A SWOT analysis of Oppn prospects

A meeting of Opposition parties in Patna was a good start. But to put up a credible challenge to the BJP, the alliance must study its strengths and weaknesses.

A mega meeting of 15 Opposition parties last week in Patna was a positive development. However, for the Alliance of United Left parties and the Congress, it made three things clear. First, with less than a year to go for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, a unified regional grouping without the Congress seems like a thing of the past.

Second, parties that didn’t attend the event cannot be sidelined. The Janata Dal (United), Tamil Nadu Congress Party, Akali Dal and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) are all part of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Bihar assembly. In the run-up to the elections, all these parties must be considered potential contenders for seats in the state.

The parties will again meet in Bihar in July to discuss a strategy for taking on the BJP. They might want to conduct a thorough SWOT analysis to understand their chances. Strengths: Arun Jaitley’s last-minute push could boost the AIADMK. Weaknesses: The anti-BJP sentiment in the state is strong, and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is well organized.

Opportunity: The upcoming assembly elections in states such as Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal will surely hurt the BJP, but the quantum of the loss is not yet known. It could be very much like the Uttar Pradesh (UP) of 2017, where the swing against the BJP was significant.

Threats: The conclusion of the coalitions despite backing the BJP in the Parliament in the past is important. The Congress will be keen to get its support from the Mahatma Gandhi (MG) party. The NDA’s rise in states like Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Assam, and the ABP’s win in bypolls, could also have a negative impact on the Congress.

Weakness: Finance. The Opposition parties have a strong hold on the economy, with the NDA’s benchmark of 8% GDP growth largely falling short. The AIADMK under Sasikala Natarajan’s leadership is also floundering. The Congress does not have a clear plan to address the economic crisis.

Opportunity: People. The NDA has been working hard to win the support of the masses. The AIADMK under Sasikala Natarajan’s leadership is also floundering. The Congress does not have a clear plan to address the economic crisis.

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