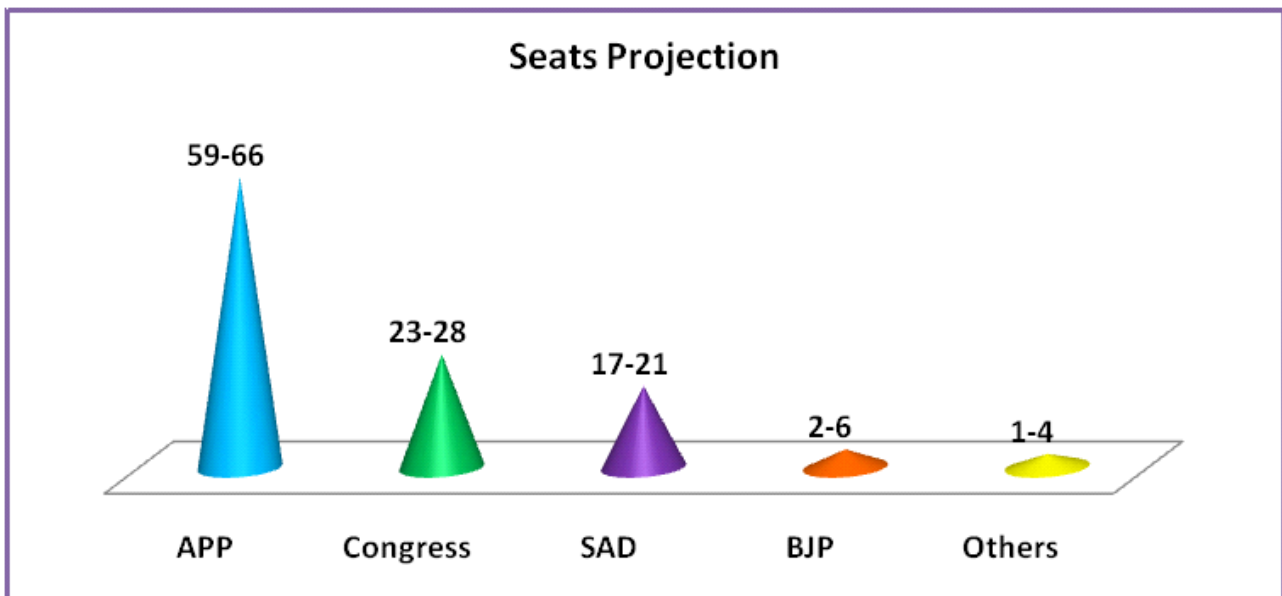


FINDINGS

SEATS PROJECTION

| S.No. | Party | Seats Projection |
|-------|----------|------------------|
| 1 | AAP | 59 - 66 |
| 2 | Congress | 23 - 28 |
| 3 | SAD | 17 - 21 |
| 4 | BJP | 2 - 6 |
| 5 | Others | 1 - 4 |

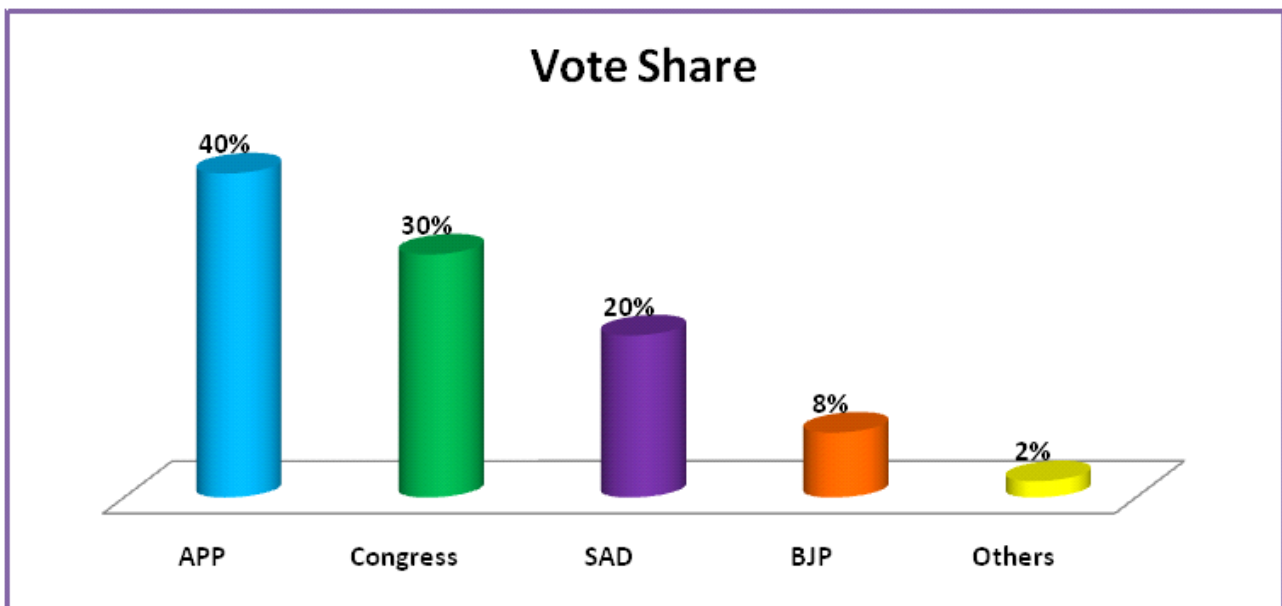
◆ Margin of error - Plus or Minus Five per cent



