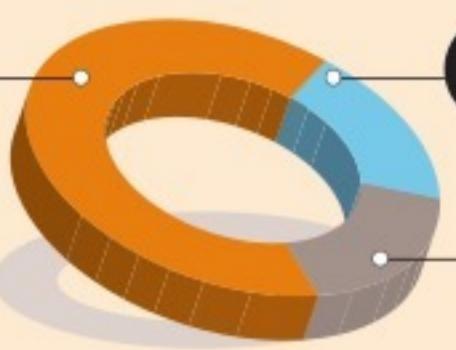




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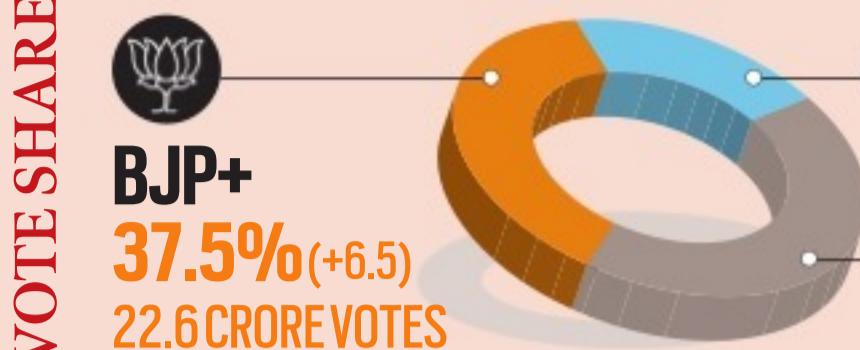


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## Vote surge from 17 cr to 22 cr scripts BJP's historic victory



BJP president Amit Shah at the party headquarters in New Delhi, Thursday

### FULL COVERAGE

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#### THE PM

The rise &amp; rise of Modi, his image of a strong and decisive leader, champion of the poor

PAGE 9

#### THE PARTY

The man &amp; the machine behind stitching up coalitions, choosing right leaders

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#### OPPOSITION

Naamdar lose across non-NDA parties, across states

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#### HEARTLAND

BJP reverses setbacks of the 2018 winter assembly elections

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Modi won because India identifies with him

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#### THE IDEAS PAGE

The leader is the truth

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#### EXPLAINED

Decoding the verdict

MORE ON PAGES 5-22

## Turfed out at home, 19 states/UTs, first rumblings in Cong

MANOJCG  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

Rahul lost to Smriti Irani in Amethi after 15 years

passage to Lok Sabha but his party was trounced, not managing to touch double digits in any state barring Kerala. As he took responsibility for the drubbing, there were indications of unrest

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Tax raid, Kamal Nath link: EC asks for probe by CBI

RITU SARIN  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

THE CONGRESS party's national drubbing at the hands of the BJP and in the state he just won is not the only worry for Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath.

Last week, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) forwarded the recommendation

of the Election Commission for the need of an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to the agency following allegations of huge illegal money transfers done by aides of the Chief Minister who were searched during simultaneous raids conducted in 52 places by the Income Tax Department on April 7, 2019.

According to officials in the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## With 18 seats, 40% vote share, BJP breathes down Trinamool's neck

ABANTIKA GHOSH,  
LIZ MATHEW  
& RAVIK BHATTACHARYA  
NEW DELHI, KOLKATA, MAY 23

FORTRESS BENGAL was considered invincible. So in the run-up to 2019, when BJP president Amit Shah said his party would win 23 of 42 seats in West Bengal, few took him seriously. But Shah and his lieutenants, party general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya and joint general secretary (organisation) Shiv Prakash, kept chipping away before the BJP launched its final onslaught, breaching the Trinamool Congress citadel and making deep inroads.

Turning the TMC war cry on



Outside the BJP office in Kolkata, Thursday. Partha Paul

its head, the BJP replaced "chupchap phule chhap" (quietly vote for the flower) – it had been used by Mamata Banerjee to end 34 years of Left rule in Bengal – to "chupchap kamal chhap" (quietly vote for the lotus).

By 1 am Friday, the BJP had

won 15 seats and was leading in 3 of 42 constituencies, doubling its voteshare in the state from 18 per cent in 2014 (when it won two seats) to over 40 per cent. The TMC had won 17 seats and was ahead in 5 constituencies –

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## NDA schemes resonate in 115 poor districts, bring 60% seats

PAGE 1  
ANCHORSHALINI NAIR  
& KRISHN KAUSHIK  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

THE USE of socio-economic indicators to target the poorest households for its social welfare schemes in rural India appears to have paid dividends for the BJP-led NDA this Lok Sabha elections – it is ahead in 71, or over 60 per cent, seats in constituencies that cover the 115 districts identified by NITI Aayog as "aspirational".

The most number of these districts fall in Bihar (13) and Jharkhand (19), and cover 12 constituencies each. In Bihar, the BJP and allies, JDU and LJP, have won or are leading in all the seats within these districts – even dis-



Celebrations in Ranchi, Thursday. PTI

lodging the RJD in Araria by over 1.3 lakh votes. In Jharkhand, the BJP and allies are ahead in 10 of those 12 seats.

West Bengal, which has five aspirational districts – Murshidabad, Malda, Birbhum, Nadia and Dakshin Dinajpur – the BJP is on course to wrest three seats from the ruling TMC.

The rural household data from the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) has been the basis for the NDA government's outreach to the most backward areas.

For instance, for the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen, the data was used to zero-in on beneficiaries who live in kutch houses or are homeless – unlike

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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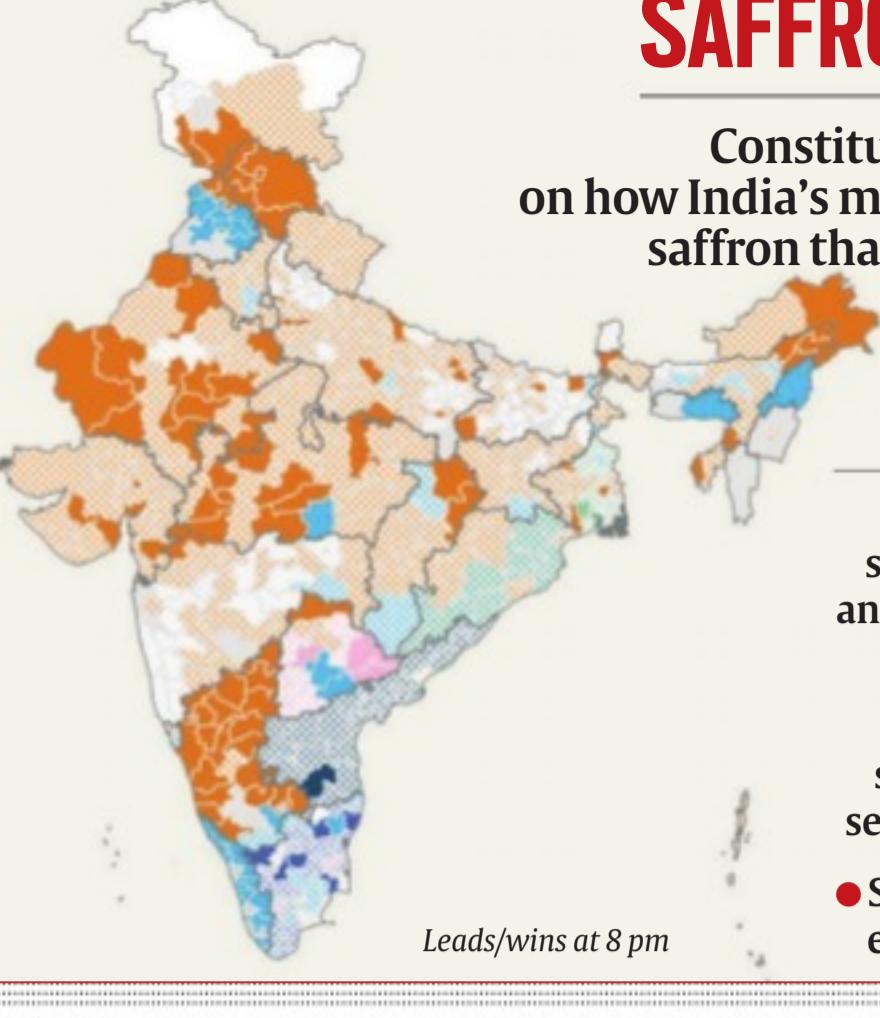
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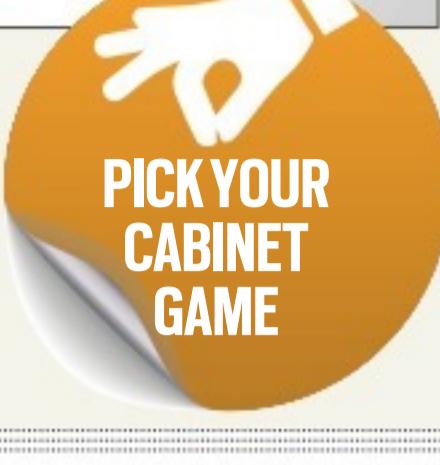
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- ALL THE BUZZ FROM THE STATES

**FROM PAGE ONE****Cong rumblings**

within the party, many targeting Gandhi's team. There were also indications that he could offer to step down when the Congress Working Committee meets.

Several Congress leaders acknowledged that the party had failed to send a message to the young and aspirational India, provide a credible vision or counter-narrative, and played into the hands of the BJP by harping on issues like removal of AFSPA in a campaign driven by hyper-nationalism. They also said the party erred in targeting Narendra Modi, placing him at the centre of the Congress campaign with slogans like 'chowkidar chor hai'.

These leaders are calling for fixing of accountability. At least two leaders said they plan to write to the Congress president, demanding an urgent meeting of the CWC to "discuss what went wrong and the way ahead".

The defeat was so comprehensive that the Congress drew a blank in as many as 19 states and UTs, including Odisha, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and picked up one or two seats in the other states barring Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Punjab. If the party's 15 seats in Kerala and eight each in Tamil Nadu and Punjab are to be discounted, then the tally would have dipped to 20. The Congress, one of its leaders said, has become a South India party. He was not very wrong, Punjab being the only exception where Chief Minister Amarinder Singh held out.

The drubbing was so severe that in the three Hindi heartland states where it returned to power in the assembly elections last winter, the Congress drew a blank in Rajasthan, won only one seat in Madhya Pradesh and managed just two seats in Chhattisgarh. The good showing in Tamil Nadu too came largely with help from the DMK. It could win only one or two seats in state after state, among them Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Bihar, Goa, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

Many of the Congress big guns lost — Malikarjun Kharge and M Veerappa Moily in Karnataka, Digvijaya Singh in Madhya Pradesh, Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Kumari Selja in Haryana, Ashok Chavan and Sushil Kumar Shinde in Maharashtra, Meira Kumar in Bihar, Pawan Kumar Bansal in Chandigarh, Sheila Dikshit and Ajay Maken in Delhi, Salman Khurshid, Raj Babbar and Sri Prakash Jaiswal in Uttar Pradesh.

Many of its younger faces, including the baba log around Gandhi in Lok Sabha, too fell by the wayside — Jyotiraditya Scindia, Sushmita Dev, Deepender Hooda, Milind Deora, RPN Singh and Jitin Prasada.

In Uttar Pradesh, the only seat the Congress could win was that

of Sonia Gandhi in Rae Bareli, making it more than clear that the entry of Priyanka Gandhi into politics and her appointment as AICC general secretary in charge of eastern Uttar Pradesh had no impact whatsoever. So much so that Rahul Gandhi lost in Amethi, a constituency she had nurtured and where she had spent considerable time campaigning.

Gandhi accepted full responsibility for the defeat and congratulated Modi for the BJP's victory. "The people are supreme and they have clearly spelt out their decision today. So first of all, I would like to congratulate Narendra Modi and the BJP. I would like to also thank the Congress candidates who fought with all their might. Our battle is an ideological battle. There are two schools of thought—one represented by Narendra Modi and the BJP and the other by the Congress. Two visions. But we will have to accept that Narendra Modi and the BJP have won in this election," he told reporters.

Asked whether he would step down, he said "we will have a meeting of the Working Committee and we will decide that there." On whether he would offer his resignation at the CWC, he said "that you can leave between me and the Working Committee if possible". He did not go into analysing the results or lack of alliances in many states, saying "today is the day of the mandate and I don't want to colour the decision of the people of India by getting into a long conversation with you about what I think went wrong. Frankly, today, it doesn't matter what I think wrong."

The people of India have decided that Narendra Modi is going to be Prime Minister and as an Indian person, I fully respect that," he said. He asked the Congress rank and file not to lose heart, and claimed that a vast section of the people in the country still follow the Congress ideology and believe in the party. On his defeat in Amethi, he congratulated Smriti Irani and hoped she would "take care of Amethi with love".

The enormity of the defeat became clear, there was churning in the party. "I am not surprised," senior Congress leader Janardan Dwivedi told The Indian Express without elaborating. Senior leader Anand Sharma said "we lost the narrative and there are many things for that matter which should have been seriously reflected upon which I don't want to comment now."

Several other leaders did not, however, hold back. One leader said many seniors had "serious reservations on certain things which were put in the manifesto like dilution of AFSPA and all... in an election fought on hyper-nationalism, Pulwama, Balakot... you are saying that you will remove AFSPA and redeploy the Army... repeat the sedition law. And then you question Balakot and the

titles of the Income Tax reports are as follows: use of unaccounted cash in Madhya Pradesh elections; Transfer of Rs 20 crore cash from residence of Shri Kamal Nath to AICC (All India Congress Committee) headquarters; Unaccounted payments made by Ministers and poll violations having linkage to AICC. The IT reports mention the present of evidence in the form of technical surveillance conducted prior to the searches.

There are lists in the IT reports of alleged payments traced to 11 candidates contesting the Lok Sabha election as well as details of cash payments made to 14 candidates who contested the recent Madhya Pradesh State Assembly election. There is also a list of 11 State Government Departments which have allegedly made payments to accountants of former OSDs of the Chief Minister.

Thus, the EC's letter to the DoPT has noted, "Matters pertaining to the reports of the CBDT requires thorough investigation by an independent agency as it not only affects the purity of the elections, but also indicates a nexus between public servants and politicians for generation of unaccounted money for polluting the electoral environment."

The EC has asked for the CBI to submit an "action taken report" on the CBDT's findings to it every two months.

It was on May 17, 2019 that the DoPT dispatched the EC's recommendation for a CBI inquiry and report to the CBI with instructions that, "the CBI is requested to take action as appropriate on the above communication received from the Election Commission."

**Vote surge from 17 cr to 22 cr scripts BJP's historic victory**

everyone along for the good of the country. We must remember the Constitution is supreme," the Prime Minister added chants of "Modi Modi" by party workers.

Drawing an analogy from the Mahabharata, Modi said, "Just like Lord Krishna said post Kurukshetra battle that he was on the side of Hastinapur, 130 crore Indians have said today, they are on the side of India." Visibly overwhelmed with emotion, Modi told his party men: "In 2014 when I approached you did not know me, but in 2019, you gave me a bigger mandate when you started knowing me. You filled this fakir ki jholi (poor man's bag)."

Calling the victory an emphatic win over dynastic, cast and "appeasement" politics, Modi said to him there are only two castes, those who are poor and those who want to free them from poverty, and that he would work taking both the groups with him.

Modi took a swipe at the Opposition parties who have been trying to bring together a secular front to fight against the BJP. He said the results have "unmasked" the faces of political parties who wore the masks of "secularism" and considered it as a cleansing tool like a dip in the Ganges. "But in this election, not a single party could mislead the country wearing the secular glasses."

Modi also claimed this was the first election that was not centered around a debate on corruption and inflation.

Shah, addressing party workers, welcomed Modi as the "mahanayak" of the party's "mahavijay". (great leader of the grand victory). He ridiculed Opposition parties for their ef-

orts to form an anti-BJP front. He said the Congress could not even "open its account" in a number of states including Delhi, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh.

So sweeping is the BJP's victory in scale and scope, it decisively pushed Congress to the margins of national politics making it struggle to win enough seats to claim the statutory position of the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha.

The jump in the vote share and the absolute addition of votes over 2014 reveals the magnitude of BJP's win. BJP's total vote share increased by a significant 6.5 percentage points compared to 2014. Of the 60.37 crore total votes polled in this election, more than 22.6 crore were for BJP. The total number of votes for BJP rose by 32 per cent or 5.5 crore compared to 17.1 crore votes it had got five years ago.

In contrast, the Congress vote share jumped marginally from 19.3 to 19.6 per cent. In aggregate terms, party added 1.17 crore votes from its 10.69 crore votes in 2014.

The states that had the largest share in BJP's swollen vote share include 17 states/UTs where the party got more than 50 per cent of the total votes this time. The only place where the BJP's votes came down is in Andhra Pradesh where it has fallen by 7.5 percent.

For the Opposition, too, the victory was stunning. Clearly, its narrative of rural distress, effects of demonetisation, depressed commodity prices, joblessness, sluggish private investment and sliding consumption pattern failed to strike chords with voters

across caste, class and geography. Instead, the BJP succeeded in making national pride and Modi's popularity an issue for electoral choices.

The results also marked a full circle for Mandal politics that held sway in vast swathes of country since late '80s and shaped the nature of the Central government since mid-90s. It is best reflected in BJP's success in politically crucial Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka that witnessed a major political realignment against the BJP.

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The verdict also marked the lowest ebb for Left parties which shrunk to their historic low - marking an affirmation of the cultural nationalism that BJP worked its script around.

The verdict also marked the lowest ebb for Left parties which shrunk to their historic low - marking an affirmation of the cultural nationalism that BJP worked its script around. Indeed, the BJP burned its credentials whether it was through the emphasis of nationalism in election campaign or by fielding Pragya Singh Thakur, an accused in terror case, to buttress its Hindu cultural moorings.

Given the demographics of the country and the record number of first-time voters, the BJP's electoral success revealed the growing impatience of dynasty-driven parties and their politics. The way several leaders from the first family of many parties — Congress, SP, TDP, TRS, JD(S) etc — were defeated in different parts of the country, the message is clear: there will be pressure on these parties to recalibrate their membership and leadership

ideas to draw the young in.

The spread of the 2019 results suggests BJP's widening appeal beyond its traditional urban and semi-urban pockets.

This is the second time after 2019 that the BJP has won massively in rural pockets of the Hindi heartland and elsewhere. Apart from holding on to its gains in 2014, the BJP broke fresh ground in new areas, in particular West Bengal where it has traditionally been a fringe player. The BJP, additionally, seems to have shown promise in Odisha and Telangana where its previous successes were made possible only in alliance with its regional partners.

In Odisha, the party's vote share increased by nearly 17 percentage points, jumping to 38 per cent from 21.5 per cent last time. In West Bengal, which saw one of the fiercest electoral battles, BJP's vote share got a 22 percentage points hike, rising to 40 per cent on Thursday from 18 per cent in 2014.

Today's verdict will help BJP make further inroads into other areas, most likely Telangana and Kerala during next five years. The verdict puts traditional parties in these states on notice. In West Bengal, the results suggest that the 2021 Assembly elections could become a direct contest between the incumbent TMC and the BJP. Whether it forces another political realignment is something that will keep the political battlefield in Bengal abuzz.

The BJP's success, however, also revealed its limitations - it didn't strike a resonant chord in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala which accounts for 84 Lok Sabha seats. That's the task cut out for the party, its leaders said today.

Within 11 months of Modi launching the scheme from Ballia in eastern UP in May 2016, the government gave out 2 crore LPG connections. By March 2019, a total of 7.19 crore connections were distributed across 714 of the country's 725 districts.

Sources in the Union Ministry for Petroleum and Natural Gas said that since its launch, "close to Rs 4,500 crore has been transferred to beneficiaries' bank accounts in subsidy". However, there have been complaints that the cost of LPG cylinders are still too high, which has led to slower adoption and fewer refills.

The government also launched a scheme to focus on electrifying all households. Once again using the SECC 2011 data, it identified un-electrified households who will get connections for free, while others could get it for Rs 500, payable in installments later.

Launched by Modi in September 2017, nearly 2.63 crore households have been electrified. As per the Union Ministry of Power's data, only 0.07 per cent of the nation's households — 18,734 — remain without electricity.

These schemes strengthened the BJP in states where it won in 2014, and helped the government make inroads into states where it had not managed to win many seats.

In West Bengal, where BJP had won just Asansol in 2014, the party appears to be gaining about 17 seats this time. Three seats — Ranaghat, Balurghat and Malda Uttar — that fall in aspirational districts, and were earlier held by the TMC, seem to be going the BJP way. Under the Saubhagya scheme, over 10 lakh households in Nadia (Ranaghat), 3.16 lakh households in Dakshin Dinajpur (Balurghat) and 7.6 lakh houses in Malda (Malda Uttar) were electrified.

In Odisha, the BJP is leading in two constituencies that include aspirational districts.

The appeal of the schemes also created goodwill among classes that were not intended beneficiaries. The PM Awas Yojana and Ujjwala scheme, in particular, found widespread resonance across castes, especially in the northern, Hindi-belt states. Even in Rajasthan, where lack of water supply meant that many of the toilets constructed under Swachh Bharat remain unused, the scheme's popularity translated into votes for the BJP.

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# Deposit lost in 3 seats, AAP leaders admit: Mistakes were made, need to introspect

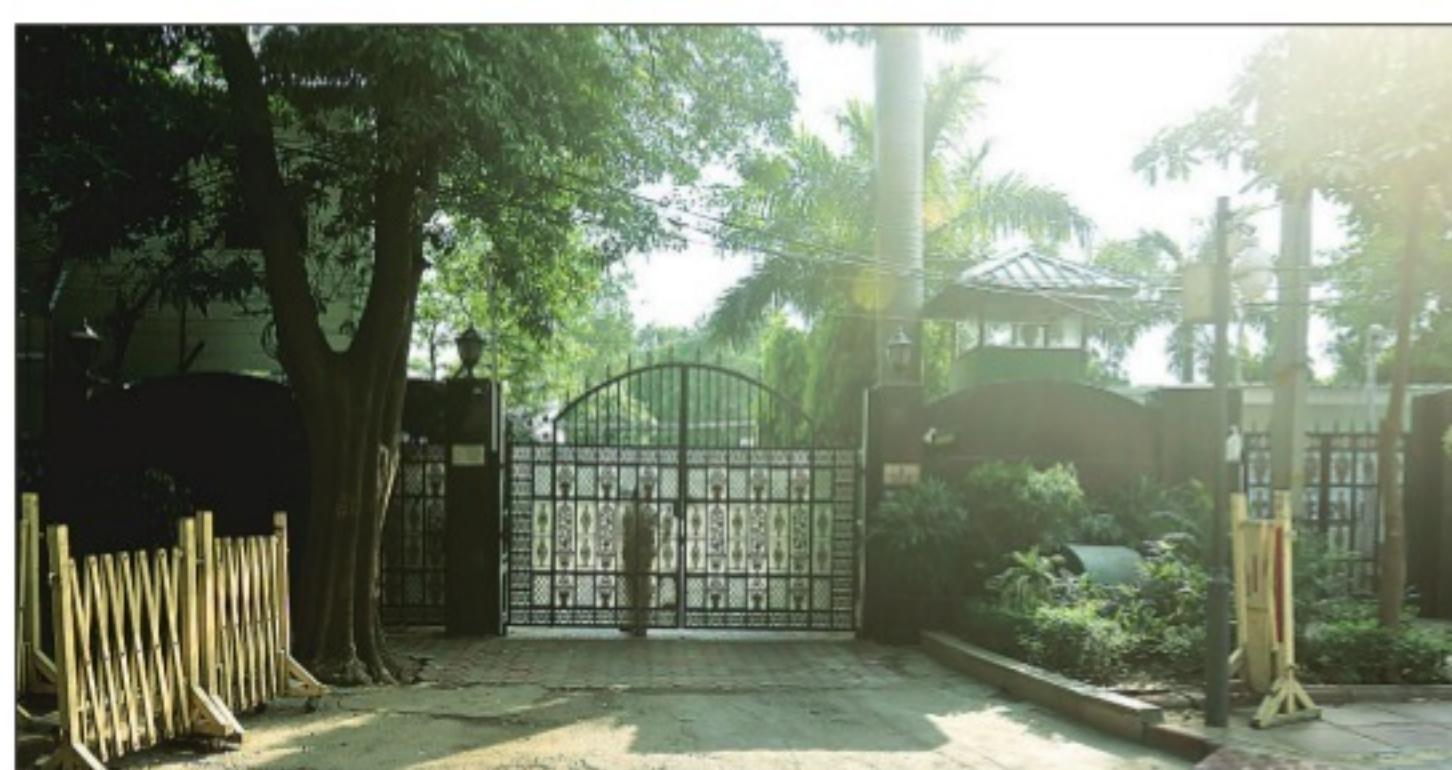
SOURAV ROY BARMAN  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

FROM FEAR of possible desertions to murmurs on "poor choice" of candidates, the Aam Aadmi Party, which finished third in the capital with 18.1% of the votes, juggled an array of concerns even as it struggled to offer a cohesive response to the debacle.

AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj spelt out the party's official stand—that it "respects" the mandate of the people. He steered clear of the EVM issue, saying raising any questions at this juncture would be "inappropriate".

Asked about the erosion in AAP's vote share, Bhardwaj said people vote "on different parameters" in Assembly and Lok Sabha polls, suggesting that the party will put up a better performance in the Assembly polls slated for early next year.

But not everyone bought into this assessment. At least five AAP



Outside Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence on Thursday. Amit Mehra

MLAs *The Indian Express* spoke to conceded the need for "course correction". "Ab aur wicket girega (more MLAs are likely to desert)," a senior office bearer said.

With a vote share less than 16.6%, three AAP candidates — Pankaj Gupta from Chandni Chowk, Brijesh Goyal from New Delhi and Dilip Pandey from North East Delhi — lost their deposits. Another senior leader said the party's biggest mistake was "not fielding deserving MLAs as candidates".

"Those who worked on the

ground for four years had a connect with people and would have got a much better result. Instead, candidates were selected based only on the opinion of the party chief. On top of that, the Chief Minister did not campaign for close to a month, only managing

seven road shows in the last week of the campaign," he told *The Indian Express*.

Asked if he had any message for the party leadership, AAP's Hari Nagar MLA Jagdeep Singh, the party's chief whip in the Assembly, said: "It should take everyone together, that's the only message I have."

Kasturba Nagar MLA Madan Lal said the AAP did not fit in the national scene. He said since people "put the nation before self", AAP's projection of the Delhi government's achievements in areas of education and health did not help. "Anti-BJP votes in Delhi went to the Congress as people thought they were better placed to take on the BJP," he said.

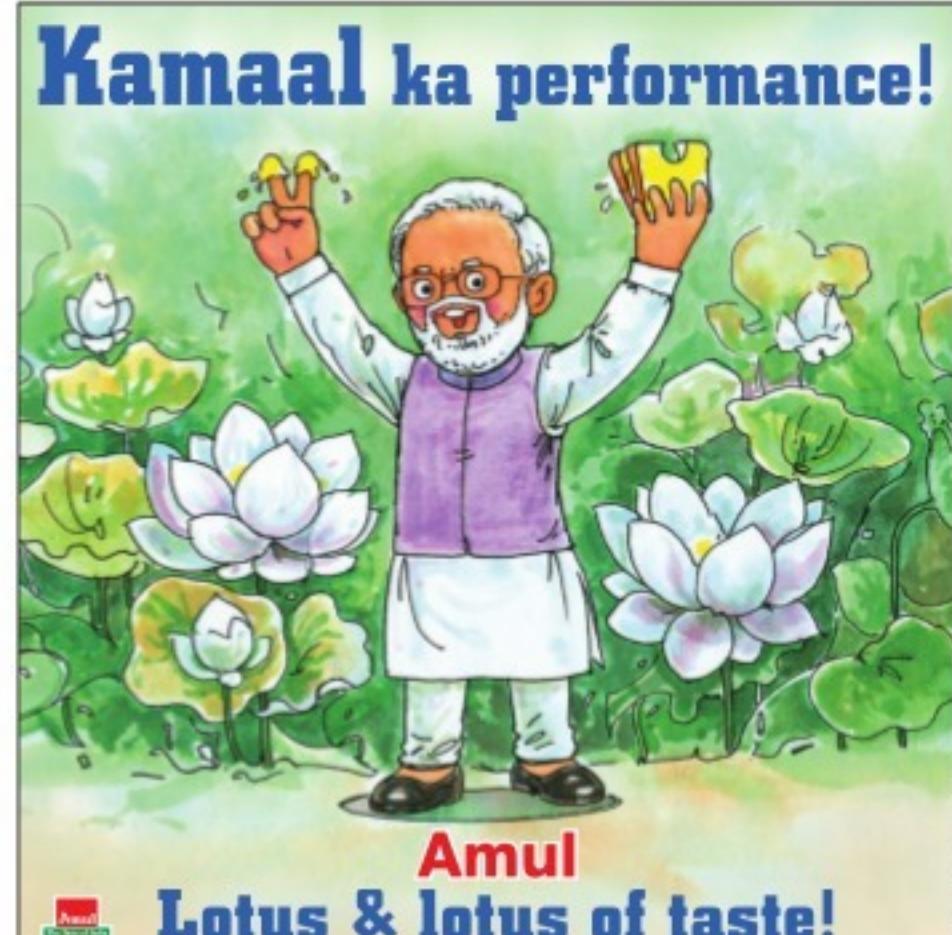
Tughlakabad MLA Sahi Ram said South Delhi MP Ramesh Bidhuri, who got re-elected on Thursday, reaped the dividends of being connected with the people and working for them. He also said the statehood issue, on which the AAP fought the polls, did not resonate with the public.

Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan said the Congress had misguided Muslims "by convincing them that since it's a national election, they should vote to make Rahul Gandhi the prime minister as it is in their best interest".

Bawana MLA Ram Chandar said AAP formed a coalition with the Congress, it could have won at least three seats.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, however, defended the candidate selection. "We gave it our all when it came to candidate selection as well as campaigning. During the last leg, our focus was

on door-to-door campaign. This



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## Party routed in Haryana too, less than 2% in 3 seats

SAKSHI DAYAL  
GURGAON, MAY 23

THE THREE candidates fielded by the Aam Aadmi Party in Haryana, as part of their alliance with the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) secured less than 2% of the vote share in their constituencies, counting of votes revealed Thursday.

As per data provided by the Election Commission of India, AAP's Ambala candidate, former DGP Prithvi Raj, obtained 12,302 votes; Karnal candidate, advocate Krishan Kumar Agarwal, secured 22,084 votes; and Faridabad candidate, AAP's Haryana chief Naveen Jaihind, got 11,112 votes.

This left the party's Ambala vote share at 0.93%, Karnal at 1.7%, and Faridabad at 0.84%.

These figures are significantly lower than those polled by AAP in 2014, when it had fielded candidates in all 10 seats in Haryana. At the time, Ambala candidate Surinder Pal Singh had secured 63,626 votes; Karnal candidate Paramjit Singh got 32,060 votes; and Faridabad candidate Purshotam Dagar polled 67,355 votes. Jaihind contested from Rohtak in 2014 and had come in fifth, securing 46,759 votes.

The BJP won all 10 constituencies in Haryana. In Ambala, BJP won with 746,508 votes and a vote share of 56.72%; in Karnal, the BJP candidate secured 91,1594 votes, with a vote share of 70.08%. In Faridabad, sitting MP Krishan Pal Gurjar polled 9,122,222 votes, with a vote share of 68.8%.

The Congress secured 30.71% of the vote share in Ambala, with 4,04,163 votes, and 19.64% in Karnal with 2,55,452 votes. Its vote share in Faridabad stood at 20.72%, with 2,74,983 votes.

Commenting on the developments in a series of Tweets, Jaihind said, "Kya janta ko kaam (bijli-paani, school, hospital, suraksha rozgar) nahin kand (jaati dharam ke naam par dange phasad jhoothi jumle) pasand hain? Sabhi naye naye chowkidaron ko jeet ki badhai. Aasha hai chowkidari achi tarah karenge janta ke seva karenge. Par rajniti muddon par nahin murdon par hi karte rahiye?" Does the public prefer scandal (riots, false accusations in the name of caste, religion) and not work (electricity, water, school, hospital, security, employment)? Congratulations to all new chowkidars on their win. Hope they will do chowkidari properly, serve the people. But will they continue politics on the dead instead of over issues?"

The BJP won all 10 constituencies in Haryana. In Ambala, BJP won with 746,508 votes and a vote share of 56.72%; in Karnal, the BJP candidate secured 91,1594 votes, with a vote share of 70.08%. In Faridabad, sitting MP Krishan Pal Gurjar polled 9,122,222 votes, with a vote share of 68.8%.

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# Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar choose incumbents

AMIL BHATNAGAR  
NOIDA, MAY 23



Mahesh Sharma (left) and General VK Singh

BJP MANAGED to retain Gautam Budh Nagar and Ghaziabad, with both candidates winning by sizeable margins. Union Minister Mahesh Sharma won Gautam Budh Nagar constituency with 38,812 votes, while General VK Singh received 9,44,503 votes in Ghaziabad. Sharma, who will now serve his second term as Gautam Budh Nagar MP, defeated the Mahagathbandhan's BSP candidate Satveer Nagar, who got 4,93,890 votes. Congress's Dr Arvind trailed with 42,077 votes.

In the run-up to the elections, both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had held rallies in Greater Noida to canvass for the

Former Indian Army Chief and the current MoS External Affairs General VK Singh had won the seat in 2014 with a margin of 5.6 lakh votes over Congress's Raj Babbar. This time, the Congress gave a ticket to MBA graduate Dolly Sharma, in whose support Priyanka Gandhi had held a road show. Samajwadi Party had fielded Suresh Bansal.

Despite facing anti-incumbency, VK Singh ensured a margin of 5.01 lakh votes. The district president of SP from Ghaziabad and three-time MLA, Surendra Kumar Munni, was dropped as the candidate when Bansal made a last-minute switch from the BSP to the SP, which then declared him as its new candidate.

He received 4,43,003 lakh votes, while Dolly Sharma got 1,11,944.

## Once with Congress, BJP's Rao Inderjit gets 3rd term in Gurgaon

SAKSHI DAYAL  
GURGAON, MAY 23

BJP CANDIDATE and sitting MP Rao Inderjit Singh Thursday retained the Gurgaon Lok Sabha seat, securing a victory with a margin of nearly 4 lakh votes.

According to data provided by the Election Commission of India, Singh secured a vote share of 60.94%, which corresponds to 8,81,546 votes, as opposed to the next best candidate, Congress's Captain Ajay Singh Yadav, who secured 4,95,290 votes with a vote share of 34.24%.

This will be Singh's third term as the MP from Gurgaon.

He had won the elections fighting as a Congress candidate in 2009, and switched over to the BJP by the time the Lok Sabha elections took place in 2014.

His margin this year is higher than the last time, when he secured 2,74,722 votes more than Indian National Lok Dal's (INLD) Zakir Hussain. While Singh secured 6,44,780 votes that year, Hussain obtained 3,70,058 votes. The Congress had fielded Rao Dharam Pal in 2014, who secured only 1,33,713 votes.

The INLD, which fielded Virendar Rana this time, secured only 9,911 votes. BSP's Chaudhary Rais Ahmad came in third in Gurgaon with 26,756

votes and a vote share of 1.85%. Dr Mehmood Khan, the candidate fielded by the AAP-JJP alliance in the constituency, secured only 8,993 votes.

Addressing workers in Rewari Thursday evening, after his victory became imminent, Rao Inderjit Singh said, "It has never before happened that all 10 seats have been won by BJP. This has happened despite people, especially our opponents, saying we will get very few votes in Mewat."

"I want to reassure you...this faith that you have put in me towards the end of my political career, will put complete effort to try to be worthy of that trust," he said.

## AHEAD OF AAP IN FIVE SEATS

# In 2nd spot, Delhi Cong sees signs of resurgence but has miles to go

Party hopeful ahead of next year's assembly polls but who will lead charge remains key question

ASTHA SAXENA  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

FROM SECURING the third position in the last three elections in the capital, the Congress managed to inch back to second spot in the Lok Sabha polls, defeating AAP in five of seven parliamentary constituencies — East Delhi, New Delhi, North East Delhi, West Delhi, and Chandni Chowk.

Though it was still considerably behind the BJP in all seven seats, senior leaders took heart in the slight revival, which comes at a crucial time ahead of next year's Assembly polls. "It's painful to lose an election that we were hoping to win. However, if we compare this to the last Lok Sabha polls, our vote share has improved. We have to work harder now. In the next few days, we will analyse the result and disclose our strategy for the Delhi polls. Discussions on the party's face for the Assembly polls can be delayed for now," Delhi Congress chief Sheila Dikshit told *The Indian Express*.

AAP has been a thorn in the Congress's foot since its inception, and party leaders said the Delhi result gives them some hope. "The party is definitely in a better position. We tried our best to revive it and give a tough competition. We managed to push AAP to the third position. Now, a strategy needs to be prepared for Assembly polls," Haroon Yusuf, working presi-



At the Congress headquarters on Thursday. Anil Sharma

dent of the Delhi Congress unit, told *The Indian Express*.

With three-time CM Dikshit losing to BJP's Manoj Tiwari by 3.66 lakh votes, and former president of the Delhi Congress unit Ajay Maken losing to incumbent BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi in New Delhi by 2.56 lakh votes, a question remained on who will lead the party into the future.

"The party invested too much time and energy in Sheila ji but she failed to win. She was the face of Delhi, but it seems that the time is gone. Problem is that the

party has no leader who can be projected as the CM candidate. Assembly polls are months away and the party seriously needs to introspect and strategise. The decision ultimately lies with party

president Rahul Gandhi," said a senior Congress leader.

Sources in the party said the initial plan was to push Dikshit as a CM candidate for the Assembly polls. However, Rahul

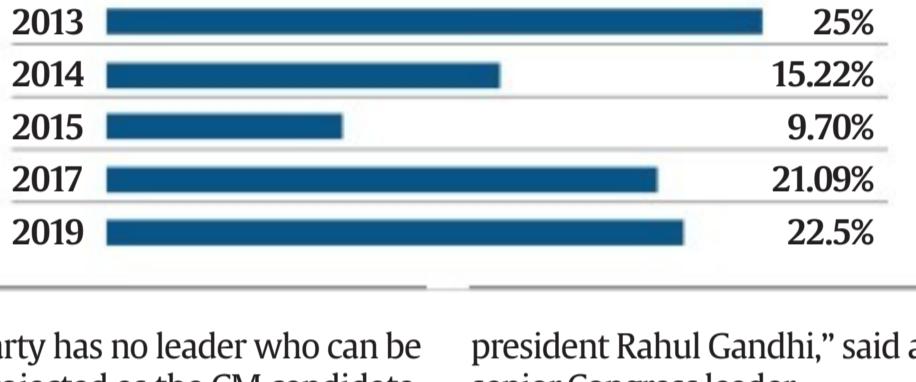
had a different plan for her. "He wanted Sheila ji to contest the Lok Sabha polls. The situation for the party is rather tough now as she has lost the election. Had it been a winning situation, she was the strongest face for the party's CM candidate," said a leader.

The vote share of the party swelled to 22.5% this time from 15.22% in 2014 Lok Sabha polls. In the 2015 Assembly elections, the grand old party performed poorly and failed to win a single seat in Delhi. Since then, the party's vote share has improved. During the MCD polls in 2017, the party's vote share rose to 21.09%.

However, results of the polls have once again underlined the persisting cracks within the party. Former Delhi minister Yoganand Shastri, who was expected to be fielded from South Delhi, was alienated when the party gave a ticket to boxer Vijender Singh.

Singh lost to sitting BJP MP Ramesh Bodhuri and AAP's Raghab Chaddha. "It was not his fault. He tried to woo voters but the party has failed to address rural issues in Delhi. One cannot win an election by sitting in the party office. There is an urgent need to strengthen the party," Shastri told *The Indian Express*.

Asked about the choice for a CM candidate, he said "Azmaae hue ko azmaana murkha hai (It is stupid to repeat the same mistakes)."



## SALUTE THE SOLDIER

14 APR 1982-24 MAY 2013



Lance Naik  
Naresh Kumar

On this day we salute and pay homage to the gallant soldier who laid down his life for the Nation while protecting the Territorial Integrity of India, along the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir in finest traditions of the Indian Army, may your soul rest in peace.

**Commanding Officer and All Ranks  
3 GRENADIERS**

### MARTYRS OF 206 BN, COBRA

SI/GD Rajesh Kumar Bind of 206, CoBRA made the supreme sacrifice during an operation in Jungle area of Tamilwada, under PS-Chintagupha, Distt- Sukma (C.G) on 24th May 2018. The CRPF proudly remembers the braveheart who laid down his life at the altar of duty while fighting with Maoists. His courage and bravery would remain an abiding source of inspiration for the Force.

**IG & All Ranks of CoBRA**

**NORTHERN RAILWAY  
E-TENDER NOTICE**  
For and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical), Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites e-tender for following work from experienced and capable tenderers.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY  
OPEN TENDER NOTICE (E-TENDER)**  
For and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical), Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites e-tender for following work from experienced and capable tenderers.

1. Tender No.: 197-S/224/Hiring-Mini Truck/PNP/19/MC-IV

2. Name of Work: Hiring of Mini Truck (Carrying Capacity-4.5 T) at C&W depot, Panipat for two years.

3. Advertised Tender Value: Rs. 16,60,893.41/- (Including GST)

4. Earnest money in favour of Sr. DFM/NR, New Delhi: Rs. 33,200/- (Note: It should be in the form of net banking or gateway only. FDR not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS)

5. Date & time of submission of tender bid: Up to 21.06.2019 at 12:00 hrs.

6. Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen: [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

No. 197-S/224/Hiring-Mini Truck/PNP/19/MC-IV  
Date: 22.05.2019

1561/19  
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Phone : 011-24126418, 24126419, 24126420  
Fax : 011-24126416 web: [www.cec.nic.in](http://www.cec.nic.in)

NIT No. CEC/Admin/Ad for wout/2019-I

**Notice Inviting Tender for Disposal of E-waste - Unserviceable/ Obsolete/ Old Computers Hardware and Peripherals, Electrical and Technical Equipment / Items (Audio Video) etc. on "As is Where is basis"**

Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC), an Inter University Centre of University Grants Commission (UGC), invites sealed TENDERS in two bid systems (Technical Bid and Financial Bid) from the E-Waste recyclers / preprocessors agencies registered by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Govt. of India) Delhi or any other state pollution control boards for disposal of E-waste - Unserviceable/Obsolete/Old Computers Hardware and Peripherals, Electrical items and Technical Equipment / Items (Audio Video) etc. on "As is Where is basis" as per list attached.

**Last Date for submission of Tender :** 18th June, 2019 upto 02.30 PM  
(along with Earnest Money Deposit)

**Date & Time of opening of Tender :** 18th June, 2019 at 3.00 PM  
(Technical bid)

**Earnest Money Deposit :** Rs.3,000/- (only DD/Pay order in favour of Director, CEC, New Delhi)

Tender Document may be downloaded from the CEC website [www.cec.nic.in](http://www.cec.nic.in) and from Central Public Procurement Portal (CPP Portal) site. Sealed tender should be addressed to the "Chief Administrative Officer, Consortium for Educational Communication, IUAC Campus, Aruna Asaf Ali Marg, New Delhi-110067" and may be sent by Speed Post / Registered Post or may be dropped in the tender box placed at reception of CEC, New Delhi at the above mentioned address on or before the stipulated date and time.

CEC reserves the right to reject the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

**CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION**  
1, NAWAB YUSUF ROAD, CIVIL LINES, ALLAHABAD-211001  
Tender Notice No.: CORE-Snt-Tele-Veh-Tkj-56 Date: 22.05.2019  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**

(i) Name of work with its location and completion period: Hiring of AC road vehicles, TATA Indigo or similar (Diesel) for HAG / SAG officers and NON AC TATA Indigo or similar (Diesel) for SG / JAG officers of Railway Electrification as per requirement on per day rate contract basis for 12 months at GM / RE camp office Tilak Bridge New Delhi.

Completion Period: 12 Months

(ii) Approximate Cost of the work: Rs. 11,79,630/- (Rs. Eleven Lacs Seventy Nine Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Only).

(iii) Earnest Money to be deposited: Rs. 23,600/- (Rs. Twenty Three Thousand Six Hundred Only).

(iv) Due date and opening of tender: 24.06.2019 up to 15.00 hrs. for submission of tender through [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and the Tender shall be opened online using IREPS portal any time after closing of tender.

(v) Website particulars: [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) (where details have been uploaded).

(vi) Office address: Office of PCSTE/CORE, 1, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil Lines, Allahabad.

NOTE: Only e-Bid shall be accepted against above tender.

Principal Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/CORE/Allahabad  
For & on behalf of President of India

"Serving Customers with a Smile"

**DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**PRESS RFP NOTICE NO.01/FO/CE/RZ/DDA/2019-20**

**Request for proposal**

Executive Engineer, RPD-6 & EE/RPD-13 on behalf of the Delhi Development Authority invited RFP through e-tendering under Two Bid system from reputed Consultants fulfilling other terms and conditions as per the RFP document for the following work:

1. RFP No. 01/EE/RPD-6/2019-20 & 01/EE/RPD-13/2019-20

Name of work: Selection of Technical consultant cum transaction advisor for Development of Housing Project on public private partnership (PPP) mode under the scheme for Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (URBAN) for "in situ" slum redevelopment in Sector-18 (RPD-6), Sector-19 (RPD-13) Rohini, Time period: 60 days, Issue of RFP: 25.05.2019, Pre Bid conference: 03.06.2019

The RFP documents are available at DDA's website [www.dda.org.in](http://www.dda.org.in) and at CPP portal of NIC at URL <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

Please give your feedback on DDA Apps at [Google play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.doorstep.doorstep&hl=en)

Please visit DDA's website: [www.dda.org.in](http://www.dda.org.in) or Dial Toll free No. 1800110332

1571/19  
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No. A-45011/07/2019-Admn.EN

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING**

**PUBLICATIONS DIVISION**

**EMPLOYMENT NEWS**

**SOOCHNA BHAWAN, CGO COMPLEX, NEW DELHI-3.**

**NOTICE INVITING APPLICATION**

**Engaging services of 'Five' (5) contract personnel for sales, marketing, accounts & sales representative functions of Employment News**

Employment News under the Publications Division (DPD), Ministry of Information & Broadcasting invites applications from citizens of India with suitable qualifications for engaging 5(Five) personnel, purely on contract basis for different categories.

The details, including terms and conditions, duties, remuneration, etc. regarding above engagement are available in Annexure-II & III of the **Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) on the website of Employment News [www.employmentnews.gov.in](http://www.employmentnews.gov.in)** & also on DPD website i.e., at [www.publicationsdivision.nic.in](http://www.publicationsdivision.nic.in)

</div



**I congratulate Shri Narendra Modi for this historic win and look forward to working together for betterment of people of Delhi... We fielded very good candidates in Delhi, campaigned very well... We will keep working for people of Delhi" — Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi CM**

## AFTER THE VERDICT RADIO SILENCE

While the BJP headquarters was buzzing through the day, party offices of AAP and Congress became eerily quiet as it became obvious that neither party was winning a seat in the capital. Several candidates from both parties, in fact, became inaccessible as polling trends became clear.



**Congress is only reaping benefits of AAP being decimated. Had they tied up, we would have won with a bigger margin because people whose first preference is Congress would have also voted for us in case they tied up with AAP." — Manoj Tiwari, Delhi BJP chief**

SEAT WINNER	CHANDNI CHOWK Harsh Vardhan (BJP) <b>52.94%</b>	NEW DELHI	Meenakshi Lekhi (BJP) <b>54.77 %</b>	EAST	Gautam Gambhir (BJP) <b>55.35 %</b>	SOUTH	Ramesh Bidhuri (BJP) <b>56.58 %</b>	WEST	Parvesh Sahib Singh (BJP) <b>60.05 %</b>	NORTH WEST	Hans Raj Hans (BJP) <b>60.49 %</b>	NORTH EAST	Manoj Tiwari (BJP) <b>53.9 %</b>
RUNNER-UP	JP Agarwal (Cong) <b>29.67 %</b>	AJAY MAKEN	Ajay Maken (Cong) <b>26.91 %</b>	ARVINDER S LOVELY	Arvinder S Lovely (Cong) <b>24.24 %</b>	RAGHAV CHADHA	Raghav Chadha (AAP) <b>26.35 %</b>	MAHABAL MISHRA	Mahabal Mishra (Cong) <b>19.92 %</b>	GUGAN SINGH	Gugan Singh (AAP) <b>21.01 %</b>	Sheila Dikshit (Cong) <b>28.85 %</b>	
THIRD PLACE	Pankaj Gupta (AAP) <b>14.74 %</b>	BRIJESH GOYAL	Brijesh Goyal (AAP) <b>16.33 %</b>	ATISHI	Atishi (AAP) <b>17.44 %</b>	VIJENDER SINGH	Vijender Singh (Cong) <b>13.56 %</b>	BALBIR JAKHAR	Balbir Jakhar (AAP) <b>17.47 %</b>	RAJESH LILOTHIA	Rajesh Lilothia (Cong) <b>16.88 %</b>	Dilip Pandey (AAP) <b>13.06 %</b>	

# BJP > AAP + Congress

Each of BJP's seven candidates got more than 50%, suggesting that a tie-up between its rivals would not have mattered; Cong pulls ahead of AAP in five seats

MALLICA JOSHI  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

FORTWO months, conversations — and headlines — around AAP and Congress revolved around whether the two parties will tie up in the capital. Thursday showed it wouldn't have mattered. With a 56.56% vote share for the party and at least 53% for each individual BJP candidate in the city, no seat combination between AAP and Congress would have worked.

