
India's Modi now faces the new challenge of coalition

Your report "The humbling of Narendra Modi" (The Big Read, FT Weekend, June 8) makes several pertinent points and observations about India's recent election.

Narendra Modi has indeed failed to get an overall majority but his Bharatiya Janata party has secured more seats than all the INDIA alliance opposition coalition combined, led by Rahul Gandhi's Indian National Congress. Still, the outcome is seen as a loss of the Modi magic by most observers. Your views on the overconfidence and arrogance of BJP resonate with some Indian political analysts. It's certainly true of the party cadres, but not Modi himself. He campaigned like a man possessed, travelling the country in the sweltering heat, addressing more public meetings than almost anyone.

The challenge of coalition government is indeed new to Modi. The opposition is also energised to contribute to its destabilisation. However, it would be naive to underestimate the prime minister — the most experienced leader of India with a sharp political mind, an indefatigable work ethic, a focus on development and outstanding skills as an orator. The full Modi story is yet to be told. Finally, if this election only proves one thing, it is that democracy in India is alive and kicking!

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