VOTE SHARE

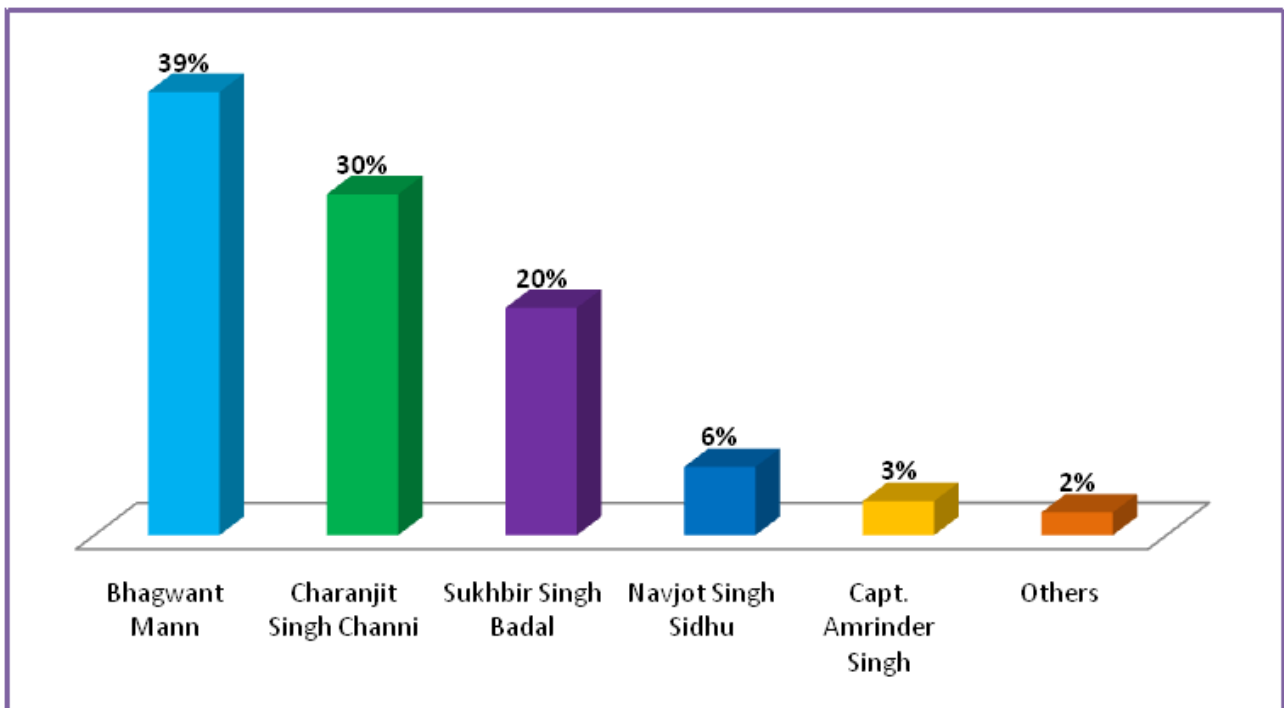
| S.No. | Party | Vote Share |
|-------|----------|------------|
| 1 | AAP | 40 % |
| 2 | Congress | 30 % |
| 3 | SAD | 20 % |
| 4 | BJP | 8 % |
| 5 | Others | 2 % |

◆ Margin of error - Plus or Minus Five per cent



CHIEF MINISTER CHOICE

| Next Chief Minister | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------|
| Bhagwant Mann | 39 % |
| Charanjit Singh Channi | 30 % |
| Sukhbir Singh Badal | 20 % |
| Navjot Singh Sidhu | 6 % |
| Capt. Amrinder Singh | 3 % |
| Others | 2 % |





PEOPLES PULSE

an ear to the ground

Flat No.402, Surabhi Complex, Opp. Lotus Hospital,
Lakdikapool, Khairathabad, Hyderabad - 500004.
peoplespulse.hyd@gmail.com