

The Influence of the Tribal Dominant Constituencies in the Voting Patterns of Jharkhand Elections – Insights from the 2024 Assembly Elections

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Abstract: *Jharkhand is a state where a substantial 26.2 percent of the population is that of the tribals. The indigenous communities of the state comprising thirty-two tribes have a dominant say in the state not only in terms of numbers but also when it comes to deciding the political leadership. The Jharkhand Assembly elections, the results of which were announced on November 13, 2024, bring to light this fact. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) Party — a regional party founded by Disom Guru Shibu Soren (father of Chief Minister Hemant Soren) — won a substantial thirty-four seats out of the total 56 seats won by its allies in the 81-member Jharkhand State Assembly. The win, considered a landslide victory for the JMM and its allies, raises a pertinent question: Is it only the core tribal seats deciding the political fate of the state or do the “tribal dominant” seats also play a pivotal role? This paper not only defines such seats but also finds an answer by taking a reality check on their contribution in shaping the political destiny of Jharkhand. The paper employs a descriptive quantitative analysis of secondary electoral data spanning 2005–2024, using constituency-level census and Election Commission data. The central finding is that ST Dominant seats — those with 20% or more tribal population but without formal reservation — are co-decisive with ST Reserved seats in government formation.*

Keywords: *ST Dominant, Scheduled Tribe, Constituencies, Reservation, JMM, Delimitation, Ethnic Voting, Psephology.*