With BJP taking pole position in all seven seats, perhaps a bigger worry for AAP turned out to be the Congress, which got 22.5% of votes in Delhi, above AAP's 18.1%. This is the first time since AAP was formed that Congress secured more votes — be it in Lok Sabha, Assembly or MCD polls. While Congress came in second in five seats, AAP stood second in two — South Delhi and North West Delhi.

Three AAP candidates — Pankaj Gupta from Chandni Chowk, Brijesh Goyal from New Delhi and Dilip Pandey from North East Delhi — lost their deposits as their vote share was less than 16.6%.

In its first-ever Assembly election in 2013, AAP had attracted 29% of all votes polled, as opposed to Congress's 25%. In the 2014 general elections, BJP's vote share was 46.63%, AAP's was 33.07% and Congress's was 15.22%.

"This is a national election and it was amply clear in the minds of voters. The Congress also created a lot of confusion. This, along with what can only be called a Modi wave, sealed the elections," Deputy Chief Minister and AAP political affairs committee member Manish Sisodia told *The Indian Express*.

For the BJP, what worked was a lack of clear messaging from other parties, a campaign that relied on a door-to-door outreach, booth-level management, and the Prime Minister's name, Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta said. "Our campaign was very well-oiled, with no internal rifts. We fought the election ground up. We took Modi ji's message to people and they saw how he had taken decisive action on sensitive issues. Others only had an anti-Modi campaign," he told *The Indian Express*.

Thursday's closest competition was seen in Chandni Chowk, where BJP's Dr Harsh Vardhan won, defeating Congress's JP Agarwal by over 2.28 lakh votes. The biggest margin was in West Delhi, where Parvesh Sahib Singh won by a margin of 5.78 lakh votes.

AAP, which came into existence in 2012, had in the 2015 Assembly elections reduced Congress's vote share to 9.7%. It had won 67 of 70 seats, while BJP won 3 and Congress 0. In every subsequent election, Congress has inched back while AAP's vote tally has gone down.

Senior AAP leaders conceded that gains made by Congress could have serious implications for their party as the city heads into Assembly polls in less than nine months.

"During our surveys, we realised people were inclined to vote for Modi in these elections and Kejriwal in Assembly polls... But the senior leadership has to realise that during 2014 Lok Sabha polls, we were in second place. Nine months is a long time and the resurgence of Congress is troublesome," said a senior party leader.

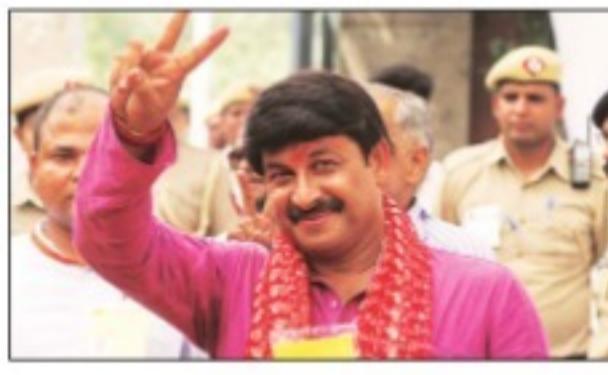
Sisodia, however, said the party was confident they would regain the lost vote share next year. "Considerations in Lok Sabha and Assembly polls are different and people in Delhi have shown this in the past. We will bounce back from this," he said.



Celebrations outside the BJP office after Thursday's result. Praveen Khanna

## Assembly next, Tiwari likely to bag plum role

ABHINAV RAJPUT  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23



Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari. Abhinav Saha

DEFEATING THREE-TIME Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit by over 3 lakh votes, Manoj Tiwari, the Delhi BJP chief, is expected to emerge as the frontrunner for the party's chief ministerial candidate when the capital goes to Assembly polls next year.

In line with the performance of BJP candidates in the capital, Tiwari got 3.66 lakh votes — more than Dikshit and AAP's Dilip Pandey combined. This is the second big victory Tiwari has been a central part of — the first being the BJP's win in the MCD polls, when the party overcame massive anti-incumbency of two terms to leave Congress and AAP behind.

Several senior leaders *The Indian Express* spoke to said Tiwari, who was brought in as Delhi BJP chief in 2016 to consolidate the Purvanchali vote, could be given an even bigger role in the party — perhaps a ministerial berth or being projected as the BJP's CM face next year. Asked about his chief ministerial ambition, Tiwari told *The Indian Express*: "I have just two ambitions. One, I wanted Modi ji to become PM and second, I want the BJP to win the Delhi Assembly elections. The first has been fulfilled, the second will be fulfilled soon."

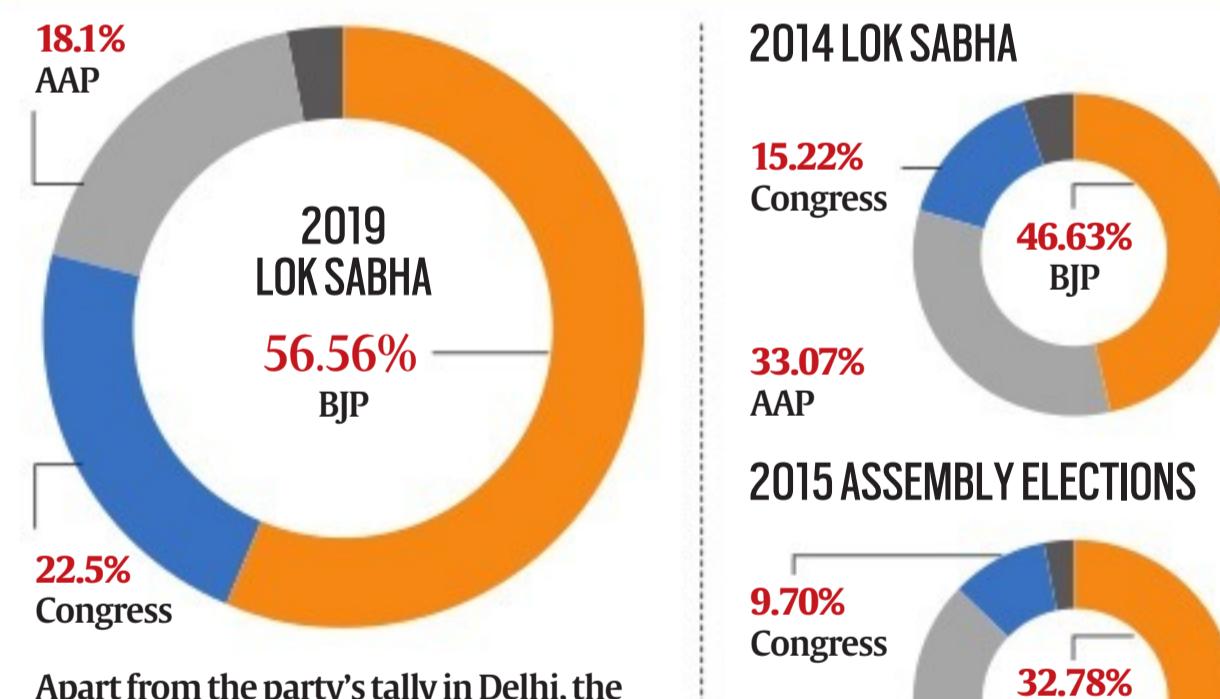
Another senior leader said, "(Arvind) Kejriwal's acceptance as a mass leader was

established after he defeated Dikshit (in 2013). Tiwari has now done the same, and could be projected as someone capable of taking on Kejriwal."

"His weight in the party has increased because he will also be seen as someone who held road shows for several candidates across India, wherever Purvanchalis are in large numbers. He also staged a road show for (South Delhi candidate) Ramesh Bidhuri, who wasn't particularly popular among the Purvanchali voters," the leader said.

Before Tiwari's appointment as Delhi BJP chief, the unit was dominated by Punjabis, Banjias, Jats and Gurjars. But as the population of migrants increased over the past decades — they are estimated to comprise a third of the city's over two crore population — the party felt the need to get a leader to tap that base.

## UP AND UP: BJP'S VOTE SHARE



Apart from the party's tally in Delhi, the fact that each BJP candidate got more than AAP and Congress rivals combined would worry both parties, given that assembly elections are not far off

## VICTORY MARGINS

Parvesh Sahib Singh (West Delhi)	<b>5,78,486</b>
Hans Raj Hans (NW Delhi)	<b>5,53,897</b>
Gautam Gambhir (East Delhi)	<b>3,91,222</b>
Ramesh Bidhuri (South Delhi)	<b>3,67,043</b>
Manoj Tiwari (NE Delhi)	<b>3,66,102</b>
Meenakshi Lekhi (New Delhi)	<b>2,56,504</b>
Harsh Vardhan (Chandni Chowk)	<b>2,28,145</b>

## Outsider to trump card: How BJP's Hans won big

SHIVAM PATEL  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

FIELDED AT the last minute from the reserved North West Delhi seat, questioned over his religion and given the outsider tag — BJP's Hans Raj Hans managed to overcome several obstacles to secure the highest vote share, 60.5%, leaving AAP's Gugan Singh and Congress's Rajesh Lilothia far behind.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, the singer-turned-politician from Punjab credited his victory to the "Modi phenomenon". "I was not expecting the margin to be this high. I was a stranger to this constituency but people heard what I had to say and accepted me as one of their own. I told them I am an artist following Modi's orders, and that I would do everything to make them feel that I was born here."

Hans said his opponents' vote share fell because their party leaders — Congress's Rahul Gandhi and AAP's Arvind Kejriwal — "would lie quite often". Earlier this month, AAP MLA Rajendra Pal Gautam had alleged Hans had converted to Islam and did not belong to the reserved category, so he cannot contest from the seat. CM Arvind Kejriwal had also tweeted that the BJP candidate was "ineligible to fight from a reserved seat (North West Delhi)".

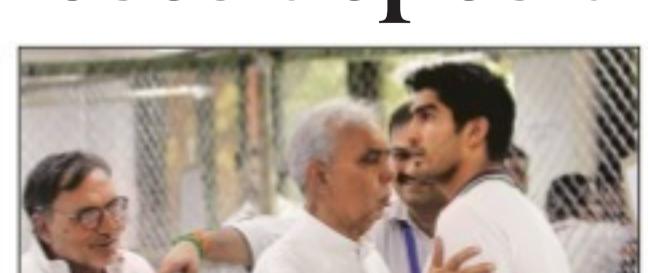
AP's Singh conceded defeat, but claimed he was "absolutely certain" that EVMs had been tampered with in some areas. (BJP chief) Amit Shah and Hans had struggled to assemble a crowd at their rallies. How can they get over 60% votes?..." he said. Singh also alleged that booths in areas with a large Muslim population, such as Meer Vihar in the Mundka Assembly constituency, recorded "100% voting" for the BJP, which was "unusual".

Similar allegations were made by supporters of Congress's Lilothia. His brother Parvesh said, "The reason behind the result today is EVM setting... If it wasn't for (the alleged tampering), we would have won by a margin of at least one lakh votes."

AP's sitting MLA from Bawana, Ram Chander, said the party could have won one to three seats if they had tied up with Congress. "We had confidence in Singh, but (Bawana and nearby) areas have nearly 80% people from UP or Bihar, and if we had fielded a candidate from these two communities, we may have won this seat," he said.

## Cong hope for boxer boost fails, Vijender loses deposit

ARANYA SHANKAR  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23



Cong's Vijender after the result. ANI

THE CONGRESS'S attempt at garnering votes through star power, by fielding boxer Vijender Singh from the South Delhi constituency, yielded no returns, as he lost his deposit, securing 13.56% of the total votes.

Singh came third on the seat, which incumbent BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri won with a huge margin of over 3.7 lakh votes. Singh, who got 1.64 lakh votes, trailed behind AAP's Raghav Chadha, who got 3.19 lakh votes. In 2014, Bidhuri secured 45.15% of the total votes polled. Singh did not respond to calls seeking a comment by *The Indian Express*.

Flashing a victory sign, Bidhuri said: "The trends are in my favour and will continue to

Karnal. "Modi bete ko aashirwad dene aaya hoon... I am here alone, despite my family's hesitation," said Das.

Inside the sprawling media room sat supporters dressed in 'Chowkidar Phir Se' t-shirts and sleeveless jackets with Modiji's face, around a single TV.

The crowd broke into 'Modi! Modi!' chants and impromptu dance every time the EVM count went up. Deepak Sharma (58), a guard at Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Medical College in Rohini, said, "The day he gave respect to Chowkidars, I was on his side."

Among senior BJP leaders who turned up were the party's behind-the-scenes organisation man Ram Lal, who was thronged by workers eager to take a selfie. Also present were BJP's national general secretaries

Kailash Vijayvargiya, Ram Madhav, Bhupender Yadav and Muralidhar Rao.

Slogans such as 'Gharghar bhagwa chhaha gaya, Modi vaapis aa gaya' to 'Sher aaya, sher aaya, Modi aaya Modi' resonated as a woman danced atop the parapet, ignoring warnings.

"We've been here since 6 am with our dugga, drum and taashe. People can't stop dancing, it's getting tiring," said Bholu Master (46) of the Nashik Band. As he took a break, members of BJP's South Indian Cell took over with a chenda and elathalam — musical instruments from Kerala.

Around 3.30 pm, Amit Shah arrived to a welcome of gulal, rose petals and firecrackers. Four hours later came the Prime Minister, flashing the victory sign.



MINISTERS WHO LOST



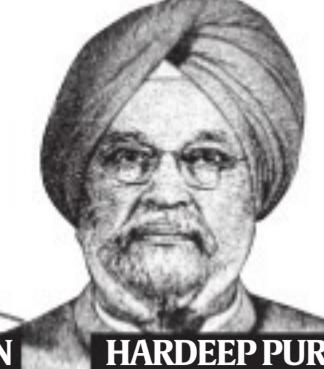
MANOJ SINHA



KJ ALPHONS



PON RADHAKRISHNAN



HARDEEP PURI

# Rise and rise of Modi

As countdown to 2019 began, he was already being seen as strong and decisive leader, a disruptor seeking change

LIZ MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

**IN FIVE years, Brand Modi has transcended religious, caste and class divisions. That, in a nutshell, is Decision 2019.**

From the time he was first named prime ministerial candidate in September 2013, Modi has never looked back. He has built on his strengths, charting the course the country will take, and also his party. In election after election, in state after state.

So when the countdown to 2019 began, he was already being seen as a strong and decisive leader, a disruptor seeking change, the poster boy of millions being tapped by the BJP.

## Home and abroad

Since the time he led the BJP to power in 2014, Modi has shown an eye for the visual. His oath-taking ceremony was held in the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan, the glow of the setting sun as a backdrop, and eight foreign heads of government in attendance. His first Republic Day appearance had US President Barack Obama as chief guest. His public meeting at the Madison Square Garden was a rockstar-like event.

At major events and meetings, he has bonded with global leaders. Overseen by a team of the BJP, led initially by general secretary Ram Madhav and later by Vijay Chauthaiwala, these foreign visits have also helped the party build a fervent base among the Indian diaspora.

If technology has helped him connect with party workers down to the booth level, his Mann Ki Baat addresses have helped him reach the common man. Today, Brand Modi is big. Yet five years in power have not changed his image of an "outsider" working hard to "set things right".

He has been under constant attack from the Opposition but the mandate indicates that Modi's message and campaign – of Good Governance, Nation First, raising India's stature, fighting corruption, teaching Pakistan a lesson – have worked on the ground.

## The initiatives

The promise of Achhe Din was an integral part of Modi's 2014 campaign. Promising to change the nation, he announced the launch of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary. Critics called it a modification of the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan of the UPA, but this did not cut any ice. In fact, this initiative helped the party appropriate the Mahatma.

His government followed this up with the National Mission for Clean Ganga, reiterating its commitment to the river millions consider holy; Mudra Yojana for affordable credit to micro and small enterprises; Beti Bachao Beti Padhao for the girl child; and legislative initiatives like banning instant triple talaq – all directed towards its goal of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas.

Critics countered this by questioning the BJP's silence on issues such as lynchings, cow vigilantism and attacks on Dalits. Each time, Modi stepped in to express his "displeasure". And succeeded.

## The risk-taker

Be it the choice of candidates, chief ministers, economic initiatives or national security decisions, Modi has gone against the grind. The selection of CMs for Maharashtra, Haryana and Jharkhand ignored caste conventions. Devendra Fadnavis, a Brahmin, was picked for



Narendra Modi and Amit Shah at BJP headquarters in New Delhi on Thursday. Tashi Tobgyal

**People are chanting Modi, Modi. But this is not a victory of Modi, it is the victory of people who are desperate for honesty in the system... it is a win of people's hope and aspirations**

**We have to move ahead. We have to take everyone with us, even our opponents. We have to work for benefit of the country. You have filled this fakir's bag with a lot of hope**

**I will not do anything for myself. I will devote every moment of my time and every fibre of my being for my countrymen. Whenever you judge me, judge me on these three parameters**

NARENDRA MODI, PRIME MINISTER

Maharashtra where Marathas have dominated the political scene, non-tribal Raghubar Das was chosen to lead the team in Jharkhand, and Manohar Lal Khattar, who is not a Jat, was asked to lead Haryana.

Known to take decisions on his own – even while he was CM in Gujarat – Modi gave further proof of this in charting foreign policy, especially in dealing with Pakistan. The surgical strike of 2016 and the Balakot air strike this year endeared him to the masses.

On the economic front, one of his most disruptive moves was demonetisation. Many called it a huge political risk, given that elections in Uttar Pradesh were approaching. But Modi and the BJP survived the fallout of the noteban. He told the people that demonetisation was good for the country and a blow to corruption.

The rollout of the GST was seen as another move that would antagonise traders who constitute a core support base of the BJP. "It taxes on fuel, GST or demonetisation, many advised Modi to step back; he was told of big political calamity or threat to his position," BJP leader and author of 'Narendra Modi – Creative Disruptor: The Maker of New India' R Balashankar wrote in his book.



BJP supporters celebrate in Varanasi on Thursday. Anand Singh

Modi told the country he was able to do things his predecessors could not since he was "an ordinary" man with "raw wisdom". And that this had helped him lift

India out of its "debt crisis" and "economic mess" created by the Congress-led UPA. The sharp jump of India's rank in the Ease of Doing Business Survey helped burnish

that image. Good rankings by international rating agencies and appreciation from global institutions helped build a positive narrative for Modi. Critics continue to raise

## THE NEXT STEPS

### CABINET MEETING

Scheduled for 5 pm Friday when a Cabinet note is expected to be moved for dissolution of 16th Lok Sabha

### COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEET

Home Minister Rajnath Singh at 5.30 pm Friday is expected to read out a resolution thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who will join the meeting only after it is passed

### PRIME MINISTER MODI

Will tender his resignation to President Ram Nath Kovind likely Friday evening

### BJP PARLIAMENTARY PARTY MEET

This will set the ball rolling for the new government after the party elects Modi as its leader. The BJP and its allies will then meet President Kovind to request him to invite Modi to form the government.

### ELECTION COMMISSION

After winners are officially declared, the EC is likely to present the list of newly-elected members to President Kovind Saturday.

questions but this election has seen voter after voter giving the PM the benefit of doubt: "How much can one man do?"

### Outreach to Dalits, poor

Seen as a party of the upper castes, the Modi-led BJP made a concerted push to bring the 16.6 per cent Scheduled Caste population under its umbrella, and had 40 Dalit MPs. One of its masterstrokes was picking Ram Nath Kovind, a Dalit leader from Uttar Pradesh, as the President. The BJP has also assiduously celebrated Dalit icon B R Ambedkar -- from a series of programmes on his 125th birth anniversary, social harmony feasts on Ambedkar Jayanti to setting up of Ambedkar international centres, holding of special Parliament sessions and celebration of November 26 as Constitution Day.

The other outreach was to the poor. Projecting the Congress's programmes to eliminate poverty as total failures, the Modi government overhauled many schemes. The BJP succeeded in convincing people that insurance schemes announced by the Modi government had secured lives, the Jan Dhan Yojana had financially empowered them; Ujjwala scheme for LPG connections to the poor had provided a clean cooking medium; the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana had made affordable housing possible; Ayushman Bharat had ensured quality healthcare; and PM-KISAN would take care of small and marginal farmers. His emphasis on open-defecation-free villages and toilets made him a Prime Minister concerned with the health of the poor. The message consistently hammered home was that the total beneficiaries of these schemes numbered 22 crore.

Long ago, Modi had said: "I have the ability to pick stones thrown at me to build a staircase to climb up." Decision 2019 has shown just that.

# World leaders congratulate Modi on 'big', 'enormous' victory

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23



Narendra Modi welcomes Benjamin Netanyahu in New Delhi. Express file

"NARENDRA, MY friend, Congratulations. What an enormous victory... You don't need a coalition, but I do. And that's a big difference," Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said when he called up Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday to congratulate him on the Lok Sabha election victory.

Late at night, US President Donald Trump congratulated Modi on his "big" victory and said that great things are in store for bilateral partnership between the countries.

"Congratulations to Prime Minister @NarendraModi and his BJP party on their BIG election victory! Great things are in store for the US-India partnership with the return of PM Modi at the helm. I look forward to continuing our important work together!" Trump tweeted. In his reply, Modi tweeted, "Thank you@realDonaldTrump! This victory represents the aspirations of a nation of 1.3 billion people. I too am looking forward to working closely with you for closer bilateral ties, which also augur well for global peace and prosperity."

Several other world leaders congratulated

Modi, including Pakistan PM Imran Khan, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Japanese PM Abe Shinzo, French President Emmanuel Macron, and Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina, among others.

Japanese PM Abe was the first world leader to call up Modi and congratulate him, according to that country's diplomats.

China's President Xi extended "heartfelt" congratulations to Modi and vowed to work with him to take bilateral ties to a new high.

"I attach great importance to the development of China-India relations and would like to work with you to guide the development directions of the bilateral relations, enhance mutual political trust, expand pragmatic cooperation and promote the closer developmental partnership between the two countries to a new height," Xi wrote to Modi.

Xi's message congratulating Modi even before the official announcement of results came as a surprise as normally, by practice and protocol, the Chinese leadership greets leaders of other countries after results are declared officially.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said, "I am convinced that, as the Prime Minister of India, you will further strengthen the centuries-old friendship between our peoples and the all-round development of a particularly privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India."

Pakistan's Imran Khan tweeted, in both English and Urdu, "I congratulate Prime Minister Modi on the electoral victory of BJP and allies. Look forward to working with him for peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia."

Japanese PM Abe was the first world leader to call up Modi and congratulate him, according to that country's diplomats.

China's President Xi extended "heartfelt" congratulations to Modi and vowed to work with him to take bilateral ties to a new high.

FULL REPORT ON  
[www.indianexpress.com](http://www.indianexpress.com)

# At 25, two more Muslim MPs likely: none from BJP, ally LJP sends one

SHALINI NAIR

NEW DELHI, MAY 23

ALTHOUGH STILL very low, representation of Muslim Parliamentarians in 17th Lok Sabha may go up slightly over the last term. At last count, 25 MPs are likely to be elected, against 23 in the outgoing Lok Sabha.

Muslim representation in the Lower House comes to less than 5 per cent of its total composition, way below the community's 14-per cent share in total population.

The BJP, leading in 303 of 542 seats, is again the only winning party in general elections to not have a single Muslim MP. The party had given tickets to two Muslim candidates in West Bengal, where the community accounts for about 27 per cent of the state's population; one in Lakshadweep, which has over 95 per cent Muslim population; and three in Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley. None of the six candidates have won or are in the lead.

In Uttar Pradesh, the BSP and Samajwadi Party alliance will have three Muslim MPs each in the House: BSP's Kunwar Danish Ali (Amroha), Afzal Ansari (Gazipur), Haji Fazlur Rehman (Saharanpur), and the SP's S T Hassan (Moradabad), Shafique Rehman Barq (Sambhal), and Azam Khan (Rampur).

The next highest number is likely to come

### MUSLIM REPRESENTATION IN INDIAN PARLIAMENT

2019	25* (5%)
2014	23 (4.5%)
2009	28 (4.6%)
2004	35 (6.69%)
1999	32 (6.11%)
1996	27 (4.9%)
1991	29 (5.4%)
1989	33 (6.2%)
1984	45 (8.3%)
1980	49 (9.2%)
1977	32 (5.2%)
1971	28 (5.4%)
1967	28 (5.4%)
1962	26 (5.1%)
1957	23 (4.6%)
1952	25 (5%)

\*Some leading at time of publication

from West Bengal, with five of six of them from TMC, and one from the Congress.

