

1. **parting** (noun) – separation, break-up, splitting up.
2. **resolve** (noun) – decision, resolution, commitment.
3. **meltdown** (noun) – collapse, complete failure, decline.
4. **sweeping** (adjective) – decisive, overwhelming, complete/total.
5. **wrest** (verb) – snatch/seize, grab; take something (power) after some difficulty.
6. **helm** (noun) – responsible, in authority, in charge.
7. **animosity** (noun) – hostility, antagonism, enmity/aversion.
8. **mirror** (verb) – reflect, echo, match/follow.
9. **aggregate** (verb) – collect, combine, group.
10. **a host of** (noun) – lot, large number, great quantity.
11. **populist** (adjective) – relating to the politicians who claim that they are representing the common/ordinary people.
12. **woo** (verb) – try to attract, seek the support of, seek the favour of.
13. **bury the hatchet** (phrase) – end a quarrel or conflict; pardon, forgive.
14. **in the making** (phrase) – developing, coming/burgeoning, up and coming.
15. **cabal** (noun) – group, clique, sect.
16. **profiteering** (noun) – an act of making an excessive/illegal profit.
17. **emptiness** (noun) – aimlessness, uselessness, futility.
18. **laterally** (adverb) – sideways, from the sides.
19. **mock** (verb) – ridicule, make fun of, insult/taunt.
20. **shake up** (phrasal verb) – reorganize/restructure, transform/reform, overhaul.
21. **no match to** (phrase) – unable to compete successfully with the other.
22. **ideological** (adjective) – dogmatic, doctrinal.
23. **might** (noun) – strength, force, power.
24. **rally** behind (verb) – come/get together, combine, unite.
25. **welfarism** (noun) – the principles/policies of a welfare state.
26. **cut across** (phrasal verb) – transcend, go beyond, rise above.
27. **degeneration** (noun) – drop, decline, decay.
28. **glaring** (adjective) – obvious, flagrant, blatant.
29. **fissure** (noun) – a state of incompatibility; disagreement, gap/crack.
30. **erstwhile** (adjective) – old, previous, former.
31. **cadre** (noun) – group, team, corps.
32. **tide** (noun) – movement, direction, turn.
33. **assumption** (noun) – belief, inference, thought.
34. **churn** (noun) – disorder, confusion, mess up.
35. **last** (verb) – exist, continue, keep going.

## A parting note: on SP-BSP alliance

**The BSP's resolve to go it alone in the U.P. by-polls does not come as a surprise**

The Opposition appears to be in meltdown mode following the BJP's sweeping victory in the Lok Sabha election. **Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati** announced on Tuesday

that her party's alliance with the [Samajwadi Party](#) stands terminated for now, and that it would contest the coming by-polls in 11 Assembly constituencies in Uttar Pradesh on its own. The SP and the BSP were rival poles in U.P. politics until the 2017 Assembly elections, when the BJP wrested power with an impressive majority. Ms. Mayawati and the Yadav family at the helm of the SP had a long history of mutual animosity, which also mirrored the tense relations between Dalits and Other Backward Classes, their respective social bases. With their very existence under threat from the BJP's ability to aggregate a host of populist issues around the Hindutva theme and woo Dalit and OBC caste groups, the BSP and the SP buried the hatchet to form an alliance, which included the Rashtriya Lok Dal, ahead of the Lok Sabha election. The alliance appeared to be doing well with victories in three key by-elections, but the general election results came as a rude surprise for them. They won only 15 of U.P.'s 80 seats, while the BJP took 62. The vote share of the alliance was significantly lower than the combined strength of the individual parties in 2014.

It should not have come as such a surprise. The collapse of backward caste politics has been in the making in U.P. Voters had begun to view the BSP, the SP and the RLD as cabals for good reason. Numerous members of the two families had captured power using the SP and the RLD as vehicles of personal profiteering. Slogans of social justice could no longer hide the emptiness of their politics. Transfer of power from generation to generation and laterally to a host of relatives did not merely mock the ideal of social justice but also questioned the public's common sense. With voters waiting for an opportunity to shake them up, the SP, the BSP and the RLD were no match to the BJP's ideological, organisational and monetary might. Ms. Mayawati rightly pointed out that Yadavs, the core base of the SP, did not rally behind it this time. Similar was the case with Jats, the RLD's core base. The appeal of the BJP's Hindutva and the welfarism agenda cut across castes, but the degeneration of backward caste politics enhanced it. Ms. Mayawati has not ruled out the possibility of an [alliance with the SP](#) in future. The dominance of upper castes in the BJP is too glaring to be missed, and caste fissures could return. But in their present form the SP and the RLD do not inspire trust among erstwhile supporters, though the BSP cadre is relatively more committed. The rising tide of Hindutva has challenged long-held assumptions in politics and the churn could last a while.