The observation of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the NDA meeting in the Parliament House soon after winning elections is generally true of the country, but it has a special relevance to the state of Haryana. He had underlined three factors that did not play a role in elections this time – inflation, casteism and corruption. Mapping the results in Haryana throws up some interesting insights.

The caste system is endemic in Haryana. Ever since Bansi Lal took over as the chief minister of the state way back in 1966, the caste factor has been gaining evermore ground. What went on covertly became almost an open policy with Devi Lal and his dynasty. Weaning the community away from the caste bias was never considered possible. The way voters chose to sideline the twin Lok Dal factions as also Jat contestants from the Congress and the so-called backward castes/classes chose to align themselves with other castes has been no less than a miracle. How one wishes this caste-neutral, unifying tendency to perpetuate! That will mean unprecedented social harmony and consequent tremendous progress on all the fronts.

It was also seen that money could not buy the votes. The sporadic crackdown on unaccounted cash flows during the election period in Karnataka and some other states did send out a general alert to the practitioners of old-style politics. However, even if liquor and money were distributed on the sly, the beneficiaries still did not oblige the benefactors. It was political maturity over material benefit that played its part. A rude shock to the money bags indeed!

The question naturally arises: how did it become possible? It was not merely the Modi mantra, it was also the working style of the present CM
Manohar Lal Khattar, who was hand-picked by PM Modi. Both had been RSS pracharaks and in that capacity had worked together for a long time. Like Modi’s, his family too leads life in a simple manner. He has been able to establish his image as a simple and an honest man.

His record of work has been far better than any of his predecessors. He has faithfully and efficiently implemented various projects. One could see the way construction work was undertaken speedily all over the state. As an example, one can compare the two almost equally long flyovers at Murthal and Bahalgarh in Sonepat district. While the former taken up during the previous Congress regime took four years to build, the latter under the present dispensation took only a year!

Khattar has also run the administration without prejudice for any caste or community. That was unthinkable, so far. Even the Jat community felt absence of any prejudice. Besides, corruption was sought to be banished through transparency and systemic changes like scrapping of weightage to interviews at the cost of merit in job interviews. One could see thousands of young men and women belonging to all castes and communities being inducted into government jobs without paying a penny and going merely by merit. Manohar Lal gained in strength because of his unbiased approach. He refused steadfastly to interfere in the working of government machinery. That was a big clincher.

The electorate in Haryana has behaved in a politically savvy way by even ignoring the shortcomings of some sitting MPs for the sake of having Modi at the helm. For this, the general public deserves kudos. One hopes such leaders will keep in mind the fact that even though the Modi tag has brought them victory, they must prove themselves worthy of the honour by working hard and sincerely to implement Modi’s agenda.