AIMIM, which has Asaduddin Owaisi elected again from Hyderabad, is likely to see another member in the new Lok Sabha. The party's Imtiaz Jaleel Syed, contesting from Aurangabad in Maharashtra, was leading by a thin margin over sitting MP Chandrakant Khaire of the Shiv Sena late Thursday night. The AIMIM contested in Maharashtra in alliance with Prakash Ambedkar's Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi, leading to consolidation of Muslim and Dalit votes in some seats for the alliance.

The Left Front's only win from Kerala is likely to come from Alappuzha, where CPI(M)'s A M Arif was leading by just over 10,000 votes late night. Also in Kerala, the Indian Union Muslim League's T M Mohamed Basheer (Ponnani) and PK Kunhalikutty (Malappuram) have been elected, while the party's K Navaskari is leading from Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu, where IUML is part of the DMK-led alliance.

All three Lok Sabha seats in Kashmir Valley went to the National Conference, its candidates being Farooq Abdullah, Mohammad Akbar Lone, and Hanani Masoodi.

The Congress has four Muslim candidates who are leading: Abdul Khaleque (Barpeta, Assam), Mohammad Jawed (Kishanganj, Bihar), Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury (Maldah Dakshin, West Bengal), and Mohammad Sadique (Faridkot, Punjab).



"Crores of people of Bharat are fortunate to once again have a stable government. This is the triumph of the national forces. Many compliments to each and everyone who have contributed to this victory of democracy..."

BHAIYAJI JOSHI, RSS general secretary



Celebrations at the BJP office in New Delhi on Thursday. Praveen Khanna

## BJP's heartland surge flattens identity politics in UP, Bihar

RAVISH TIWARI  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

TURNING CASTE calculations on its head, and upending the formidable arithmetic of the Mandal formula's main protagonists in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the BJP-led NDA has virtually flattened the politics of identity by winning 103 of the 120 Lok Sabha seats in the two states.

The BJP's surge in the Hindi heartland pushed to the wayside the biggest political realignment of Muslim-Yadav-Dalit-Jat communities attempted by the SP-BSP-RJD alliance in UP, and the rainbow coalition of Muslim-Yadav-Mushahar-Koeri-Nishad groups put together by the RJD-led initiative in Bihar.

"Ek bhi vote na ghatne paye, ek bhi vote na batne paye (Not a single vote should go waste, not a single vote should be split)," was the war cry that was sounded at the first joint campaign rally of the BSP-SP-RJD in Deoband on April 7, just five days before the first phase.

This slogan summed up the coalition's ambitions, but also exposed the limita-

**EXPLAINED**

tions of such a formulation in a politically crucial state. It was a call for the mutual transfer of votes among their core support base but it was also seen as a veiled suggestion to other communities that they were not needed in this arithmetic.

"Meriginti nahin hogi na use mein (I will not be counted among them)," was the theme pushed by the core supporters of SP and BSP over the last couple of decades, since the advent of Mandal politics, to justify voting against "non-social justice parties". This time, however, the gathbandhan's slogan virtually signalled to other communities that they would not be counted.

This left the field open for the BJP to consolidate non-Yadav and non-Jatav votes behind it. These communities had shifted to the BJP in droves during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections and stuck with the party during the 2017 assembly elections. Until as late as the 2012 assembly elections, many of these communities used to vote for the SP or BSP.

The results, in essence, reflect how identity-based arithmetic fell flat against the chemistry of BJP. While the BJP increased its vote share from 42.63 per cent (2014) to 49.55 per cent, the combined BSP-SP-RJD vote share slipped from 42.98 per cent (2014) to 38.92 per cent. That the gathbandhan didn't cause much of a dent is obvious from the final NDA tally of 64, including two alliance partners, as against 73 in 2014.

In Bihar, too, the politics of identity was a key factor as recent as in the 2015 assembly elections, when the Opposition RJD tied up with the JD(U) to defeat the BJP. This time, after the JD(U) switched sides to join hands with the BJP, the Opposition sought to replicate the model with other parties.

The RJD weaned away the BJP's partners – Upendra Kushwaha (RLSP) and Jitan Ram Manjhi (HAM) – and added Mukesh Sahni (VIP) to forge a rainbow coalition that drew its core support from the Muslim-Yadav-Koeri-Mushahar-Nishad combination, along with the Congress.

This tie-up, however, fell flat against the NDA's BJP-JDU-LJP alliance that rode the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The alliance together polled about 53.25 per cent votes, winning every seat except one in the state.

The results also appear to have called the bluff of politically organised peasant communities across UP, Bihar, Haryana, Gujarat and Maharashtra. These communities – Yadavs (UP and Bihar), Jats (Haryana), Patidars (Gujarat) and Marathas (Maharashtra) – had taken a dominant position in state politics until this setback.

While the Yadavs experimented with coalitions, the Jats, Patidars and Marathas have staged violent agitations against the BJP governments in these states since 2014. Their demands for quotas in jobs and educational institutions were seen as attempts to further consolidate the politics of identity.

While the BJP tried to pander to these demands at the administrative level, the results suggest that other communities have not displayed much sympathy. This time, the association of dominant communities with Opposition parties appears to have isolated them politically.

## The man, his machine, and the 2019 blueprint

LIZ MATHEW  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

AFTER THE BJP's stunning victory in 2014, many compared Amit Shah to the late BJP leader Pramod Mahajan, who was known for his strategising skills. But someone who knew Shah from his early years in politics said, "Pramod could be indulgent while dealing with a request for a seat from someone he loved or respected, even if he knew he would not be able to win it. But with Shah, it's impossible to make him oblige if he is not sure you can win that seat."

In 2014, not many knew the real Shah. What Indian politics has witnessed thereafter is a man who has often been called the modern-age Chanakya, someone who has unveiled his own version of the political treatise Arthashastra. By now, no one in the BJP seems to have any doubt about Shah. His determination to accomplish anything he sets his mind on, his meticulous planning and the ruthlessness with which he takes on political rivals have made him the most successful party chief.

From stitching up new social coalitions to choosing the right leaders for election management to keeping out senior leaders from the election fray – Shah's is arguably the last word in organisational matters.

### Reviving party

Soon after the BJP came to power, Shah set aside the first year – 2014–15 – to "revitalise" the party. On November 1, six months after the BJP won a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, Shah launched his party's membership drive with the slogan 'Saath Aaye, Banaye' (Come together, build the nation).

By July, the membership, registered through a simple process of missed calls, rose from 3.5 crore to 11 crore. Shah then launched the Maha Sampark Abhiyan or the mass contact programme to familiarise new members with the organisation and its ideology.

He then kicked off 'Mera Booth Sabse Mazboot', another campaign to take the party ideology to the booth level. Next, he launched Deendayal Upadhyaya Vistarik Yojana from Naxalbari in West Bengal, setting off on a 95-day all-India tour to strategise on ways to win the 2019 Lok Sabha election with a clear focus on 120 seats where the party had lost in the last election. "The BJP's booth-level management is superhero. No other party has the management ability of the BJP," said a party general secretary.

The effect of Shah's plan to expand the party was first on display in Tripura, where the party overthrew the decades-old Communist government. As early as September 2016, Shah had started a contingency plan for the 2019 elections – in case the party failed to retain the seats it won in 2014. For that, he planned to zoom in on states where the party had not made deep inroads, including southern and eastern states. A core committee meeting chaired by Shah had identified around 115 seats as the party's "new catchment area". In these seats, across Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the Northeast, general secretaries and other office bearers were given charge.

He brought about changes within the

**This is a victory of true nationalism over parties supporting the ideology of the tukde-tukde gang. The politics of casteism, dynasty and appeasement politics has been buried in this massive mandate to the BJP**

**It is the victory of people, it is a victory of Modi's Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas policy. Modi is the superhero of BJP's super victory**

**Today's result is India's mandate against opposition's propaganda, lies, personal insinuations and baseless politics. It is also the people's mandate who have chosen development and nationalism, and rejected casteism, dynasty and appeasement**

AMIT SHAH  
BJP PRESIDENT

party too. Shah dismantled existing cells within the party and carved out 19 new departments. Besides, Shah identified 10 focus areas – among them, setting up of district-wise party offices, office modernisation, setting up of libraries, the membership campaign and government schemes such as Namami Ganga and Swachh Bharat.

### Picking right

When it comes to choosing people to do the job, nothing comes in Shah's way except the candidate's ability to accomplish the mission. "There's no lobby in the BJP. If Shah is convinced that you can do the job, you are in," said the leader.

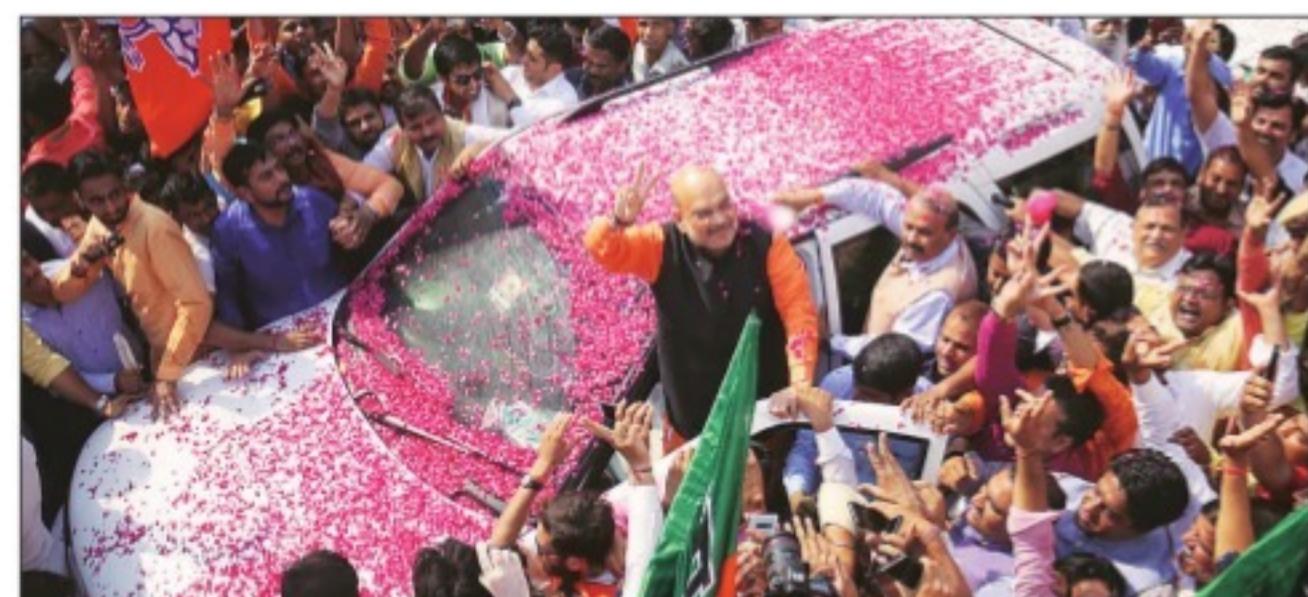
He had picked Sunil Bansal, a low-profile organisation person who had worked in Rajasthan and Delhi, to oversee the implementation of his blueprint for the Uttar Pradesh mission ahead of 2014. He chose P Muralidhar Rao, a general secretary who was working with Swadeshi Jagaran Manch before he came to the BJP, for the training programme. What impressed Shah about Rao was his ideological background and his ability to spread the party ideology among the cadre.

### The technology push

Call-centres, GPS-fitted raths, video and hologram addresses, and tracking of booths and volunteers – the BJP's campaign over the last five years has been infused with technology. For the 2019 election, the party had 168 call centres with 12,662 karyakartas who would contact people on telephone or through social media. Shah has incorporated high-tech designers and consultants in his team.

### Multi-pronged approach

Ahead of the election, efforts were made to track beneficiaries of welfare schemes initiated by the Central government and mobilise them as the party's core support base.



Amit Shah at the BJP office in New Delhi on Thursday. Praveen Khanna

## How BJP marketed to a new voting bloc: the 22 crore beneficiaries

KARISHMA MEHROTRA  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

SINCE LAST year, BJP president Amit Shah has emphasised one number: 22 crore. A voting bloc of 22 crore beneficiaries of at least one scheme of the Narendra Modi government in the past five years will take the party past the 300 mark, Shah said.

"With this foundation, we have done the work of a huge beneficiary outreach campaign," he said at a press meet marking the end of campaigning.

This beneficiary outreach campaign connected the party to 18 crore beneficiaries through 161 call centres and 15,600 callers. Shah announced that the party had reached out to 24.81 crore people through this.

Sources told *The Indian Express* that 6 crore of these people were women, and 20 per cent of them were in the South. The seats that saw the most beneficiary outreach were 19 seats in Uttar Pradesh and four in Maharashtra, amounting to eight lakh beneficiaries, said sources.

A total of 14 crore people were contacted on the ground and 6 crore were reached through SMS and interactive phone calling.

The work began right after the 2014 victory, when Shah's National Membership Drive collected over 11 crore missed calls by May 2015 and reached out to them.

This database was topped up with data of beneficiaries collected by party workers at Shah's behest.

Sources claim that the initial collection

of beneficiaries data was to the tune of 3 crore beneficiaries and later rose to 18 crore, with added numbers from gas companies and repeated on the ground campaigns to collect more missed calls.

Closer to the elections, in July 2018, Shah tasked party general secretary Bhupendra Yadav to reconnect to this database. The team set up one call centre for every three Lok Sabha constituencies with an average of 30 callers who were locally drawn and trained in political communication.

In the last few months of campaigning, the 2015 missed call dialers and the party workers reached out afresh to the beneficiaries' homes in two BJP campaigns. In February, *Mera Parivar* BJP Parivar had workers and sympathisers visit the benefi-

caries, get a missed call from them, and raise a flag in front of their home. In Kamal Jyoti Sankalp, workers asked beneficiaries to introduce them to more beneficiaries, adding another 8 crore phone numbers to the already collected 10 crore missed calls.

The BJP used services of a company called Jarvis Technologies to map the numbers to booths so that the call centers could conduct targeted campaigning. The call centre operations began in December and were monitored from 11 Ashoka Road.

"The soft message to the workers was you have to say two lines. Go there and say look, Modi has given schemes to this many families in only five years. Give him another five and you can make that number even more," a senior core member of Jarvis told *The Indian Express*.



Celebrations in Bengaluru. PTI

spent Rs 21 crore on Facebook and Google and the Congress Rs 4.5 crore, but the major politi-

cal spending supporting the BJP was not officially linked to the party.

Even as the Election Commission entered the digital fray for the first time, with a Voluntary Code of Ethics directing social media companies to address valid takedown requests in a timely manner, the BJP's cadre strength concentrated on encrypted political content that could percolate out on WhatsApp. The booth-level workers, essentially the BJP's WhatsApp nerve endings, were directed to integrate into non-BJP-affiliated WhatsApp groups in their neighborhood and circulate content beyond the party.

BJP's IT cell head Amit Malviya said the party had roughly 1.2 million social media volunteers while a Congress spokesperson put their numbers at roughly 9 lakh.

In mid-2018, BJP chief Amit Shah went on a nationwide tour and spoke exclusively to social media volunteers and galvanised them.

"The large technology-friendly cadre and massive volunteer network that stood in support of Modi gave us an edge," Malviya told *The Indian Express*.

The BJP had accumulated data from multiple phases of missed call campaigns starting from 2013. This led to a 25-crore strong database mapped to the booth level, focused on beneficiary outreach.

In March 2018, the Congress also began to build a database of 65 lakh workers, a dashboard to communicate with them, and an application to facilitate door-to-door campaigns.

"Big data is not new. What's new are the tools to digitise and analyse it," said Congress data analytics head Praveen Chakravarty. "Today everybody has a device through which I can reach them. I just need to know more about that device or how to reach that device and more about the owner of that device. That's what we do."

While the BJP's strength in numbers far surpassed the Congress, internal discord in the Congress' publicity committee significantly stalled the selection of a company for campaigning. While the party chose Dentus in 2014, the committee chose four firms — Silverpush, DesignBoxed, Percept, and Niksun — by the end of March 2019. In contrast, the BJP has been working with Jarvis Technologies to reach out to beneficiaries since mid-2018 and continued to work with Association of Billion Minds since the previous state elections.

Some central Congress social media heads attributed their defeat to a lack of funds. "It was primarily an issue of money. Even if you had imperfect communication, with enough money you can whitewash imperfection," one of them said. This social media head said he was already gearing up to take back the narrative.

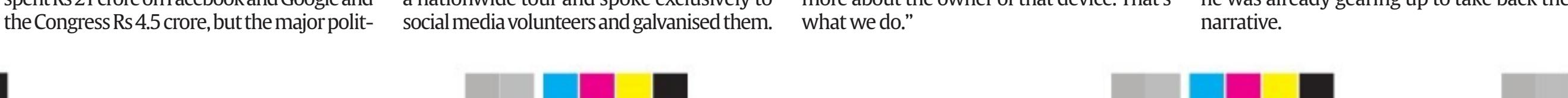
## After 2014 digital debut, 2019 push came from BJP cadre

KARISHMA MEHROTRA  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

THE 2014 Lok Sabha election was deemed India's first "digital election", in which technology brought in an unprecedented factor. In 2019, the novelty had faded. From a competition of followers and likes on the Internet, the narrative battle shifted to the ground as the ruling party leveraged its cadre to spread its message further.

"The top BJP leadership was not focusing on digital this time. Digital was a weapon taken care of by the IT cell independently," a top political consultant hired by the BJP central leadership said. "But booth worker activation had ripple effects."

The BJP war room shifted its focus to data collection and analysis to strengthen the party volunteer base and map potential vot-



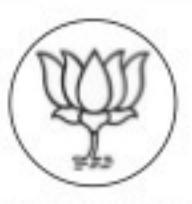
Celebrations in Bengaluru. PTI



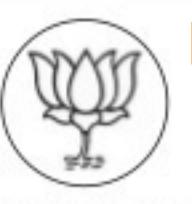
# HEARTLAND

DECISION  
2019

## MADHYA PRADESH 29 SEATS

BJP  
282014  
27CONG  
12014  
2OTHERS  
02014  
0

## RAJASTHAN 25 SEATS

BJP  
242014  
25CONG  
02014  
0OTHERS  
12014  
0

Leads/results till 1 am

"This is for the first time in India that nationalism was put first in general elections."

— SUMITRA MAHAJAN,  
BJP leader and former Indore MP



## THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Bhopal candidates — Congress's Digvijaya Singh and BJP's Pragya Singh Thakur — during the counting of votes. Pragya won by a margin of 3,64,822 votes. Hitesh Bajpai

### 5 QUESTIONS RAJASTHAN CM ASHOK GEHLOT

CONGRESS LEADER SPEAKS TO MANOJ CG ABOUT THE RESULTS IN RAJASTHAN



The Congress drew a blank in Rajasthan and could manage to win only 51 seats. What went wrong?

BJP did not frame the election based on issue or ideology, programme or policies. They only harped on communalism and converted the election into one on nationalism as if they are the only custodians of it. Pakistan, Pulwama, Balakot...they took the election into that mode. So the people also started thinking about Modi or no Modi. There was no other reason.

And the Congress could not counter it?

In Congress, Rahul Gandhi fought a remarkable fight... Modi could not reply to any of the allegations. He made the people sentimental.... He won by misleading and confusing the people.

Were there any shortcomings organisationally?

There were no shortcomings... the campaign of the Congress was spectacular...They (BJP) polarised the election in a different way... They misled and provoked the younger generation using social media.

Many people believe Rahul Gandhi should step down.

It is all nonsense... Everybody has confidence that only he can fight.

What changes should the Congress carry out organisationally and in its messaging to the people?

The Congress Working Committee will discuss all this.

## Months after voting Vasundhara out, Rajasthan throws weight behind Modi

HAMZA KHAN  
JAIPUR, MAY 23

The BJP not only won all the 25 Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan, but also increased its margin in 20 seats — including one contested by an ally — and its overall vote share in the state.

The BJP increased its vote share from 55.61 per cent in 2014 to over 58 per cent. This was also an increase over its voteshare of 38.8 per cent in the Assembly elections late last year.

The Congress, which won zero seats in 2014, had received 30.73 of the vote share then; this time it slightly improved it to 34.2 per cent. In the Assembly elections last year, it got 39.3 per cent of the total votes.

Among the prominent Congress candidates who suffered a defeat are Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's son Vaibhav Gehlot in Jodhpur, Olympian Krishna Poonia in Jaipur Rural, Jitendra Singh in Alwar and Manvendra Singh in Barmer.

Congress insiders said the party expected to win at least seven seats, including Dausa,



Vasundhara Raje with BJP state chief Madan Lal Saini in Jaipur. Rohit Jain Paras

Tonk-Sawai Madhopur, Barmer, Karauli Dholpur, Sikar, Barmer and Jodhpur.

What worked for the BJP was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's focussed campaign around national security, terrorism, Pakistan and the cross border strikes. It was

only towards the end of his speeches that the Prime Minister would list his government's achievements in Ujjwala Yojana, Saubhagya

Yojana, Jan Dhan, MUDRA, PM Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, Soil Health Cards and Ayushman Bharat, etc.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said, "While Congress president Rahul Gandhi contested the elections on the issue of development, Narendra Modi blew the model code of conduct to smiteereens and contested the polls on religion, caste, and army's value."

For the Congress, Rahul's campaign around the alleged corruption in Rafale deal and the NYAY scheme for farmers did not yield dividends. The party had hit the ground running after forming the government in the state and announced farm loan waiver, unemployment dole, etc. but these seem to have been unsuccessful in swaying the voters. The friction between the Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot camps also affected party's prospects.

The results epitomised the slogan doing the rounds during Assembly elections last year: 'Modi tujh se bair nahi, Rani teri khari nahi' (Nothing against Modi, but the queen has had it). Five months after voting out Raje, the electorate threw its full weight behind Modi.

## Modi factor, 'mistakes' by Baghel govt behind Cong defeat in Chhattisgarh

DIPANKAR GHOSE  
RAIPUR, MAY 23

AS THE BJP swept to power, the Congress was reduced to binary scores across the country and performed poorly in Chhattisgarh too, winning only two of the 11 seats. While the Prime Minister's image was certainly a factor in a state where the BJP changed all 10 of its sitting MPs, many within and outside the Congress believe that five months of party rule have seen a series of mistakes that have exacerbated the problem.

Five months ago, the Congress barely scraped through in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, but in Chhattisgarh it won 68 of 90 seats. In all three previous elections, the party which won the Vidhan Sabha elections in December, won the Lok Sabha elections in May. All three times it was the BJP.

The Congress lost with the highest margin — of over four lakh — in Durg, which is

home to three ministers, including CM Bhupesh Baghel. "That is actually the reason why Durg, and even Surguja have been lost. All three were CM candidates, and since then, no relationship building has taken place. Everyone is pulling in solitary directions and

there is no sign of collective leadership. In Durg, this margin means neither the Kurmis, with Baghel being a Kurmi leader, or the Sahus voted," said a senior Congress leader.

If the BJP campaign in the state was single-minded, replacing its old guard with 11 new faces to concentrate on Modi during the campaign, the Congress failed to show political clarity. Its flagship scheme Narwa Gurwa Gharwa Baari has failed to show immediate results, and while the loan waiver may have assuaged some farmers, many believed in a clear national alternative. "On top of that, there were administrative lapses. Despite them being because of administrative reasons, the BJP used the stoppage of subsidised chana and salt to their advantage in tribal areas. This is clear government laxity," a senior Congress leader said.

While former CM Raman Singh said this was a vote for Modi, other BJP leaders said that there was a clear two-prong strategy. "One was Modi... The other was to highlight... what the Congress has done wrong," a BJP leader said.

## Pragya wins 'ideological battle' against Digvijaya

MILIND GHATWAI  
BHOPAL, MAY 23

BILLED AS an ideological battle, the emphatic victory of political novice Pragya Singh Thakur from Bhopal has demolished former chief minister Digvijaya Singh's plans of returning to active politics in Madhya Pradesh.

After the debacle of the Congress in the 2003 Assembly polls, the senior Congress leader had vowed not to contest any election for 10 years. When he finally decided to take the plunge again, with the Lok Sabha, he wanted to contest from Rajgarh, his home turf, but in clever manoeuvring by Chief Minister Kamal Nath, a rival in state politics, Digvijaya found himself in contest from Bhopal, one of the safest BJP seats in the state.

"Even an ordinary worker can defeat Singh in Bhopal," former CM Uma Bharti had said before the BJP announced the candida-

tive of the Malegaon blast case accused.

Her remark that Godse is, was, and will be a patriot got the Prime Minister to say that he "could not forgive her from his heart".

But that hardly helped Digvijaya. He probably visited more temples than Pragya, fed roti to a cow, and was escorted by sadhus during a march.

