

Congress says JD-S divided 'secular votes'

The Congress Sunday blamed the 'division of the secular votes' for its defeat in Karnataka.

According to Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan, the party general secretary in charge of the Karnataka election, the Janata Dal-Secular (JD-S) 'divided' the secular votes helping the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to take the top position in the 224-member assembly.

'Getting a clear majority was not feasible because of the split in the polity. The secular votes of the Congress are getting divided,' Chavan told reporters here.

Chavan, the minister of state in the Prime Minister's Office, pointed out that although the JD-S seats had come down, the party's vote share remained the same.

The JD-S, which had 58 seats in the former assembly, could end up with around 40 seats. The BJP won 79 seats in 2004 and was leading in around 110 seats before noon Sunday.

Chavan said the delay in the implementation of the delimitation process also attributed to the party's poor performance in the southern state.

'There are two things (that went wrong). The delimitation was announced fairly late. We needed time to revise the voters' list but (we did not get the time).'

Congress spokesperson Abishek Singhvi was of the view that the Congress and the JD-S - which could end up as the second and third largest parties in the assembly - should form an alliance to form the government.

'Politics is all about reality. You have two options - go for another election or make every attempt to form a government (with the available numbers). There should not be any political vacuum,' Singhvi said.

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