



By: TA | AP Brief

Narendra Modi's coalition leads in a key Indian state election



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling coalition was leading in a key state election Friday, in an early trend seen as a barometer of his **popularity** and the alliance's hold over one of the country's poorest yet most politically influential states.

Partial results from the Election Commission of India, the country's election watchdog, showed the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance, or NDA, expected to take 200 seats of the 243-member legislature in the eastern state of Bihar.

A simple majority to form the government is 122. Modi's party alone is forecast to take 90 seats.

Hard-fought campaigns

A victory in Bihar, the country's third-most populous state with nearly 130 million people, is crucial as it sends the fourth-highest number of lawmakers to the lower house of parliament.

Its control strengthens the party in power as the state is seen as a political bellwether, setting political trends across India's Hindi-speaking heartland.

This year, the two-phased election was held amid widespread public concerns over unemployment, law and order, and alleged irregularities in revision of electoral rolls.

It saw hard-fought campaigns marked by mass rallies, aggressive welfare messaging and personal outreach to voters, both by Modi and his **opponents**.

As the NDA led in the initial counting, celebrations erupted in the state capital, Patna, with supporters waving party flags, dancing to the beats of drums and setting off firecrackers.