His campaign also appeared to be organised and systematic unlike the chaos surrounding Pragya's initial efforts, before the RSS took over the reins. In between, she had to endure a 72-hour ban on campaigning due to her controversial statements. She used the break to visit temples and sing bhajans in the glare of TV cameras. Just three days before the campaign ended, she released a patchy vision document in stark contrast to the one unveiled by the Congress leader.

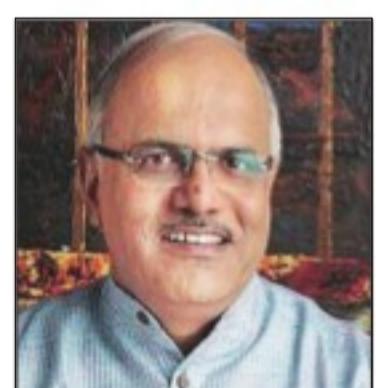
None of this appears to have helped Digvijaya live down the BJP's projection of him as anti-Hindu and pro-minority.

### 5 QUESTIONS | VINAY SAHASRABUDDHE

BJP VICE-PRESIDENT AND MADHYA PRADESH IN-CHARGE TALKS TO MILIND GHATWAI ABOUT PRAGYA SINGH THAKUR'S VICTORY AND WHAT WORKED IN THE PARTY'S FAVOUR

Was there a Modi wave and did you expect such an outcome?

More than a wave it was an undercurrent... But honestly, 28 (out of 29) was more than our expectations.



of its own contradictions...

Is there a message in Pragya Singh Thakur's victory?

We were clear that her candidature is our 'satyagrah' against the vote bank politics of the Congress... Digvijaya Singh symbolised the pervert vote bank politics...

Did the BJP have any special campaign plan against Scindia?

I will draw a parallel between Amethi and Guna. For political dynasties, the constituencies gave a very clear message... Generations who voted in this election do not have an emotional connect with monarchies...

## After Assembly win, the defeat

WHILE the Congress fared badly nationally, its drubbing in Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh — three states where it had won five months ago — compounded its defeat. All the three states had announced waiver of farm loans, as promised by Rahul Gandhi during the election campaign. There

**EXPLAINED**

were other sops which were on the anvil. There were seasoned and experienced leaders at the helm in at least two states — Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The verdict, despite all this, underlines the challenges ahead, especially in Madhya Pradesh where the Congress does not have majority on its own.

RAJYAVARDHAN SINGH RATHORE (BJP)

wins Jaipur Rural, defeats Congress's Krishna Poonia by a margin of 3,93,171 votes



VAIBHAV GEHLOT (CONGRESS)

loses Jodhpur to BJP's Gajendra Singh Shekhawat by a margin of 2,74,440 votes



NAKUL NATH (CONGRESS)

wins Chhindwara, defeats BJP's Nathansha Kawreti by a margin of 37,536 votes



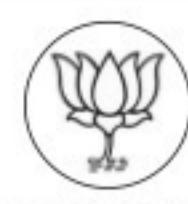
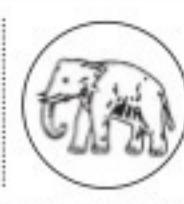
JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA (CONGRESS)

defeated in Guna by BJP's Krishna Pal Singh by a margin of 1,25,549 votes





## UTTAR PRADESH 80 SEATS

BJP  
622014  
71BSP  
102014  
0SP  
52014  
5CONG  
12014  
2OTHERS  
2

Leads/results till 1 am

"It is high time for the opposition to introspect and shun politics of negativity..."

— YOGI ADITYANATH,  
BJP leader and UP chief minister

# In alliance dark cloud, BSP gets silver lining

BSP set to get 10, saffron party's tally down but vote share rises, as SP and Cong both see a dip in votes polled

MAULSHREE SETH  
LUCKNOW, MAY 23

WHILE THE alliance between the BSP and the SP managed to make some dent in the mandate that the BJP got in Uttar Pradesh in 2014 — 71 seats — the BSP emerged to be the major gainer.

The BJP lost numbers compared to 2014 but gained in terms of vote-share. The SP got around the same number of seats but lost in terms of vote-share. The BSP, which led on 10 seats, maintained its vote-share.

As of late Thursday, the BJP led in 62 out of UP's 80 seats, reflecting the Congress's inability in giving a strong fight even in its bastion of Amethi. The grand old party appeared to be the biggest loser, with even its vote-share dipping in the state. This comes even after the party launched Priyanka Gandhi as general secretary in charge of eastern UP who extensively campaigned in the region.

Despite losing about 15 seats to the alliance, the BJP's vote share increased in the state from 42.63 per cent in 2014 to approximately 49.5 per cent this time. The BSP maintained the same vote-share (around 19.27), while the SP's share dipped from 22 per cent in 2014 to about 18 per cent.

The Congress's vote-share came down from 7.53 per cent to about 6.3 per cent. The party got a major shock in Amethi, where AICC president Rahul Gandhi lost to Union minister Smriti Irani of BJP by about 55,000 votes. Irani maintained her lead against Rahul through all the rounds of counting.

In Varanasi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke his previous record of 3.71-lakh margin, winning by about 4.79 lakh votes. The Congress chose to repeat local leader Ajai Rai against Modi, but the SP's Shalini Yadav finished second.

Among other surprising results were Union minister Manoj Sinha of the BJP losing to BSP's Afzal Ansari in Ghazipur by a margin of over 1 lakh votes, and BSP candidate Atul Kumar Singh, absconding in an alleged rape case, winning from Ghosi.

The BSP was leading from Ambedkar Nagar, Amroha, Ghazipur, Ghosi, Bijnor, Jaunpur, Lalgarh, Nagina, Saharanpur and Sharavasti.

The SP failed to retain some of the constituencies it had won in 2014, including Kannauj, where Dimple Yadav, wife of party chief Akhilesh Yadav, was trailing by 12,000 votes. Akhilesh won from Azamgarh by over 2.5 lakh votes against Bhopuri actor Dinesh Lal Nirahua of BJP. Party patriarch Mulayam Yadav won from Mainpuri by about 94,000 votes. Two sitting SP MPs — Akshay Yadav in Firozabad and Dharmendra Yadav in Badaun — were trailing to BJP candidates. In Rampur, Azam Khan of SP was leading by a margin of about 94,000 votes against Jaya Prada of the BJP.



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath celebrates with his deputies Dinesh Sharma and Keshav Maurya at the BJP office in Lucknow on Thursday. Vishal Srivastav

**EXPLAINED**

## Gathbandhan loses UP-hill battle

THE OPPOSITION'S efforts to hold back the BJP suffered the biggest setback in Uttar Pradesh, where the SP-BSP-RLD gathbandhan was the biggest political realignment in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections. But the attempt to consolidate their respective vote-banks was countered by the consolidation of the non-Yadav, non-Jatav communities behind the BJP. Consequently, the BJP improved its vote share, even as it lost a few seats to the alliance. The gathbandhan failed to make any substantial dent to the BJP's tally in the state. Within the alliance, while the BSP emerged as the bigger beneficiary, several members of both the SP and RLD first families lost.

No gains for SP, party leaders say must check if BSP votes transferred

LALMANI VERMA  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

WITH THE Samajwadi Party (SP) leading in only five seats in Uttar Pradesh despite its much-hyped alliance with the BSP, senior SP leaders have expressed concern and said the party should check if the BSP's votes were adequately transferred to the party.

Besides Moradabad and Sambhal, where SP candidates are leading, SP national president Akhilesh Yadav is leading from Azamgarh, party patron Mulayam Singh Yadav from Mainpuri and MLA Azam Khan from Rampur.

If the SP wins all these five seats, its tally will be the same as in 2014. But the party is trailing in its bastions of Kannauj, Firozabad and Badaun. In Kannauj, Akhilesh's wife Dimple Yadav is trailing behind the BJP candidate by a small margin. In Firozabad, Mulayam's younger brother and SP rebel Shivpal Singh Yadav has hurt the party's official candidate — while Shivpal has scored more than 91,000 votes, SP candidate Akshay Yadav is trailing behind the BJP by 28,364 votes.

The BSP, which drew a blank in the 2014 elections, has already won four seats and is leading in six other seats.

SP leader and Rajya Sabha member Chandrapal Singh Yadav said, "The results are surprising. We will review the results from each polling station and find out whether the vote were transferred (BSP's to SP). Another reason could be polarisation of votes because of the alliance."

Chandrapal Yadav, however, insisted that the alliance had been fruitful. "We have got the votes. There was no loss. Earlier, SP had five seats and BSP zero. Today we have 17-18 seats. So, we cannot call it a loss. The situation would have probably been worse if there was no alliance," he said.

SP founder and Rajya Sabha member leader Beni Prasad Verma said, "Modi ki andhi hai to kya kya jae (what can be done if there is a Modi storm)." On the alliance with the BSP, Verma said, "The alliance was okay but the results went contrary to our expectations."

Javed Ali Khan, another Rajya Sabha member of the SP, too said the SP and BSP would have been worse off had they not come together. Khan said the alliance failed to sense the impact of the BJP's nationalism agenda.

## Cong cuts into gathbandhan votes, to little effect

Leads contradict party's claim that Congress candidates would either win or eat into BJP's votes

LALMANI VERMA  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

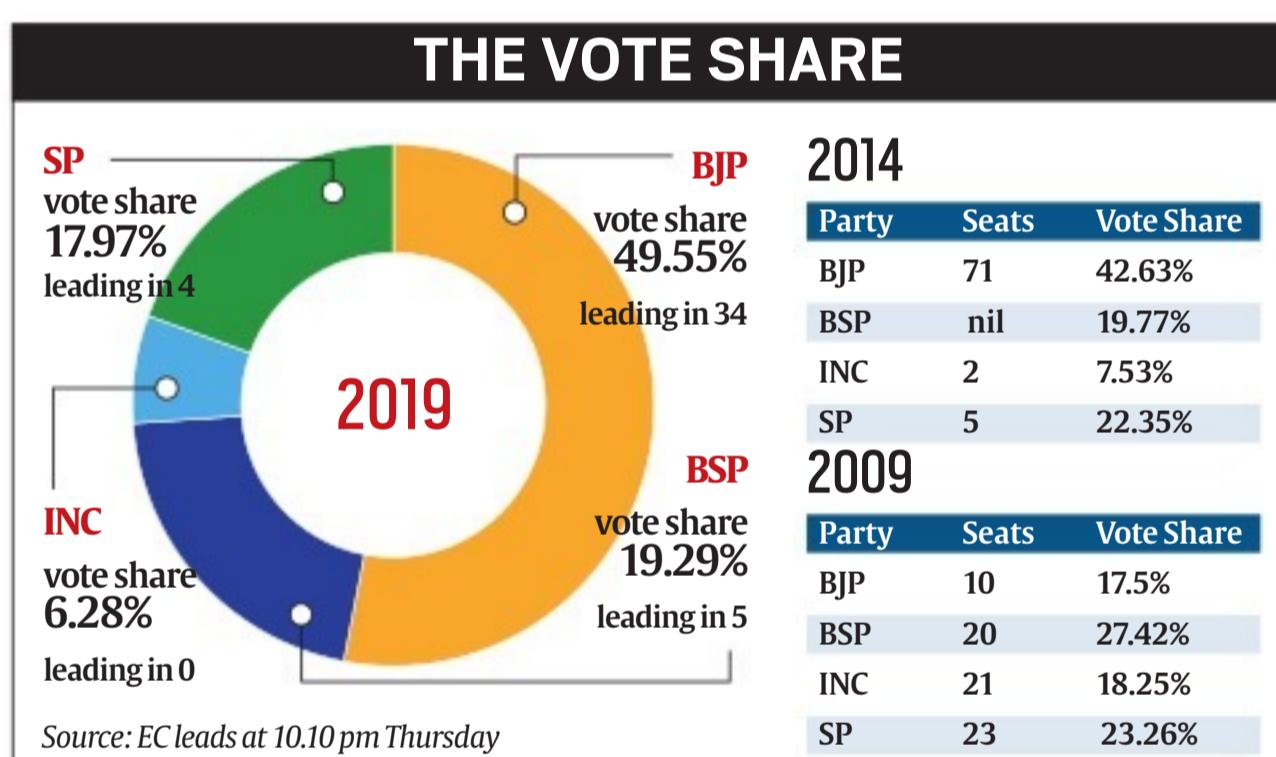
IN AT least a dozen seats of Uttar Pradesh, the Congress ended up cutting into the gathbandhan votes, with SP and BSP insiders saying their candidates would have won here or at least put up a better fight had the Congress not fielded its candidates.

Earlier this month, Congress general secretary in charge of eastern UP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra had remarked that her party candidates would either win or cut into the BJP's votes. But the numbers from these seats show otherwise.

For instance, as of 10 pm on Thursday BJP's Sultanpur candidate Manek Gandhi was leading with 45.91 per cent votes and BSP's Chandra Bhadra Singh was trailing at 44.45 votes while Congress candidate Sanjay Singh had got 4.17 per cent votes. Had Congress not fielded its candidate in this seat, the BSP could have ended up on the winning side.

In Dhaula, BJP's Rekha Verma was leading with 47.73 per cent votes against BSP's Arshad Ilyas Siddiqui (33.75 per cent votes). Here, Congress's Jitin Prasada stood third with 15 per cent votes.

In Barabanki, BJP's Upendra Singh Rawat was leading with 46.48 per cent while SP's Ram Sagar Rawat had got 36.88 per cent votes. The 13.8 per cent votes that Congress



candidate Tanuj Punia got is more than the BJP's lead over the SP candidate.

In the SP bastion of Badaun, sitting SP MP and alliance candidate Dharmendra Yadav was trailing at 44.96 per cent votes, behind BJP's Sanghmitra Maurya (47.82 per cent votes). Here, the Congress's Saleem Iqbal Shervani has got 5 per cent votes.

In Pratapgarh, Apna Dal MLA and NDA candidate Sangam Lal Gupta was leading with 47.72 per cent votes while BSP's Ashok Tripathi was trailing with 34.79 per cent votes. Congress candidate Rajkumari Ratna

Singh had got 5 per cent votes.

In Meerut, sitting MP and BJP candidate Rajendra Agarwal was leading with 48.2 per cent votes while BSP's Haji Mohammad Yaqoob was marginally behind with 47.79 per cent votes. Congress's Harendra Agarwal was at third place with 2.84 per cent votes.

In Sitapur, sitting BJP MP Rajesh Verma was leading with 48.62 per cent votes while BSP's Nakul Dubey was trailing at 38.17 per cent votes. Former BSP MP Qaiser Jahan, who joined the Congress a few weeks ago, was at third position with 9.39 per cent votes.

In Badohi, BJP's Ramesh Chand was leading with 48.74 per cent votes while BSP's Rangnath Mishra was trailing with 45.13 per cent votes. Congress candidate Ramakant was at third position with 2.45 per cent votes, close to the difference of votes between BJP and BSP.

In Kairana, SP candidate Tabassum Begum (42.33 per cent votes), who as RLD candidate had defeated the BJP in a key bypoll, was trailing BJP's Pradeep Kumar (50.34 per cent). Congress's Harendra Singh Malik was at third place with 6.18 per cent votes. Here too, the presence of the Congress may have ended up splitting the Opposition space.

In Faizabad, sitting BJP MP Lallu Singh led with 48.83 per cent votes while SP's Anand Sen was trailing with 42.42 per cent votes. Congress candidate and former PCC chief Nirmal Khatri stood third with 4.94 per cent votes. Gathbandhan sources say had the non-BJP votes been consolidated, this seat would have witnessed a close election.

Similarly, in Kushi Nagar, where BJP's Vijay Kumar Dubey was leading with 56.76 per cent votes, and Fatehpur Sikri, where Congress state unit president Raj Babbar (17.48 per cent votes) was trailing with behind BJP's Raj Kumar Chahar (63.29 per cent votes), SP-BSP insiders say had the Congress not fielded its candidates, the complexion of these seats would have changed.

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## HEARTLAND

DECISION  
2019

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

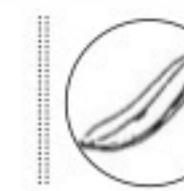
The campaign was not about what you will do for the country, or for the farmer, for poor, for villages, for dalits or for backward class.

ASHOK GEHLOT, Rajasthan Chief Minister

BIHAR 40 SEATS

BJP  
172014  
22JD(U)  
162014  
2LJP  
62014  
6

JHARKHAND 14 SEATS

BJP  
112014  
11AJSU  
12014  
1CONG  
12014  
0

(Leads/wins till 1am)

## Saffron sweep in Jharkhand but SC seats remain

ABHISHEK ANGAD  
RANCHI, MAY 23

THE NATIONAL Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Jharkhand is set to sweep the state with 12 out of 14 seats.

While the ruling alliance's performance is a repeat of 2014, it is important to note that this time, the BJP managed to wrest Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) President Shibu Soren's constituency Dumka.

Soren has won the seat all but twice since 1989. This time however, the poll plank of protection for 'jal, jungle, and zameen' (water, jungles and land) does not seem to have worked. He was beaten by Sunil Soren.

At 10:45pm, The saffron party was leading in two other reserved constituencies — Khunti and Lohardaga — while the JMM won Rajmahal, the Congress' Geeta Kora won Singhbhum.

Since tribals make up for 27 per cent of the state's population, their vote is pivotal to any party's victory.

While Shibu Soren got 42.78 per cent vote share compared to Sunil Soren's 47.09 per cent, in Khunti, the difference between the BJP's Arjun Munda and the Congress' Kalicharan Munda voteshare — 45.95 per cent and 45.82 per cent respectively — was 0.13 per cent with the former winning.

The contests came down to the wire in Lohardaga as well where the Congress' Sukhdeo Bhagat garnered a 44.24 per cent vote share against the BJP's Sudarshan Bhagat who raked up a 45.4 per cent share.

In Rajmahal and Singhbhum however, the opposition candidates won with comfortable margins of 9-10% in the vote shares. In Rajmahal, Vijay Kumar Hansdak of the JMM beat his nearest opponent — Gruhan



Since tribals make up 27 % of the state's population, their vote is pivotal to any party's victory. PTI

Ram of the RJD — by a margin of over 99,000 votes. Meanwhile in Singhbhum, Kora beat her nearest rival — Jharkhand BJP president Laxman Giluwa by a margin of over 72,000 votes.

The above results would suggest that a significant section of the Adivasi population may not have bought into the 'wave' that has powered the BJP across large swathes of the nation.

Among the ST seats, Khunti was witness to the Pathalgad unrest, Singham is badly affected by malnutrition and home to many Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, Rajmahal was won by the JMM victory in 2014, and Lohardaga saw a tight contest as well. The results could also decide the future of the coalition, with the JMM winning one seat and the Congress winning the other. The Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (P) and the Rashtriya Janata Dal were both unable to pick up any seats.



## WINNER TAKES ALL

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi celebrate the NDA's victory on Thursday. Alok Jain

## NDA sweeps Bihar leaving nothing for RJD, one for Cong

EXPLAINED  
E.

Alliance chemistry over caste maths

Party out on a duck, Tejashwi stares at storm without RJD chief Lalu Prasad; allies Upendra Kushwaha and Jitan Ram Manjhi unable to win

SANTOSH SINGH  
PATNA, MAY 23

LATE THURSDAY afternoon, the contrast between the images in front of the offices of three big parties on Patna's Bir Chand Patel Path was telling.

BJP and JD(U) supporters danced to drums, and there was nearly no one around the RJD office nearby. It read like the Bihar score-line: 39-1 in favour of the BJP-JD(U)-LJP.

For the RJD-led opposition alliance, the solitary victory went to the Congress — in Kishanganj seat.

The RJD, led by Leader of Opposition in Bihar Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, in the absence of his father and party chief Lalu Prasad, drew a blank, as did the other alliance partners former Union minister Upendra Kushwaha's RSLP, former Bihar CM Jitan Manjhi's HAM(S), seven-term Lok

Sabha MP Sharad Yadav, and the newly formed Vikashel Insan Party.

For the NDA, the result was unprecedented — the best showing since bifurcation of Jharkhand from Bihar, and a huge improvement over the already impressive tally of 32 in 2009 and 31 in 2014.

The RJD had won four seats each in 2014 and 2009. But it was not just the shellacking at the hands of the NDA but the huge margins — anything between 70,000 and 3 lakh — that will be a cause of concern.

Tejashwi clearly failed to make an impression in the absence of Lalu, with the losers' gallery including such political heavyweights like Raghuvaran Prasad Singh, Jagdan Singh, Abdul Bari Siddiqui, Meira Kumar, Shatrughan Sinha, Sharad Yadav, and Misa Bharti, among others.

Chief Minister and JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar, who had stayed away from the media through the campaign phase, said: "So

many (uncharitable) remarks have been made about me, but I had decided to speak only after the people gave their verdict. Now that the verdict is out, it makes us more responsible..."

Asked whether his party will join the Union Cabinet, Nitish said that is a call for the Prime Minister to take. But there "should not be any difficulty in working together" with BJP, he added.

Tejashwi congratulated PM Narendra Modi and said, "We expect the PM to work for employment and agriculture. We will look into reasons for our defeat."

RSLP chief Upendra Kushwaha said his party respects the public mandate, while Congress's Patna Sahib candidate Shatrughan Sinha, who congratulated his "family friend" and the man who vanquished him, BJP's Ravi Shankar Prasad, said, "I have been hearing about irregularities on several seats but today is not the day to discuss that."

THE NDA's sweep in Bihar can be attributed to a number of factors, the key ones being the Modi factor and the almost perfect synergy between allies BJP, JD(U) and LJP. In contrast, the RJD-led Grand Alliance appeared to be in disarray — although the caste combination with leaders like Upendra Kushwaha, Jitan Ram Manjhi and Mukesh Sahni looked good on paper. In fact, the huge victory margins of BJP's Yadav leaders — Nitayanand Rai from Ujjayarpur (over 2.75 lakh) and Ashok Yadav from Madhubani (over 4.5 lakh) — indicated that the party was able to draw the Yadav votes away. Through the campaign, the RJD felt the absence of its chief Lalu Prasad.

## 5 QUESTIONS | BJP'S SUSHIL KUMAR MODI

TALKS TO SANTOSH SINGH ON THE NDA'S WIN IN BIHAR, THE IMPORTANCE OF NITISH KUMAR TO THE ALLIANCE AND THE PROBLEMS WITH THE OPPOSITION'S CAMPAIGN

Did you expect such a victory, especially against a seemingly good social alliance? Even though several experts said Modi's popularity was a uniform factor, they added a rider of the Opposition's good social combination. But we could see the wave all around. We did expect it.



votes with his, we would be getting over 54-55 per cent of the votes.

Do you think the RJD-led Grand Alliance ran a negative campaign?

They had no issue except taking up reservation and their perceived threat to the Constitution.

Were you able to stitch up a better social combination?

Victories of BJP state president Nityanand Rai and Ashok Yadav suggest we also got the Yadav votes. There was perfect synergy in NDA.

So what worked in your favour? We had got 38 per cent of the votes in 2014 when Nitish Kumar was not part of the NDA. He alone had got about 16 per cent of the votes. If we combine our

## EVMS pass test, VVPAT matching success

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

A DAY after the Opposition mounted an aggressive campaign against the credibility of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) units, the Election Commission (EC) successfully matched 12,480 EVMs with their corresponding paper slip count, till 10.30 pm Thursday, save one in Andhra Pradesh.

According to EC spokesperson Sheyphali Sharai, the mismatch in one polling station in Andhra Pradesh was apparently because of "human error".

The most common human error leading to VVPAT mismatch is when a poll officer forgets to clear the mock poll date before the final voting begins. The Commission will ascertain the exact reason for the error in Andhra Pradesh soon, said sources.

This is the first Lok Sabha election covered completely with VVPAT units. The Supreme Court on April 8 had directed the Commission to compulsorily verify VVPAT slips with EVM count in at least 5 polling stations of every assembly segment. As per this direction, the EC has to match VVPAT slips in roughly 20,570 polling stations, across 542 Lok Sabha seats.

Till 10.30pm Thursday, this exercise was completed for 12,480 polling stations, of which error was reported in one in Andhra Pradesh.

Verification of VVPAT slips went on till late Thursday night and a final report of all 20,570 polling stations will only be available Friday.

The Opposition had mounted an aggressive campaign questioning the credibility of EVMs and VVPATs filing a petition in the Supreme Court last month demanding 100% VVPAT count and also approached EC this week to seek VVPAT verification before the EVM count begins.

Both demands were rejected by the SC and EC, respectively.

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## The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

A REMARKABLE VICTORY,  
A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

A victory of this magnitude speaks of an appeal that has breached vote banks and also drawn into its fold the aspirational and the poor

**T**HE NARENDRA MODI-led-BJP's winning of a second term comes with a mandate so large that it could end the political argument. It must start a new conversation. One that begins with the acknowledgement of what PM Modi and his party have achieved. First and foremost: A second unprecedented majority, the second larger than the first. Verdict 2019 deals a fell blow not just to the political common sense that India's parliamentary election had become the sum of 29 contests, but also, that anti-incumbency had settled down as the country's political reflex. The numbers will be parsed carefully in days to come. But it is already clear that this was a national election, fought across the country around the political persona of the man who had led the NDA government for five years, and the electorate has overwhelmingly affirmed his rule.

