



The Complete Collapse of Stalinist and Reformist Left Parties across India Indian Elections (April–May 2026)

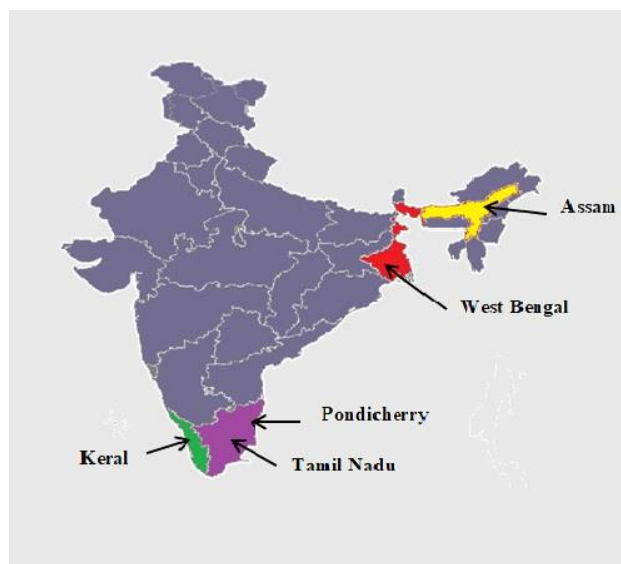
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The recent elections in India were held across five states of the world's largest democracy. Some of these states are among the most densely populated and politically significant regions in the country.

These states are:

1. Assam
2. West Bengal
3. Kerala
4. Tamil Nadu
5. Pondicherry



Brief Introduction to Indian Politics

Since independence, Indian politics has largely revolved around the secular Indian National Congress at the national level and various Stalinist, reformist, and nationalist parties in different states. Parties such as the Communist Party of India operated within the framework of the Indian Constitution and

supported a mixed economic system consisting of both public and private sectors.

India's political system, democratic institutions, and civil structure largely continued the framework inherited from British colonial rule. Rapid population growth became one of the major obstacles to economic progress, alongside limitations imposed by the private sector economy and prolonged conflicts with Pakistan and China. These conflicts consumed a significant portion of India's economic resources through an ongoing arms race. The central dispute between India and Pakistan remained the Kashmir issue, with both countries claiming the region as their own.

Before British colonization, the Indian subcontinent consisted of territories that now include India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar (Burma), and parts of Afghanistan. These regions were divided into numerous small kingdoms and states, each with its own language, culture, and political structure. British colonialism unified these territories under one administration and later partitioned them into separate countries. Modern India, as a unified state, emerged during British rule.

This historical background explains why separatist movements continue to exist in both India and Pakistan, with New Delhi and Islamabad often responding through the use of state power.

At the national level, the Congress Party remained dominant for decades but failed to significantly improve the living conditions of ordinary people. In several states, Communist and nationalist parties gained influence. In West Bengal, the

Communist Party governed for nearly thirty-four uninterrupted years, yet failed to establish meaningful working-class control over the economy or political structure.

When these secular and reformist parties failed to bring structural change, the Congress Party introduced neoliberal economic reforms in the 1990s, shifting India from a mixed economy toward a market-oriented capitalist system. Public-sector industries increasingly moved into private hands. While the economy grew overall, much of the wealth remained concentrated in the private sector, and the hardships faced by ordinary people intensified.

This situation was effectively exploited by the far-right religious nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Like many right-wing populist movements around the world, the BJP promoted divisions and hostility among religious communities. The party increasingly pushed India away from secularism toward religious nationalism. Its slogan that “Hindu rule will ensure the prosperity of Hindus” deeply affected India’s social and cultural fabric.

Recent Elections

1. Assam

In Assam, the NDA alliance led by the BJP was declared victorious. Since the BJP was already governing the state, the election result allowed the party to retain power.

2. West Bengal

West Bengal, with a population of nearly 106 million, holds immense political importance in India. The state was once a major stronghold of the CPI, which governed uninterrupted for thirty-four years. In 2011, however, the CPI government was defeated by the secular All India Trinamool Congress (TMC), marking a major setback for the Communist movement in the state.

Since 2011, the TMC has remained in power, while the CPI has continued to lose political ground. In the 2026 elections, the CPI — in what was once considered its political heartland — managed to secure only a single seat.

A record voter turnout of 93.71% was reported. The BJP, already in power at the national level, focused heavily on winning Bengal. According to critics, the party relied on its usual strategy of promoting communal divisions, particularly targeting Muslims. Indian election commission deleted 10 million voters from the list, including 2.7 million voters who challenged their disqualification were not even heard by the commission.

At the same time, the BJP ran an extremely organized and targeted election campaign, identifying weaknesses within the TMC and exploiting them effectively. As a result, a state once associated with Left-oriented politics shifted decisively toward the BJP. This clearly reflects a rejection of reformist Communist politics and demonstrates that reformism without structural transformation cannot sustain itself politically.

Following the election victory, reports of attacks against Muslim communities were also recorded.

3. Kerala

Kerala had long been another stronghold of Communist politics under the Left Democratic Front (LDF), which included both the CPI and CPM. For more than three decades, Kerala remained the final major Communist-led state in India.

However, in the recent elections, the secular United Democratic Front (UDF) decisively defeated the LDF. The UDF won 102 seats, while the LDF secured only 35 seats.

4. Tamil Nadu

In Tamil Nadu, a new left-centrist party known as TVK emerged as a major political force. The party was founded just two years ago by popular actor Joseph Vijay.

Out of 234 seats, TVK won 108 seats, while the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) secured 73 seats. The DMK had governed the state for nearly twenty-five years.

5. Pondicherry

In Pondicherry, voter turnout reached a record 89.87%. The NDA alliance led by the BJP won the elections and retained control of the territory.

Conclusion

Today, there is no longer a single Indian state governed by Communist parties. This marks a major shift in Indian politics and effectively ends nearly fifty years of Communist rule in different parts of India. The central question is: why did this happen?

According to this analysis, one major reason is the failure of these parties to critically examine the collapse of the USSR and China's transition toward capitalism. Had these developments been understood realistically and addressed politically, the outcome may not have resulted in the near-total collapse of Communist influence in India.

The failure of Stalinism in the Soviet Union eventually paved the way for capitalism. Instead of dismantling bureaucratic control and transferring power to workers, many party elites sought personal control over state-owned industries and later benefited from their privatization. Similar developments occurred in China and elsewhere.

Over the past thirty-five years, Communist parties in India increasingly focused on electoral alliances and power-sharing arrangements with capitalist and right-wing parties. In the author's view, they failed to push for revolutionary reforms or establish genuine workers' control in either governance or the economy.

Decision-making also remained centralized within party leaderships, with ordinary supporters and voters excluded

from meaningful participation. Without structural transformation, public frustration grew, and many voters eventually shifted toward far-right politics. This shift suggests that decades of Communist rule failed to fundamentally transform political consciousness at the mass level.

This represents not only the failure of Stalinist ideology, but also the broader collapse of reformism on a global scale. According to this perspective, the Left must now abandon outdated political methods and develop new revolutionary strategies that ensure democratic workers' control in workplaces, political parties, and government institutions alike.

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