In the process, Modi has taken the BJP to newer places and groups. The party that was seen as a Brahmin-Bania outfit, primarily of the Hindi heartland, and most attractive to the upper classes, has now carved significant spaces for itself in the east, most spectacularly, in West Bengal, and also in the south, in Telangana and Karnataka. It has also vaulted over the faultlines of caste and class. A victory of this magnitude speaks of an appeal that has breached the caste vote banks of its political opponents and also drawn into its fold the aspirational and the poor.

Under Modi, the BJP shows an appetite for power not diminished by being in power. And an ability to constantly remake its message, add layers to the party's appeal. In the beginning, was the call for Hindu consolidation, by a party that pledges to protect and propagate Hindu interests, through the proposed amendments to the Citizenship Bill, or even more strikingly, and troublingly, by the candidature of Sadhvi Pragya Thakur, accused in a terror case, out on bail. But that was not all.

After the terror attack in Pulwama, and India's response to it in Balakot, the BJP, and the Modi campaign, turned "national security" into a prime talking point. Hindutva was mixed with a muscular nationalism that used the strikes in Pakistan to spell out a new security doctrine: If hit, India would retaliate, and would say so too. To this mix, was added the message that the Modi regime was burnishing India's stature abroad. And delivering a vast array of schemes to the poor at home, in their homes.

Indeed, the Modi message was underscored by the fact that in times of an economic downturn, and rampant unemployment in a country of the young, the government found imaginative and relatively efficient ways of lending a helping hand to the poor. Be it the Ujjwala yojana, or the assistance with building toilets and Swachh Bharat, be it the opening of Jan Dhan accounts for all or the Rs 2,000 sent into them under PM-Kisan – the state reached out to those who bore the brunt of an economic slowdown made worse by, ironically enough, another government policy, demonetisation.

**A**S IT drove its multiple messages home, the Modi-BJP was helped, most of all, by its Opposition. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Congress-led Opposition created the enabling environment for the Modi landslide.

The Congress and the Mahagathbandhans sought to counter the multi-hued, leave-nothing-to-chance Modi campaign with just an anti-Modi slogan plus a bare caste arithmetic. Rahul Gandhi's "Chowkidar chor hai" chant could not drown out his party's silence on crucial issues or its BJP-lite responses in others.

For five years, the Congress seemed either spooked by the BJP or bewildered about the way forward, on subjects ranging from secularism and the rights of minorities to economic policy. Just before elections, the Congress did finally try to outline its positions, differentiate itself from the BJP, in its manifesto. But it was too late, and the Congress itself seemed content to throw up talking points in the capital's drawing rooms – it did nothing to carry its document to the people.

Regional parties in the Opposition, with the exception of the DMK in Tamil Nadu and the YSR Congress in Andhra Pradesh, also confront a moment of reckoning. The RJD in Bihar, and partners in the much touted UP Gathbandhan, SP and BSP, need to ask themselves why it was so easy for the BJP to flatten regional diversities and sweep aside state specificities. It could do so because these parties have either shrunk into family fiefs, or let themselves be tarred by corruption or tainted by a distorted version of secularism that alienates the majority without meaningfully coming to the aid of the minority. Or they have narrowed their appeal to address their core support groups alone.

**B**UT with great power comes great responsibility, as Modi himself underlined in his victory speech. More so, when the victory comes after a campaign marked by majoritarian triumphalism and a rhetoric that often sought to divide to rule. From fielding a terror-accused who will now be the new MP from Bhopal to categorising the electorate as majority or minority, many anxieties were stoked, institutions were tested. Now, the election won, and handsomely, PM Modi and the party that he and his lieutenant Amit Shah have remade in their own mould, must acknowledge the need to reach out to those who worry about the shrinking of the Opposition. How they respond in their historic second term will matter to all those who have stakes in the quality – and future – of this great democracy.

## AGENDA NO 1

State of the economy was not a defining issue in the election. But Modi government can use its mandate to prioritise it

**F**OR ANY RULING party, the state of a \$2.7 trillion economy, in one of the fastest growing nations in the world, which is staring at a slowdown with a collateral impact on revenues, growth and jobs, would have been the main issue it is judged by in a national election. That the NDA government led by Narendra Modi has managed to buck that trend flies in the face of conventional theories on the linkage between economics and politics. A resounding win, encouraging as it is from the point of view of the financial markets and political stability, may, however, recede from the mind of the voters as soon as the new government takes over. It must be warned that India's fiscal health is worrying and must be addressed urgently.

With the combined deficit of the Centre and states now over 8 per cent, coupled with a widening current account deficit, a slump in exports and private investment, and the threat posed by the fresh tariff war unleashed by Donald Trump, the challenges are enormous. They are amplified by the state of the global economy and the limited leeway for a fiscal stimulus in India. All these point to the urgent need to put in place a good economic management team and to hit the ground running. The Modi-led NDA government's economic agenda in its second term should be dominated by policy measures to boost private investment, a progressively cleaner GST regime with just two rates, a quick one-shot recapitalisation of PSU banks to ensure greater flow of credit and governance changes, tightening of the provisions in the new insolvency law to make sure that timelines are met, flexibility on labour laws to enhance competitiveness, privatisation of bleeding state-owned firms in competitive sectors and addressing of the crisis in the farm sector.

The Modi government has the comfort of numbers on its side again. But falling short on economic management this time around will resonate with both domestic and global investors. The economic costs or fallout will be severe.

## WORDLY WISE

HE WHO WISHES TO BE OBEYED MUST KNOW HOW TO COMMAND.— NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

## Staggering dominance



PRATAP BHAU MEHTA

THERE ARE TIMES in the life of a democracy when the heady winds of popular power turn into their opposite: The deification and personification of one man. Democracy displays a will to simplicity when the answer to every question, the remedy for anxiety becomes one man, and one man alone. The only authentic analysis of this election is two words: Narendra Modi. Everything else is irrelevant. Modi convinced the voters that he could write India's destiny. And they were glad to outsource their destiny to him. Anybody who doubted that this was going to be the outcome, including this columnist, should eat humble pie.

All our normal categories of political analysis and statistical jugglery come to nought when they are faced with Narendra Modi. This is because, he more than any politician in modern history, has grasped three things. First, he is the purest distillation of the idea of politics. For him political reality is not given, it is created; while other parties twiddle thumbs trying to get sociological arithmetic right, he goes about the task of producing a total identification with his persona. And he deploys undefeatable energy to do so. Second, he has fully grasped the potential of a dangerous idea in democracy: That even evil that has a whiff of a larger cause about it has the power to move more than civility that is tainted with pettiness. And third, and most importantly, he has crafted a way of being everywhere: He managed to colonise our imaginations, our fantasies, hopes and fears, to the point where even resistance to him seemed to be entirely in his thrall. Has there been any other figure in the annals of democratic politics who makes you think about him almost every second of your existence? He can literally make himself the object of attention every second of public discourse. Many leaders win because the public does not see an alternative. Modi won because he made an alternative unthinkable.

It is difficult to argue with the claim that the opposition did not, in any way merit victory. In these times, civility is a rare commodity and the Congress can be granted that. It is also easy to blame control of institutions, me-

Narendra Modi won because India identifies with him. What that means is something we will figure out

dia and money for the BJP's electoral fire-power. Some of that is true, but to attribute the BJP's victory to that would be to deny political reality. Even in a moment of grave national crisis, the Opposition's inability to come together was above all, evidence of their pettiness and myopia. Even when the Congress knew that the battering ram Modi was using against the Congress was that Congress was dynastic and corrupt, Congress could not change the face of its leadership. Modi relentlessly campaigned that all of India's other parties – from SP and BSP, to the Congress – are corrupt family enterprises. He was the scimitar, slashing away at the old order, which was still holding India back.

Modi deserves his victory. But this is also a moment of dread for Indian democracy. Let us be clear: This is the greatest concentration of power in modern Indian history. Never has a force emerged, not even the Congress under Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, where a leader had such unchallenged power in the party, a party organisation that energised, complete control over capital, and a vast set of civil society organisations that are poised for dominance in every institution in every corner of the country. India's fate is now truly in his hands. This victory puts an imprimatur on the idea that India has given up on the central tenets of its politics. In both its institutional and aesthetic form, this is a victory for electoral Caesars pure and simple, where the power of every institution, from business to religious institutions, will revolve around one man. In ideological terms, it is a victory for majoritarianism, a desire to openly marginalise minorities and assert the cultural hegemony of Hindutva. In sociological terms, this is yet another blow to those who peddle illusions about the power of caste and regional politics. Those identities are breaking down, and ripe for appropriation for the larger project of Hindutva. It is probably also the case that despite the cult of toxic masculinity that characterises BJP's ideological discourse, Modi upended the politics of gender in new and creative ways. There are now no barriers to the Hindutva project that we take for granted that emanate from social structure.

This is a victory for the politics of unreality. The Modi government has several successes to its credit. It certainly managed to create a sense that some of its schemes touched the lives of more people than ever before. But let us be clear: Modi has not won because of his economic success; he has won despite his economic failures. The economy is tottering at a growth rate feels that is closer to four or four-and-a-half per cent. That this election was almost entirely bereft of a serious economic narrative of hope does not portend well. To be fair, the Opposition did not have any eye-catching ideas either. Indian elites are now compensating for a faltering India story, a make believe world where our explanation of our failures is the fragmentation of power. If only we gave one man more power, he would do wonders: Nationalism became a refuge for us, because participating in it seems to vicariously lift us, even though it does not do anything to secure India's future. This is also, finally, a victory of the politics of fear and hate. In 2014, Modi struck a hopeful chord; perhaps it was easier as an outsider. But this campaign was a relentlessly negative one, full of mendacity and hate. This is not a poison that is easy to roll back.

All this is not to take away from Modi's political achievement. As a purely political phenomenon, he has scripted another glorious victory. But the magnitude of his political achievement is made even greater by understanding how staggering his dominance is. What kind of an alchemy is it where a leader produces not just a sense that he is better than the other, but a sense of deep identification? His political achievement becomes even more creditable because it is not built on a secure foundation of economic achievement or national security. People were looking for an excuse to vote for him despite his failures, and nationalism gave them the fig leaf. But to give Modi credit: He won because India identifies with him. What that says about India is something we will figure out over the next five years.

The writer is vice-chancellor, Ashoka University. Views are personal



BADRI NARAYAN

IT IS CLEAR THAT the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance is headed for a mammoth victory. The BJP is likely to win at least 55 of the 80 seats in UP. This is in contrast to the reading of political analysts, who had expected the gathbandhan of the SP and BSP to pose a severe challenge to the BJP. The SP-BSP gathbandhan, backed by the Scheduled Castes and other backwards, was deemed an unassailable social coalition. What then explains the success of the BJP in UP?

First, the BJP, which has its core vote among the upper castes, who are numerically substantial in UP, went for a strategic micro-management of castes and crafted a new social equation. This too was a gathbandhan of non-Yadav, numerically substantial OBC communities such as Kurmi, Maurya, etc. and most backward castes including Nishads, Bind, Kasera, Kumhar, Thathera, Tamboli. The party also reached out to non-Jatav Dalit castes such as Musahars, Nat, Kanjar, and Kuchbadhiya. The BJP built this social coalition by organising caste conferences of various most backward and non-Jatav Dalit castes while also ensuring that the benefits of schemes like Ujjwala Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Mudra reached them. In this way, it crafted a larger social coalition than the gathbandhan of the SP, BSP and Rashtriya Lok Dal. Feedback from the RSS helped the party to build and manage this coalition. Dalit and MBC caste heroes were reinterpreted by the BJP-RSS leadership as Hindutva warriors to attract their respective communities into the Hindu fold.

## GATHBANDHAN VS GATHBANDHAN

The social coalition crafted by the BJP trumped the BSP-SP-RLD caste alliance

The impressive success of the BJP and the failure of gathbandhan in UP may have far-reaching consequences for Indian politics. Political parties may have to redefine the politics of social justice in north India. The relationship between caste and politics may have to be revisited.

Second, vote-katuas (vote-cutters) like the Congress and Pragatishil Samajwadi Party of Shivpal Singh Yadav worked against the SP-BSP-RLD gathbandhan. The Congress's tactic was to field candidates who could work as vote-katuas against the BJP in many seats. The tactic misfired. Many Congress candidates were leaders from the SP and BSP, who were denied tickets by their own party. They cut into the gathbandhan's votes, which in benefited the BJP.

Third, the SP and BSP cadres didn't get sufficient time to build a rapport on the ground. In our field trips, we could sense the rivalry among castes, which was not overt, in many constituencies. The interests of the Jatavs and Yadavs work at cross purposes at the grass roots. This conflict works at multiple levels – between the landholding Yadavs and landless Dalits, the socially dominant Yadavs and newly assertive Jatavs. It also affected the transfer of votes between the parties.

Fourth, an aspirational class of voters which identified with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The economic reforms initiated by the Congress under the prime ministership of P V Narasimha Rao have unleashed aspirations across age-group, gender and caste. This section of aspiring classes relates to the politics of BJP and is attracted towards its neo-right agendas. Issues such as national security, the call for a strong prime minister, cornering Pakistan and other such slogans motivated them to support the BJP. They backed the BJP in 2014, and their loyalty to the

BJP was evident in 2019 also.

Fifth, the Modi government, through policies and programmes, mobilised various marginal communities horizontally to counter the BSP and SP, which mobilised castes vertically. The reservation for economically backward sections among the upper castes helped to dilute the dissatisfaction among the upper castes, especially the Brahmins, who perceive UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath as favouring specific castes. It also diluted the upper caste anger against the BJP's ambivalence on the SC-ST Act, which had played a significant role in the party's defeat in the elections to assemblies in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. The reservation for economically backward classes helped the party to assuage the upper castes in northern India, particularly in UP.

The impressive success of the BJP and the failure of gathbandhan in UP may have far-reaching consequences for Indian politics. Political parties may have to redefine the politics of social justice in north India. The relationship between caste and politics may have to be revisited. The OBCs and SCs are not homogeneous communities. Their inherent heterogeneity is brought to the fore by competitive democracy. Political parties such as the BJP are quick to respond to the emergence of these heterogeneities and craft social equations accordingly.

The writer is professor, Govind Ballabh Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad



## MAY 24, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

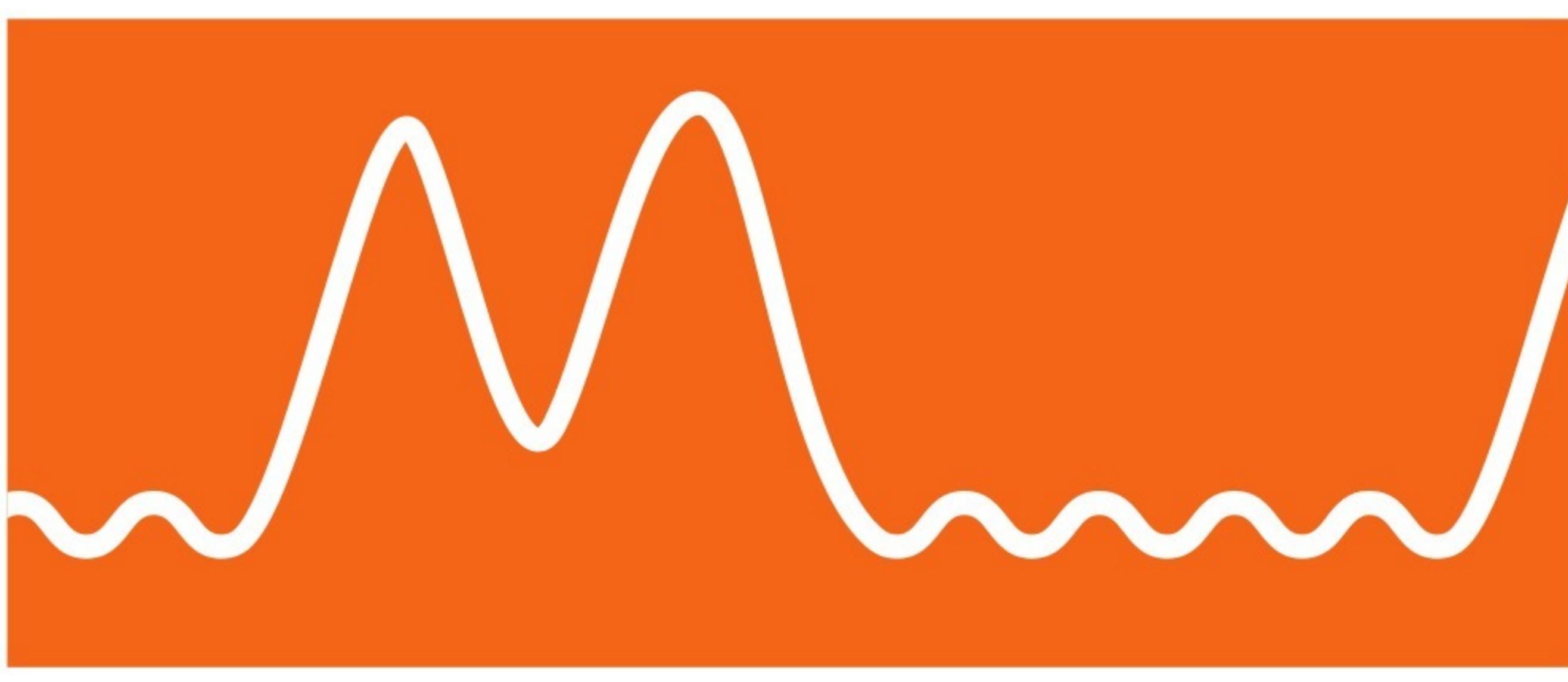
O P T YAGI'S "FREEDOM of Religion Bill" could become "a potent means of harassing honest persons exercising no more than their fundamental right in regard to the profession, practice and propagation of their religion". These are the words in which the Minorities Commission has condemned the Bill. The Commission has been in touch with the law ministry on the controversial bill. Last week, it met to finalise its report which has now been sent to the Centre. Tyagi's bill, it says, is badly drafted and should not be accepted.

DRUGS PRICE CONTROL  
THE DRUGS PRICE Control Order, 1979,

which was officially heralded as an important measure to bring down drug prices, is yet to be enforced. The drugs and pharmaceuticals industry is virtually set on a confrontation course with the government over the latter's bid to curb prices of essential medicines. Barring half a dozen units, drug manufacturers including most multinationals and others in the foreign sector, have not cared to submit to the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals their price lists as is required under the order, even though the time limit has expired. Notified on March 31, 1979, the order made it obligatory on the part of manufacturers to furnish price lists by April 30.

## AIR AUTONOMY

THE MEMBERS OF the Verghese committee, appointed to review the question of autonomy for All India Radio and Doordarshan, have criticised the Prasar Bharati Bill which, they say, seeks to give more power to the executive. B G Verghese, chairman of the committee, and its members Umashankar Joshi, A G Noorani, Chanchal Sarkar, P L Deshpande and Nayantara Sehgal have issued a joint statement. They say: "Instead of the 'genuine autonomy' for broadcasting that the country was promised, the Prasar Bharati Bill offers something emasculated and confined, with the executive continuing as the dominant influence".



CR Sasikumar

## The leader is the truth

This election result is a positive mandate in favour of Narendra Modi



RAM MADHAV

the emotional element (campaign theme and tactics).

The overall strategic planning of the BJP's campaign, led by Amit Shah, has been miles ahead of the Opposition. The party had put in enormous efforts in areas where additional dividends were expected, like West Bengal, Odisha and the Northeast. The results in these states prove that those efforts paid off. On the other hand, the Opposition's campaign was lacklustre and bombastic.

The BJP had mobilised all its organisational resources very well. The organisational structure that team BJP put in place right up to the polling station level has played an important role in this election. The Opposition lacked in that respect too. The senior and seasoned leadership of the Congress party was less visible while the campaign was left on the shoulders of inexperienced young leaders.

Finally, the Opposition had no answer to PM Modi's strong emotional pitch. Modi effectively intermixed his personality, his developmental programmes of the last five years and the ideology in action to generate a strong emotional sentiment among the masses in his support. Those accusing Modi of using "nationalism" for electoral ends must remember that nationalism is not just an election issue, but forms the very identity of the BJP. Modi has many achievements in the past five years to showcase, reaffirming his nationalist credentials. That is what Modi and the BJP did during the campaign. In fact, this mandate is a proud reaffirmation of the people's commitment to nationalism. It is, in a way, an answer to all those critics, both domestic and international, who called Modi a divisive figure. It is the most expansive and inclusive mandate in support of the nationalist idea of India.

Modi is a shrewd learner. He didn't hesitate to follow Napoleon, whom historian Eric Hobsbawm described as the "secular deity", in some of his tactics. Napoleon had mastered the art of using propaganda. He ran a government newspaper, *Le Moniteur Universel*, that regularly informed the French public about his military heroics and war successes. "What counts is what the people think as true", Napoleon used to say. The Opposition's lies didn't cut any ice before the people's belief in Modi because of his relentless and direct engagement with them through various communication platforms.

Modi led from the front. He bore the brunt of the Opposition's attacks on himself and responded with firmness. "In the turmoil of bat-

This mandate is significant for another reason. It has completed the rejection and decimation of what Modi himself described as the 'Khan Market cacophony' of pseudo-secular/liberal cartels that held a disproportionate sway and stranglehold over the intellectual and policy establishment of the country. Under Modi-II, the remnants of that cartel need to be discarded from the country's academic, cultural and intellectual landscape.

tle, the great general maintains a psychological serenity like the needles of the compass in the storm-tossed ship", writes Clausewitz. Consciously or otherwise, the Opposition has centred this election round Modi. And the results affirm a phenomenon that Marxist social scientist William Davies describes as "the leader becomes the truth".

In the end, the Opposition has been left flabbergasted. They had no answer to this unconventional and intense electoral onslaught unleashed by Modi and the BJP. "Sesham kopena purayet" — "Rage is the only option left" — goes the ancient Indian saying. All that the nation sees from the Opposition is illogical and irrational anger and rage.

Modi-II starts on a strong wicket. Its immediate priorities are clearly laid out. Attending to the economy is, of course, one such priority. While the macroeconomic picture looks stable and promising, many important segments need support from the government. India cannot completely remain insulated from the ongoing trade war between the US and China or the geo-strategic conflict between the US and Iran. The neighbourhood also calls for attention. Developments in Sri Lanka and relations with Pakistan need the prime minister's time and attention. Giving an impetus to the Indian Ocean strategy to secure India's economic and strategic interests needs more focus from the government in Modi-II. The kind of mandate that Modi-II has secured makes it easy for the PM to tackle many security and strategic challenges.

This mandate is significant for another reason. It has completed the rejection and decimation of what Modi himself described as the "Khan Market cacophony" of pseudo-secular/liberal cartels that held a disproportionate sway and stranglehold over the intellectual and policy establishment of the country. Under Modi-II, the remnants of that cartel need to be discarded from the country's academic, cultural and intellectual landscape.

Narendra Modi is seen by the people of India as not just another prime minister, but as a "transformative leader". Nothing short of building a New India is his goal. The road to transformation is not easy but we have already taken that road. In Modi-II, the country expects the government to tread that path with a greater vigour.

*The writer is national general secretary, BJP and director, India Foundation*

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The prime minister (Theresa May) has lacked the vision and judgment to define Britain's future relations with Europe, let alone convince MPs and the public to trust her."

— THE GUARDIAN

## A victory foretold

Election results invite questions for liberals. Worldwide, they lack their rivals' discipline and close ranks too late



CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT

THE 2019 GENERAL election has been won by Narendra Modi, like the last one. But the context this time is different. In 2014, it seemed that the Modi wave was founded primarily on the promise of development. Five years later, Prime Minister Modi did not even mention *vikas* in his campaign, simply because his government failed on that front, at least when it comes to job creation. So, what are the reasons for the massive support he has received?

The growing acceptability of Hindu nationalism needs to be factored in first because this ideology has been the main motivation of the BJP's traditional voters.

This core group has expanded and it clearly approves of the communalisation that has taken place in the past five years — an unprecedented phase of Indian history, marked by recurrent campaigns against "love jihad", for "ghar wapsi" and cow protection (including cases of lynching innocent Muslims).

These hardcore supporters of the BJP have endorsed the mainstreaming of Hindutva's fringe, including Pragya Singh Thakur, whose election to Parliament will remain the most defining aspect of this election.

But only a fraction of the BJP voters are likely to say they support Modi because of Hindutva. What about the others? Many do not support the BJP's brand of Hindutva — even though, they have no problems with Hindu majoritarianism as such — but prefer to give other explanations for their voting preference. Indeed, Modi offered them another good reason to vote for him this time — national security. The Pakistan-centred turn that the election campaign took after Pulwama enabled the PM to project himself as the country's protector. Modi argued that the situation demanded a strong leader and a coalition government run by his opponents would inevitably be a weak one. Some voters took this "strong leader" rhetoric at face value. Among them, many felt that the Opposition did not offer a viable alternative because Rahul Gandhi is not sufficiently experienced.

This reading of the elections, that is supported by the findings of the Lokniti-CSDS exit poll, suggests three conclusions.

First, India has taken another step towards re-inventing itself as a de facto "ethnic democracy" — a term coined by the Israeli political scientist, Sammy Smooha, to describe the regime in his country, a de jure Jewish state. India continues to be a secular state on paper but in practice, the minorities are becoming second-class citizens, as the under-representation of Muslims in the Lok Sabha shows.

Second, India has also taken another step towards becoming an illiberal democracy. This trend, evidenced during the election campaign, has been reinforced by the loss of credibility of the Election Commission and the media. It flows from the populist idiom of Indian politics: When one person embodies the nation, and projects himself as its saviour

against all kinds of threats, any questioning of his authority is deemed illegitimate. There's been hardly any press conference, hardly any assessment of policies — not to speak of the debates between the main contenders, one of the exciting features of elections in a democracy. The PM has, instead, benefited from a disproportionate access to prime time on electronic media. All this reflects the growing convergence of India with other illiberal ethnic and nationalist-populist democracies, such as Israel, Brazil, Hungary and Turkey — even the US, to an extent. In all these countries one person has projected himself as the nation's — the majority community's — saviour against external and internal threats and polarised the society. In such a regime, political adversaries are transformed into enemies — of the people and the nation — in the name of security. Most illiberal democracies are, therefore, also security states: Their populist leaders harp on threats to divert attention from their limitations on the governance front.

Third, in Indian politics, policies do not matter as much as before. This time, the campaign was not about jobs, the farm crisis or the environment, but about emotions — fear, anger and mangoes, a cocktail that is part of populist recipes across the world. The Congress manifesto did talk of some of these issues, but they were not discussed during the campaign.

Some Indian citizens have also voted for Modi because they did not believe that the Opposition offered a viable alternative. In fact, the same people who have supported his opponents at the state-level in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, barely six months ago, have voted for Modi this time. Why has the Opposition failed to make a dent in the Modi mania?

Certainly Modi did have more funds and support in the media, including the social media where an army of paid trolls demolished Rahul Gandhi's reputation in much the same manner that Donald Trump's supporters attacked Hillary Clinton a few years ago. But the Opposition was unable to project a viable alternative. To win against Modi, it needed to rally around a leader who could be projected as the PM-in-waiting. Many state-level leaders, including Mayawati, Akhilesh Yadav, Arvind Kejriwal, Mamata Banerjee and Prakash Ambedkar, did say that the BJP was posing a threat to democracy. But they did not go in for electoral adjustments with the Congress. They perhaps believe that they can live with a BJP government in New Delhi. Many such parties have been BJP allies in the past. So why not again? Also, many of them have not adjusted to the "new normal" — the majoritarian era. Some even dream of a tabula rasa on which they could build an ideal state. They even ask the Congress to commit suicide, forgetting that forming a party from scratch is not an easy task — the AAP is a good example.

Liberals face similar problems elsewhere — they lack the discipline of their rivals and before they realise that they should close ranks, the populists change the rules of the game for good — or for the period during which the strongman is in command.

*The writer is senior research fellow at CERI-Sciences Po/CNRS, Paris, professor of Indian Politics and Sociology at King's India Institute, London*



AMARTYA LAHIRI

## The long game

New government at the Centre should focus on land and labour reforms

THE INDIAN VOTER has delivered a second sweeping mandate to the NDA. This is historic by itself. Congratulations are due in no small measure to the leadership team of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP President Amit Shah, who jointly spearheaded a campaign that proved irresistible to the electorate.

The size of the mandate given to the NDA as well as the fact that it signals persistence in voter preference, possibly provides the new government with the breathing space and confidence to think long term in terms of its economic policies. The first term of the Narendra Modi government was, perhaps understandably, characterised by a strong focus on political consolidation. That goal has clearly been achieved. This result will hopefully energise the government to expend some of its considerable political capital on policies that may be politically difficult in the short run but will have large long-term economic benefits.

The Indian economy is today at a crucial cusp. There are some clear positives that are tailwinds for the economy. The past 25 years have witnessed a dramatic turnaround, with growth rates above 6 per cent having become the norm. This growth revolution came on the back of a crisis-induced liberalisation of the Indian economy in the early 1990s that saw a rolling back of the industrial licensing regime along with wide-ranging trade reforms. These reforms remain in place today, which is a big plus for the economy.

A second potential tailwind is India's demographics. India is currently adding around 10 million workers to its labour force every year. This supply of new labour should keep wage pressures in the economy under control. Moreover, it should potentially also rejuvenate the labour force with new skills, energy and dynamism. This second factor has often been described as India's ongoing demographic dividend. It is a very important factor since such periods come infrequently, and do not last more than a couple of decades. So, it is vital that India seizes this moment.

The country is also facing serious headwinds. The first is with regard to the demographic dividend itself. The demographics will work as a dividend if and only if the economy is successful in providing jobs that match the aspirations of these new workers. If there is a mismatch due to either not enough jobs being created or workers being dissatisfied with the quality of the jobs on offer, then the demographic dividend can rapidly turn into a curse. Nothing can be societally more destructive than hordes of young people lounging around unemployed. There are salutary examples of this from all over the world, South Africa perhaps is the most recent such example.

Job creation is a tricky business in developing countries. Most of the workers are employed in agriculture. Agricultural productivity is typically low in such countries precisely because there is excess supply of labour to this

sector. The incentive for labour to leave agriculture is usually provided by the creation of jobs in the low-skill, large-scale manufacturing sector as an economy develops.

India's experience has been somewhat different from this typical pattern. Our services sector, especially the high-skill IT sector and its offshoots, took off before manufacturing. However, this sector doesn't create enough high-value jobs to absorb labour at the rate of a million a month. As a result, over 90 per cent of India's services sector employment is located in enterprises that employ three or fewer workers. These are usually family-run low-productivity enterprises that add limited value to the country's production chain.

Expecting India to continue its growth trajectory through a novel services sector-led model is a road to nowhere. There is neither enough world demand for telephone operators servicing outsourced business processes, nor is there enough supply of Indian workers with the requisite skills even if there were such a demand. Put differently, there is no escaping our manufacturing conundrum: We need our manufacturing sector to grow at scale.

Most of Indian manufacturing is currently concentrated in small-scale low productivity establishments. We need investment in low-tech, large-scale manufacturing units to pick up. Productivity is linked to scale: Firms operating at larger scale also tend to be more productive. But investing in such large units is

risky. There are constraints associated with acquiring land. Adequate infrastructure provision, including the skilling of labour, is a second constraint. While the NDA government has done excellent work in building transport infrastructure, schooling and skill-building remains a constraint.

Another problem is due to our labour laws. These are antiquated and tend to be pro-labour to such an extent that firms prefer to eschew the productivity benefits of growing to retain the safety of remaining small. This also is a major hurdle to attracting foreign investment. In this context, it is heartening to see a recent statement from the Chief Economic Advisor that the labour ministry is working on reforms to our labour laws. It is politically a minefield but highly necessary.

Lastly, withdrawing the public sector from its unproductive pursuits in multiple sectors, including banking, has to be prioritised. The scale of India's development challenge is immense. The country needs to play the long game and it needs to start now. There is no time to lose. Hopefully, the renewed mandate will give the Modi government the political will and space to pursue overdue land and labour reforms.

*The writer is director, Centre for Advanced Financial Research and Learning, Mumbai and professor of economics at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Views are personal*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ALLAY WORRIES

THIS REFERS TO the explained article, 'The journey of an EVM' (IE, May 22). The article explained all the processes intricately. However, almost every day, there are reports of EVMs being transported sans security or the voting machines landing up at hotels. EVMs cannot be procured at shops, neither can they be "bought" in an illegal manner. Instead of rejecting these claims, why doesn't the Election Commission give proofs that turn down such reports?

**Yamini Kandpal, Lucknow**

### EVM BOGEY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Shooting the machine' (IE, May 23). The Opposition parties' targeting of the EVM machines is without logic. Had the EVMs been really faulty, the Congress would not have returned to power in the assembly elections a few months ago. The Opposition's allegations are baseless.

**Sanjay Chawla, Amritsar**

### TACKLE MILITANCY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Arunachal omen' (IE, May 23). The shooting of 11 persons, including a sitting MLA and his security guards, is an alarming event. But the editorial has missed out on a vital detail — the steps that can be taken to eradicate militancy

### LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to [editpage@expressindia.com](mailto:editpage@expressindia.com) or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301.

Letter writers should mention their postal address and phone number.

**THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS**

from the region. The AFSPA should be re-imposed in the region but only after a thorough scrutiny of the militancy-affected districts so as to not alienate the local population. Another step that can be taken is to construct laser fencing around the over 1,500-km long porous border with Myanmar to check the influx of illegal migrants and militants.

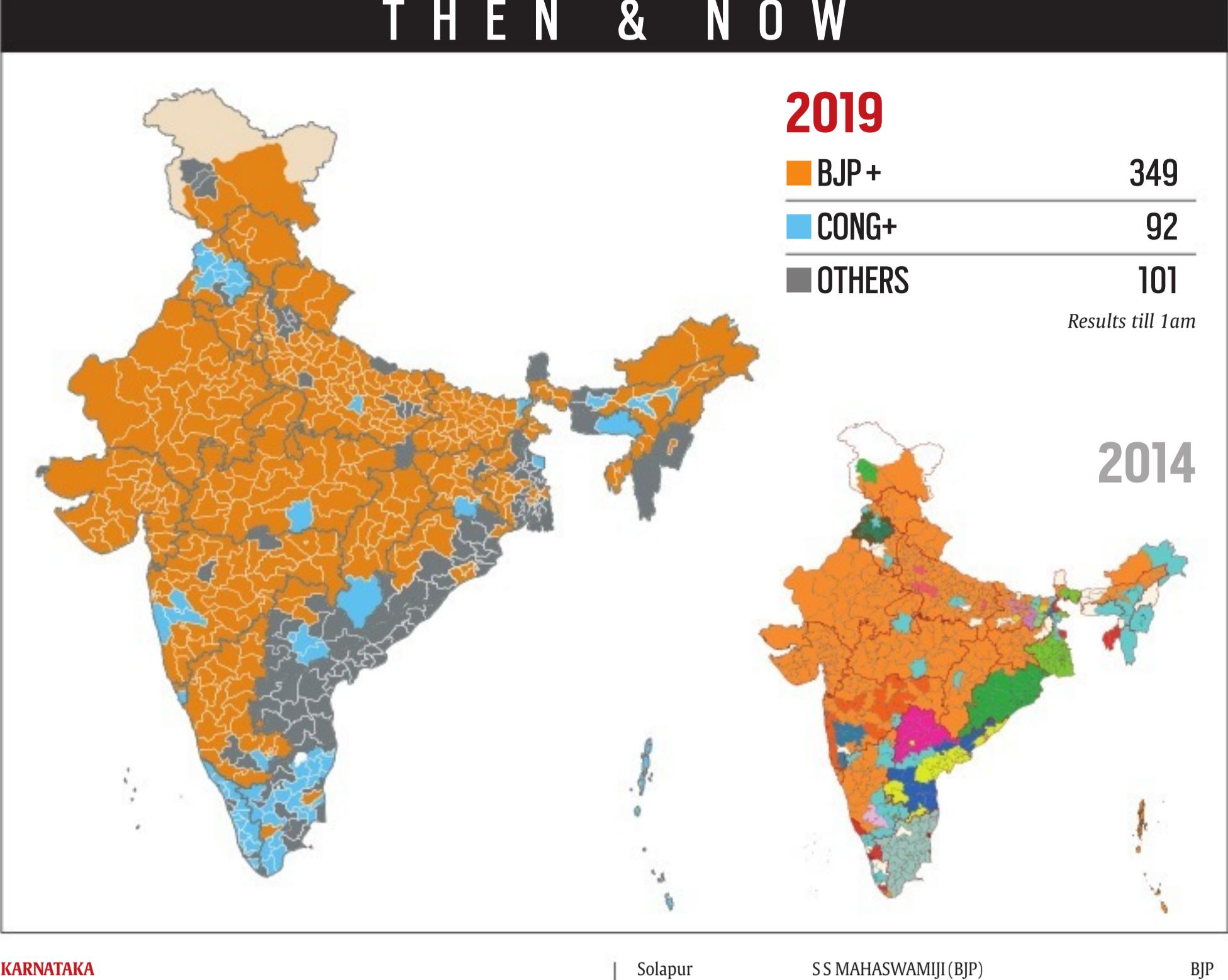
**Pranay Kumar Shome, via email**

# 16 THE WINNERS



# DECISION 2019

## THEN & NOW



Results till 1 am

2019

BJP+

349

CONG+

92

OTHERS

101

**ANDHRA PRADESH**

	2019	2014
Amalapuram	CHINTA ANURADHA (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Anakapalli	DR. B V SATYAVATHI (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Antanapur	TALARI RANGAIAH (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Aruku	GODDETI MADHAVI (YSRCP) (leads)	YSRCP
Bapatla	NANDIGAM SURESH (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Chittoor	N. REDDEPPA (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Eluru	KOTAGIRI SRIDHAR (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Guntur	JAYADEV GALLA (TDP) (leads)	TDP
Hindupur	KG MADHAV (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Kadapa	YEDUGURI SANDINTI AVINASH REDDY (YSRCP)	YSRCP
Kakinada	V GEETHAVANATH (YSRCP)	YSRCP
Kurnool	SANJEEV KUMAR (YSRCP) (leads)	YSRCP
Machilipatnam	BALASHOWRY VALLABHANEI (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Narsapuram	K R RAMA KRISHNA RAJU (YSRCP) (leads)	BJP
Narasaraopet	LAVU SRI KRISHNA DEVARAYALU (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Nandyal	PB REDDY (YSRCP) (leads)	YSRCP
Nellore	ADALA PRABHAKARA REDDY (YSRCP) (leads)	YSRCP
Ongole	MAGUNTA SREENIVASULU REDDY (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Rajahmundry	MARGANI BHARAT (YSRCP) (leads)	TDP
Rajampet	P V MIDHUN REDDY (YSRCP) (leads)	YSRCP
Srikakulam	KR MOHAN NAIDU (TDP) (leads)	TDP
Tirupati	BALLI DURGA PRASAD RAO (YSRCP)	YSRCP
Vizianagaram	BELLANA CHANDRA SEKHAR (YSRCP)	TDP
Visakhapatnam	M V V SATYANARAYANA (YSRCP) (leads)	BJP
Vijayawada	KESINENI SRINIVAS (TDP) (leads)	TDP

**ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

Arunachal East	TAPIR GAO (BJP) (leads)
Arunachal West	KIREN RIJJU (BJP) (leads)

**ASSAM**

Autonomous District	HOREN SING BEY (BJP) (leads)
Barpeta	ABDUL KHALEQUE (CONG) (leads)
Dhubri	BADRUDIN AJMAL (AIUDF) (leads)
Dibrugarh	RAMESWAR TELI (BJP)
Guwahati	QUEEN OJA (BJP) (leads)
Jorhat	TOPON KUMAR GOGOI (BJP)
Karimganj	KIRIPANATH MALLAH (BJP)
Kalibari	GAURAV GOGOI (CONG) (leads)
Kokrajhar	NABA KUMAR SARANIA (IND) (leads)
Lakhimpur	PRADAN BARUAH (BJP) (leads)
Mangaldoi	DILIP SAIKIA (BJP) (leads)
Nowrangpur	PRADYUT BORDOLOI (CONG) (leads)
Silchar	RAJDEEP ROY (BJP) (leads)
Tezpur	PALLAB LOCHAN DAS (BJP) (leads)

**BIHAR**

Araria	PRADEEP KUMAR SINGH (BJP)
Arrah	R K SINGH (BJP)
Aurangabad	SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH (BJP)
Banksa	GIRDHARI HADAV (JDU)
Begusarai	AJAY KUMAR MANDAL (JDU)
Bhagalpur	ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY (BJP)
Buxar	GOPAL JEE THAKUR (BJP)
Darbhanga	VIJAY KUMAR (JDU)
Gaya	D. ALOK KUMAR SUMAN (JDU)
Gopalganj	PASHU PATI KUMAR PRASAD (JDU) (leads)
Hajipur	CHIRAG KUMAR PASWAN (LJP)
Jahabad	JAMU RAMIT MANDAL (JDU)
Jamui	RAMPRIT MANDAL (JDU)
Jhanjharpur	MAHALI BINGH (JDU)
Karakat	DULAL CHANDRA GOSWAMI (JDU)
Khagaria	CHOURHARY MEHBOOB ALI KAISER (LJP)
Kishanganj	DR. MOHAMMAD JAWED (CONG)
Madhepura	DINESH CHANDRA YADAV (JDU)
Madhubani	ASHOK KUMAR YADAV (BJP)
Maharajganj	JANARDAN SINGH (BJP)
Munger	RAJIV RANJAN SINGH (JDU)
Muzaffarpur	AJYA NISHAD (BJP)
Nalanda	KAUSHLENDRA KUMAR (JDU)
Pataliputra	CHANDAN SINGH (LJP)
Patna Sahib	RAM KIRPAL YADAV (BJP)
Paschim Champaran	RAVISHANKAR PRASAD (BJP)
Purvi Champaran	DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (BJP)
Purnia	RADHA MOHAN SINGH (BJP)
Samastipur	SANTOSH KUMAR (JDU)
Saran	RAMCHANDRA PASWAN (LJP)
Sasaram	RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (BJP)
Sheohar	CHHEDI PASWAN (BJP)
Sitamarhi	RAMA DEVI (BJP)
Siwan	SUNIL KUMAR PINTU (JDU)
Supaul	KAVITA SINGH (JDU)
Ujjarpur	DILESHWAR KAMAIT (JDU)
Vaishali	NITYANAND RAI (BJP)
Valmiki Nagar	VEENA DEVI (BJP)
	BAIDYANATH PRASAD MAHTO (JDU)

**CHHATTISGARH**

Bastar	DEEPAK BAIJ (CONG)
Bilaspur	ARUN SAO (BJP)
Durg	VIJAY BAGHEL (BJP)
Jangir-Champa	GUHARAM AJGALLEY (BJP)
Kanker	MOHAN MANDAVI (BJP)
Korba	JYOTSNA CHARANDAS MAHANT (CONG)
Mahasamund	CHUNNILAL SAHOO (BJP)
Raigarh	GOMATI SAH (BJP)
Raipur	SUNIL KUMAR SONI (BJP)
Rajnandgaon	SANTOSH PANDEY (BJP)
Sarguja	RENUKA SINGH SARUTA (BJP)

**GOA**

North Goa	SHRIDAP YESSO NAIK (BJP)
South Goa	C FC SARDINHA (CONG)

**GUJARAT**

Ahmedabad East	PATEL HASMUKH BHAI SOMABHAI (BJP)
Ahmedabad West	DR KIRIT P SOLANKI (BJP) (leads)
Amreli	KN BHIKHBHAI (BJP)
Anand	P RAMESHBHAI BAKABHAI (BJP)
Banaskantha	P S PATEL (BJP)
Bardoli	PARBHUBHAI NAGARBHAI VASAVA (BJP)
Bharuch	M D WASAVA (BJP)
Bhavnagar	B D SHIVAL (BJP)
Chhota Udaipur	RATHVA GITABEN VAJESINGBHAI (BJP)
Dabod	J S BHABHOR (BJP)
Gandhinagar	AMITSHAH (BJP)
Jamnagar	P H MAADAM (BJP)
Junagadh	C R NARANBHAI (BJP)
Kachchh	C V LAKHAMSJI (BJP)
Khedha	COHUNAR DEVUSINH (BJP)
Mahesana	S A PATEL (BJP) (leads)
Navsari	C R PATIL (BJP)
Panchmahal	R M RATHOD (BJP) (leads)
Patan	D B SHANKARI (BJP)
Porbandar	R L DHADUK (BJP) (leads)
Rajkot	K M KALYANJI BHAI (BJP)
Sabar Kantha	R D SHANKARSHINH (BJP)
Surat	D V JARDOSH (BJP)
Surendranagar	M MAHENDRABHAI (BJP) (leads)
Vadodara	RANJANBEN BHATT (BJP) (leads)
Valsad	K C PATEL (BJP)

**HARYANA**

Ambala	RANT R L KATARIA (BJP)
Bhawani-Mahendragarh	DHARAMVIR SINGH (BJP)
Faridabad	KRISHAN PAL (BJP) (leads)
Gurgaon	RAO INDERJIT SINGH (BJP)
Hisar	BRIJENDRA SINGH (BJP)
Karnal	SANJAY BHATIA (BJP)
Kurukshetra	YASIR KHAN (BJP)
Rohtak	ARVIND KUMAR SHARMA (BJP) (leads)
Sirsia	JITENDRA SINGH (BJP)
Sonipat	SURESH KUMAR KASHYAP (BJP)

**HIMACHAL PRADESH**

Hamirpur	ANURAG SINGH THAKUR (BJP)
Kangra	KISHAN KAPOOR (BJP)
Mandi	RAM SWAROOP SHARMA (BJP)
Shimla	SURESH KUMAR KASHYAP (BJP)

**JAMMU & KASHMIR**

Anantnag	HASNAIN MASOODI (NC)
Baramulla	MD AKBAR LONE (NC) (leads)
Jammu	JUGAL KISHORE (BJP)
Ladakh	JTN AMYCAL (BJP)
Srinagar	FAROOQ ABDULLAH (NC)
Udhampur	JITENDRA SINGH (BJP)

**JHARKHAND**

Chat
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17

THE INDIAN EXPRESS, FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019

# EAST



## WESTBENGAL 42 SEATS



18

2014  
2

22

2014  
34

2

2014  
4

0

2014  
2

### RINGING IN CHANGE

BJP supporters celebrate the party's lead in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls at state BJP headquarters in Kolkata on Thursday. PTI

EXPLAINED

### Bengal breached, all eyes on 2021 now

WITH the BJP breaching West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress has emerged substantially scathed in this semi-final ahead of the 2021 Assembly polls. For the BJP, it was as much an ideological victory as an electoral victory, powered by meticulous planning on the ground. The growth of the party's organisational strength in a state where it had little base has been meteoric. While it successfully pushed its Hindutva narrative and polarised voters, it consistently fanned the angst around Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's "appeasement" politics. The Left and the Congress, the other two players in the state, have been pushed to the margins. While the Left has been wiped out from what was once its citadel, the Congress managed to win just one seat.

## Local strategy, national drive help BJP in Bengal and Odisha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

WHEN KAILASH Vijayvargiya emerged from his office at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s central headquarters on Thursday afternoon, a crowd of party workers surged forward to congratulate their national general secretary for the organisation's best ever performance in West Bengal.

The BJP had won 14 seats and was leading in 4 others till Thursday on late evening when counting was in progress.

From two seats in the 16th Lok Sabha, Vijayvargiya, who replaced Siddharth Nath Singh in July 2015 as state in-charge, is among those who played a key role in the rise. Along with Shiv Prakash, the joint general secretary (organisation) who helped the party improve its vote share from six per cent in 2009 to 17.02 per cent in 2014, Vijayvargiya worked on sealing social combinations, resolving internal issues and identifying the right people on the ground.

The result: 1,250 mandal committees, up from 452 in 2015; 12,407 shakti kendras; 10,266 shakti kendra pramukhs and 58,084 committees.

Also, the party divided the state into five segments for managing the various constituencies this time.

Another key move by Vijayvargiya was to rope in Mukul Roy, who was known as the "right hand man" of TMC leader and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Roy was a leader who, according to Vijayvargiya, knew "everything" about TMC and West Bengal "like the palm of his hand".

Vijayvargiya and Roy together worked on leaders who were disillusioned with Banerjee, which led to those like MPs Anupam Hazra and Saumitra Khan, and MLAs Arjun Singh, Khagen Murmu and Dular Bar, moving to the BJP before the elections.

In essence, this election in Bengal was about the BJP banking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi as its face, with Roy as backroom operator and Vijayvargiya as the go-to person in Delhi.

In Odisha, the BJP was leading in eight Lok Sabha seats till 10.30 pm Thursday. The party had hoped to develop a support base with the Ujjwala LPG connection scheme, especially with its most prominent Odisha leader, Dharmendra Pradhan, being the face of the initiative as Petroleum Minister.

Hoping to make fresh inroads, the BJP chose western Odisha for three reasons: It borders Chhattisgarh, where the BJP was in power for 15 years till last December; it is an area seen to have been neglected by the state government; it covers influential royal families who are with the party.

Starting from the ground, the party built committees in every booth, mandal, village, block and district, and held a number of public programmes.

The BJP general secretary in-charge, Arun Singh, who has been based in Odisha for six years, led a drive to enrol 35 lakh new members.

The state unit's attempts were also supported by central leaders, with Union ministers and BJP chief Amit Shah frequently visiting the state.

In the 2017 panchayat elections, the BJP's tally in 853 zilla parishes went up to 297 from 36 in 2012.

The gains were not just from the Congress, whose tally was halved from 128 to 60, but also the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), which came down to 460 from 651.

In the final stretch, the party banked on its call for "paribartan (change)" and its biggest draw — Modi.

## Tie-up may have staved off BJP, say CPM, Cong

ESHA ROY  
KOLKATA, MAY 23

AS THE Lok Sabha election results rolled in, the CPM office at Alimuddin Street and Congress headquarters in Entally, barely 2 km apart in Kolkata, wore a desolate look. In May last year, the state Congress had proposed that the two parties join hands again — after tying up for 2016 Assembly elections — to fight the BJP and Trinamool Congress.

After a year of planning and negotiations, the alliance fell through in March, days before the election. The alliance, both parties now say, could have staved off the BJP's advance in West Bengal.

A major stumbling block was the CPM fielding sitting MP Mohammad Salim as the alliance candidate in Raiganj and the Congress insisting on fielding Deepa

Dasmunshi there. Both lost to TMC, with Salim coming third and Dasmunshi a distant fourth.

One of the two architects of the alliance, state Congress vice-president O P Mishra, said that two types of votes were cast in West Bengal this election — the TMC vote and anti-TMC vote. "The idea was to give the people an alternative to these two parties. Instead, the Congress and CPM vote was split. In 2016, the TMC vote share was 44.91 per cent. The Congress-Left Front alliance vote share was 38.64 per cent. If the alliance had happened, the scenario would have been reversed, with the BJP having been squeezed out of the equation," he

said. CPM insiders said the party got wind of the situation, but a little late.

"Bengal became a repeat of Tripura. Unless you have the potential to win an election, why would the voter vote for you? We did not have the potential to win by ourselves and we knew that," said the CPM insider.

The CPM vote share is now around 6 per cent, the party's poorest performance in the state yet. It did not get the runner-up slot in any constituency.

It did not get the runner up slot in any constituency. The Congress was reduced to 5.48 per cent.

Politburo member Salim said, "The result would have been entirely different if

the alliance had worked. There was a very high anti-incumbency factor and anti-Mamata Banerjee sentiment, especially since the panchayat polls. The TMC further polarised the electorate on religious grounds, allowing the BJP a foothold, then momentum."

The only Congress candidate to lead in this election was the other architect of the alliance, Behrampore candidate and sitting MP Adhir Ranjan Choudhury.

"I have always maintained that we should have carried on the alliance," he said speaking to *The Indian Express*.

This is the only constituency where the Left front did not field a candidate, and its dedicated vote went to the Congress, CPM leaders said.

Mishra said the Congress's only option now is to join hands with the Trinamool to fight the BJP in West Bengal.

BABUL SUPRIYO (BJP)

Defeats Trinamool's Moon Moon Sen by over 1.9 lakh votes in Asansol

ABHISHEK BANERJEE (TMC)

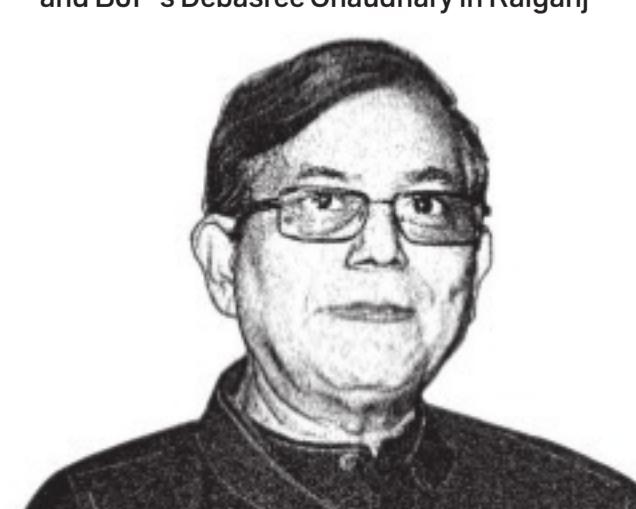
Defeats the BJP's Nilanjan Roy by over 3.2 lakh votes in Diamond Harbour

MOHD SALIM (CPM)

Comes third behind TMC's Kanaialal Agarwal and BJP's Debasree Chaudhary in Raiganj

ADHIR CHOWDHURY (CONG)

Defeats Trinamool's Apurba Sarkar by over 70,000 votes in Baharampur



## SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Aspirational India has proved it once again that India wants growth and a leadership that believes in country first & acts tirelessly for the people... Jai Hind.

ARUN JAITLEY, Union Finance Minister



(Leads/results till 1 am)

## BJP set to take on TMC before Assembly polls

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA  
KOLKATA, MAY 23

FIRMLY SETTING its foot in Bengal with significant gains in the Lok Sabha elections, BJP appears set to put up a serious challenge to Trinamool Congress before the Assembly polls in 2021.

During his campaigns, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already stated that over 40 MLAs of the Trinamool are in touch with him. BJP state unit leaders also believe that the investigating agencies will speed up the probe into the chit fund scams, in which the TMC leaders are accused.

As BJP is poised to snatch 18 seats in Bengal — a considerable increase in numbers since it got only two seats in 2014 — it is confident of doing well in the 126 Assembly segments. Added to this is the four seats it is poised to win out of eight Assembly segment bypolls in Bengal. West Bengal has a total of 294 Assembly seats, out of which 211 were won by the TMC in 2016.

In the last few years, TMC leaders such as Mukul Roy, who was once the party's second-in-command, has joined BJP. Even before the Lok Sabha polls, TMC suspended MPs like Anupam Hazra and Saumitra Khan, who joined the saffron party. Former TMC MLA from Barrackpore Arjun Singh also joined the BJP recently. All three of them were given Lok Sabha tickets by the BJP.

During a series of campaigns, Modi and BJP national president Amit Shah had promised 'punishment' for those involved in chit fund scams, apart from a call that the end of CM and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee's rule will start from May 23.

Amit Shahji had promised during the campaign that after coming to power, people accused in chit fund scams, including TMC leaders, would be behind bars. So, expect the investigation agencies like CBI and ED to speed up the probe," said a BJP leader.

Sayantan Basu, BJP state secretary, said: "Our future course of action will be decided by the party's central unit. But it is true that many are in touch with us. For years our workers have worked hard in Bengal. We will further develop our organisation."

According to sources, BJP's both state unit and central leadership are in touch with TMC MPs and MLAs, and after the new government swears in, initiative to break the ranks of TMC will start. Roy, now a BJP national executive member, will play an instrumental role.

"BJP has got around 40 per cent vote share

### HOW THEY VOTED IN WEST BENGAL

#### 2009 LOK SABHA POLLS (RESULTS)

Party	Seats	Vote share
TMC	19	31.17%
Left Front	15	43.30%
INC	6	13.45%
BJP	1	6.14%
SUCI	1	NA

#### 2014 LOK SABHA POLLS (RESULTS)

Party	Seats	Vote share
TMC	34	39.05%
Left Front	2	34.00%
BJP	2	16.80%
Congress	4	9.58%

#### 2019 LOK SABHA POLLS (LEADS) TILL 1 AM

Party	Seats	Vote share
TMC	22	43.28%
BJP	18	40.25%
Congress	2	5.61%
Left Front	0	7.42%

and leading in 18 seats so far. This is despite terror and rigging by TMC. The Trinamool Congress government has no right to stay in power," said Roy.

When asked about whether there is any chance of postponing the Assembly polls, Roy said: "The people of Bengal will decide."

According to party insiders, a change of state leadership is also expected after the Lok Sabha polls end and a new government swearing in at the Centre under Modi.

"Mamata Banerjee's rule will end by 2021, or even before. People of Bengal had enough of the terror. Who knows whether the people of Bengal has to wait for two years for the Assembly polls or not," said a senior BJP leader from Delhi.

Interestingly, when the TMC won 19 seats against the Left in 2009 Lok Sabha elections, it also paved the way for the party's victory in the Assembly polls in 2011.

BJP leadership is optimistic that the trend will be repeated.



Will this victory mean more political violence? Many of our karyakartas have lost their lives and homes because of violence triggered by the TMC, we are prepared for the future too.

Is BJP eyeing TMC MLAs?

It is other way round. We are not eyeing them, they are in touch with BJP.

How are you feeling about your win? I was always confident and had been telling people that I will win with a good margin.

## ASSEMBLY BYPOLLS

### BJP wins four seats, TMC three

SANTANU CHOWDHURY  
KOLKATA, MAY 23

In keeping with its landslide victory in the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP won four of the eight seats in the West Bengal Assembly bypolls. It was runner-up in two other seats.

The bypolls were necessitated due to one death and seven resignations, according to PT

18

# EAST



## DECISION 2019

ODISHA 21 SEATS

BJP  
082014  
01BJD  
122014  
20OTHERS  
012014  
00

ODISHA (ASSEMBLY) 146 SEATS

BJP  
232014  
10BJD  
1122014  
117OTHERS  
112014  
20

Includes the leads



## AND THE WINNER IS

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik flashes the victory sign, at his residence in Bhubaneswar on Thursday. Express

## Naveen secures mandate for fifth term as BJD withstands BJP onslaught

BJD supremo thanks women voters, says will have constructive relationship with Centre

SAMPAD PATNAIK  
BHUBANESWAR, MAY 23

ALTHOUGH ITS Lok Sabha tally is set to dip, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) on Thursday managed to withstand the wave in favour of the BJP across the country. The party also retained power in the Odisha Assembly polls, with its supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik set for a historic fifth term.

Till late on Thursday night, the BJD was leading in 12 out of the 21 Lok seats in Odisha – eight less than its 2014 Lok Sabha polls tally. The BJD was ahead in eight seats and the Congress in one. In the Assembly election, the ruling BJD had won 28 seats and was ahead in 84 seats. The BJD, on the other hand, had won five seats and was leading in 18 others.

Patnaik won from both Hinjili and Bijeupur Assembly seats that he had contested.

Crediting the women voters in the state with the party's victory, Naveen said, "I want to thank particularly the women of Odisha who came out in large numbers to vote for us."

"I would like to express my deep gratitude to the people of our state who have showered their blessings time and time again on the BJD. I would also like to thank leaders and workers of the party who worked so hard," said the BJD chief.

"We will have a constructive relationship with the Central government for the development and welfare of Odisha," Naveen told ANI. This new position is in complete contrast to his previous stance of "equidistance" from the national parties.

"A fifth term for Naveen Patnaik will be historic in the country," said former Bhubaneswar MP and BJD veteran Prasanna Pathasani. "All talks of anti-incumbency stand discredited".

In the course of the campaign, the BJD had criticised the BJD on its record in agriculture, corruption and women's safety and given a call for "Ethara sarkar badaliba darkar (This time government must change)".



BJD supporters celebrate in Bhubaneswar on Thursday. PTI

"We accept that the BJD at the state level has been unable to make people understand the wrong policies of the BJD government," said BJD state vice-president Sameer Mohanty.

In his last election rally at Kendrapara, Modi had predicted an imminent defeat for Naveen. "Naveen Babu you are going, it is decided. Your officers cannot save you," the Prime Minister had said. To this, Patnaik had replied that he will invite the Prime Minister for the BJD government's swearing-in.

After results, both leaders congratulated each other on Twitter.

The Congress, meanwhile, put up a dismal show. Till late on Thursday night, it had won one and was leading in eight Assembly seats. A day before results were to be declared, state Congress chief Niranjan Patnaik had said his party will not form the government, but will better its 2014 tally when the

party won 16 Assembly seats.

On Thursday, Niranjan said, "This is a democracy and we accept the verdict of the people. But if BJD forms the government in the Centre again, then it is not good. If Naveen Patnaik forms government in Odisha again, then it is not good."

Till late on Thursday night, the BJD was leading in eight Parliamentary seats. In Bolangir, BJD's Sangita Singh Deo was ahead of the BJD's Kalikesh Singh Deo, while former IAS officer Aparajita Sarangi was ahead of her BJD rival and former IPS officer Arup Patnaik. Union Minister Jual Oram was leading by a margin of over 2 lakh votes in Sundergarh.

The BJD was breathing easy in three Lok Sabha seats considered its bastions – Aska, Berhampur and Kendrapara. In Kendrapara, BJD's Rajya Sabha MP and actor Anubhav Mohanty was leading against former BJD MP

### EXPLAINED

#### Inroads, and a roadblock

IN ODISHA, one of its focus states where it contested on its own, the BJD's vote share has risen from 21.5% to 38% this time. It has managed to recapture the ground lost to the BJD in Western Odisha. However, the BJD was unable to translate this advantage to the Assembly seats, where the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD won 113 of the 147 seats. The BJD managed to win only 22. While the BJD registered a 12% lead against its nearest rival, the BJD has reaffirmed its position as the growing alternative party in the coastal state.

Bijayant Panda, who recently joined the BJD, with over 1.4 lakh votes.

The BJD's Pramila Bisoyi looked set to win in Aska. In Berhampur, the BJD, which had fielded former Union Minister and Congress leader Chandra Sekhar Sahoo, was headed for a win. The BJD was also seen romping home in Kandhamal, Jagatsinghpur and Jajpur.

In Bargarh, BJD's Suresh Pujari was ahead of his BJD opponent. The party was also leading in Kalahandi. Overall, the BJD seemed to be performing well in western Odisha.

The BJD was breathing easy in three Lok Sabha seats considered its bastions – Aska, Berhampur and Kendrapara. In Kendrapara, BJD's Rajya Sabha MP and actor Anubhav Mohanty was leading against former BJD MP

Sambit Patra.

Puri, a contest between spokespersons of three parties, saw a tight contest between the BJD and the BJP. The BJD's Pinaki Mishra was leading by nearly 15,000 votes against BJD's Sambit Patra.

### A CONTEST STILL LEFT

#### PATKURA YET TO GO TO POLLS

Polling on the Patkura Assembly segment has not been held so far. It was initially postponed due to the death of a candidate and then due to cyclone Fani hitting the state.

## NDA score shows little impact of citizenship Bill row

ABHISHEK SAHA  
GUWAHATI, MAY 23

THE BJP and its regional allies are set to win a lion's share of seats in the Northeast, leading in 17 of 24 seats in the seven states of the region by late Thursday. These include nine of Assam's 14 seats.

Besides Assam, BJP candidates took a clear lead in both seats of Tripura, two seats in Arunachal Pradesh, and one in Manipur.

Ally National People's Party (NPP), headed by Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, surged ahead in one (Tura) of the state's two seats, and another ally Mizo National Front (MNF), headed by Mizoram CM Zoramthanga, won the lone seat in the state. In Nagaland's only seat, BJP ally NDPP is leading.

Late Thursday night, Congress candidates were leading in only three seats in Assam, and one in Meghalaya.

Himanta Biswa Sarma, Assam minister and convenor of the North-East Democratic Alliance, the BJP-led alliance of political parties in the region, told *The Indian Express*, "We have won in the Northeast because Prime Minister Narendra Modi has developed the region very methodically. People here have realised there is a PM who really cares for the Northeast – that is why this overwhelming support (has come)."

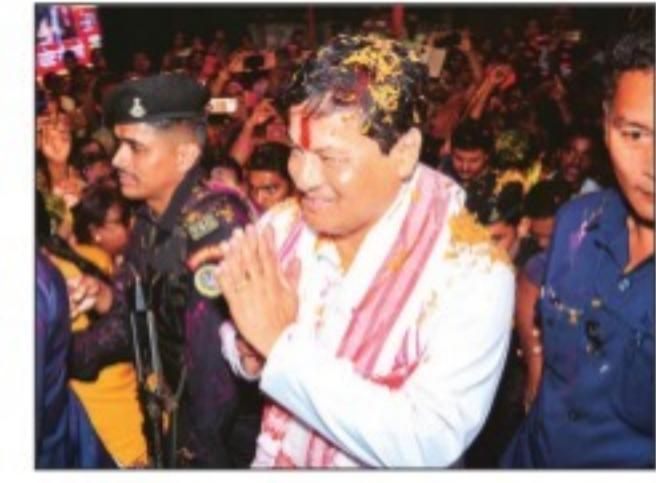
Another important reason for the NDA's victory, he said, is the BJP's "capacity to work with its regional allies – the BJP is the world's largest political party, yet we are working with regional parties which, say, have influence over a district or a particular region."

Earlier this year, the region was rocked by intense protests against the BJP due to its pledge to implement the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill (CAB), which proposes to make non-Muslim minority immigrants from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan eligible for Indian citizenship through comparatively relaxed norms. Large sections of the society in the region consider the proposed law to be detrimental to the interests of the indigenous people of the Northeast.

Thursday's victories indicated that the BJP has overcome the opposition in Assam's Brahmaputra Valley region, and persistence with the Bill helped consolidate votes in Barak Valley, where the proposal enjoys support. The BJD was leading in upper Assam's Dibrugarh, which saw massive agitation against the Bill, as also in Barak Valley's Silchar – where sitting Congress MP Sushmita Dev was trailing – and Karimganj.

Sarma said: "A lot of negative things were said about our party and our leadership on the Citizenship Bill. While overcoming that, we had to ensure that we are not compromising with our core beliefs, values, ideology. Many people thought we will lose because of the CAB, but when the final results are out you will see... CAB consolidated our votes."

In Assam, political observers said, the BJP benefitted from infrastructure projects such as the Dhola-Sadiya bridge and Bogibeel bridge



Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal in Guwahati on Thursday. PTI

### ASSAM

#### 14 SEATS

BJP  
092014  
07CONG  
032014  
03OTHERS  
022014  
04

– two of India's longest river bridges inaugurated in the state in the last five years – several welfare schemes aimed at tea tribe voters, and a consolidation of votes of the Bengali-speaking Hindu community.

The Congress was leading in three seats of Assam as of late Thursday, while AIUDF chief and sitting MP from Dhubri was ahead in that constituency. The AGP, the BJP's ally in Assam government which had walked out of alliance over the CAB issue and then returned, did not manage a lead in the three seats it contested.

In 2014, the BJP had won seven seats in Assam, and the Congress and the AIUDF got three each. Independent candidate Nabu Sarania was leading in Kokrajhar LS constituency, where he is the sitting MP.

According to tentative results, Congress's vote-share in Assam increased from 29.9 per cent to about 35.3 per cent as of Thursday evening. The BJP's vote showed a slight decline – it was tentatively 35.61 per cent, against 36.86 per cent in 2014.

Assam Congress spokesperson Rhituparna Konwar told *The Indian Express*, "We had won three seats last time and had expected more this time. But this is a Parliamentary democracy and we accept the people's verdict. Winning and losing are part of it (democracy)."

### 5 QUESTIONS | BJP LEADER HIMANTA SARMA

SPEAKS TO ABHISHEK SAHA ON THE BJP'S SWEEP IN THE NORTHEAST.

#### As the man-in-charge, how do you see this result?

This is a tremendous victory. This has become possible because of the strong leadership of PM Narendra Modi and the organisational expansion by party chief Amit Shah.



#### What were the crucial challenges?

Negative things were said about our party on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. We had to overcome that... Many people thought we will lose because of the Bill, but you will see it helped us.

#### But allies like NPP contested against BJP on some seats.

No no, they attended the NDA's meeting Tuesday.

#### So CAB will be passed?

Whatever we have committed [will be done]. I believe the core of CAB will remain same, but we have to address issues which give an advantage to those opposing it to spread rumours.

You criticised certain sections of Muslims, doubting their citizenship and accusing them of encroachment. The SC has ordered NRC after convincing themselves. So, presence of foreigners in Assam is not a question to be debated. If you have come here, you respect my civilisation. It is not a message for conflict, it is a message to show them how to live in this country in the days to come.

BAJAYANT PANDA (BJP)

Behind BJD's Anubhav Mohanty by 1,46,089 votes in Kendrapara

BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (BJD)

Ahead of BJD's Prakash Mishra by 1,17,418 votes in Cuttack

SAMBIT PATRA (BJP)

Behind BJD's Pinaki Mishra by 14,932 votes in Puri

SUSHMITA DEV (CONGRESS)

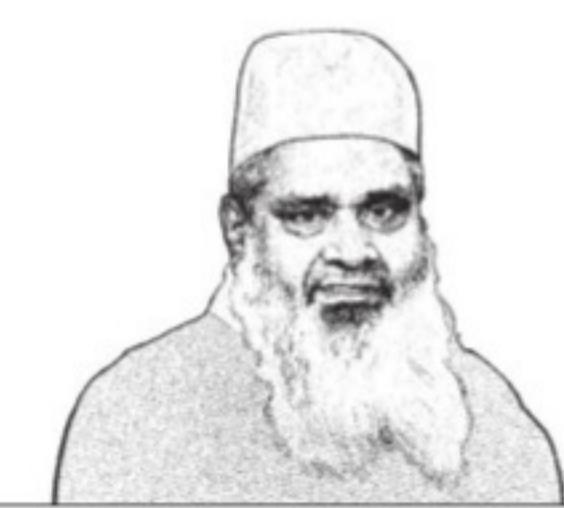
Loses from Silchar, finishes behind BJD's Rajdeep Roy by a margin of 81,596 votes

BADRUDDIN AJMAL (AIUDF)

Wins from Dhubri, defeats Congress's Abu Taher Bepari by 2,26,258 votes

KIREN RIJIU (BJP)

Ahead of Congress's Nabam Tuki by 1,39,854 votes in Arunachal West



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## NORTH



## PUNJAB 13 SEATS

	BJP+	04	2014	06
	CONG	08	2014	03
	OTHERS	01	2014	04

## HARYANA 10 SEATS

	BJP	10	2014	07
	CONG	00	2014	01
	OTHERS	00	2014	02

(Includes the leads)



## THE SMILE OF VICTORY

Congress candidate from Patiala Preneet Kaur celebrates her victory. Kaur defeated Shiromani Akali Dal candidate Surjit Singh Rakha. Harmeet Sodhi

EXPLAINED E.

## Modi factor, split in Jat votes

WHAT EXPLAINS the BJP sweep in Haryana? For one, the Modi factor. Besides, Haryana sends a large population of its youth to the armed forces and the ripples of the Pulwama attack were felt in its villages. The Congress, on the other hand, was a divided house, as was evident both in the panchayat polls and in the Jind bypoll, in which party national spokesman Randeep Singh Surjewala came a distant third. The INLD split vertically with party supremo Om Prakash Chautala's younger son Ajay Chautala forming his own Jannayak Janata Party. Traditionally, Haryana was ruled by the party that got the Jat votes. But the BJP managed to polarise the voters, creating a Jat, non-Jat divide. While the Jat votes got split among Jat candidates, the BJP managed to consolidate the non-Jat electorate

## Hoodas, dynasties fall by wayside as BJP scores perfect-10 in Haryana

VARINDER BHATIA  
CHANDIGARH, MAY 23

The BJP created history in Haryana by winning all 10 constituencies with comfortable margins.

Rohit was the lone seat where the BJP candidate, Arvind Sharma, was neck and neck with Congress's Deepender Hooda. The three-time Congress MP eventually lost by a thin margin.

The state's main opposition party, the Indian Lok Dal, was decimated, with most of its candidates losing security deposits. The newly formed JJP (an offshoot of INLD) and its ally, Aam Aadmi Party, also failed to make any impact.

The verdict also wiped out four political dynasties of Haryana — Devi Lal's three great-grandsons Dushyant, Digvijay and Arjun Chautala lost; Bansi Lal's granddaughter Shruti Choudhary lost in Bhiwani-Mahendragarh; and Bhajan Lal's grandson Bhavaya Bishnoi finished a distant third in Hisar.

Congress's four-time MP and two-time CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda — Deepender's father — lost to BJP's Ramesh Chander



CM Manohar Lal Khattar and state BJP chief Subhash Barala Thursday. Jasbir Malhi

Kaushik by over 1.6 lakh votes.

This was the first time the BJP contested all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana. In 2014, it contested eight seats and won seven, while then ally Haryana Janhit Congress had contested two seats and lost both.

In Karnal, Sanjay Bhatia, making his electoral debut, won by a record 6.5 lakh votes. The BJP's Krishanpal Gurjar won in Faridabad.

In Sirsa, BJP's Sunita Duggal, a former IRS officer and another debutante, won by over 3 lakh votes against Congress's Haryana chief and former local MP Ashok Tanwar.

Kumari Selja, a former Union minister, lost to BJP's Rattan Lal Kataria by over 3.40 lakh votes, while Shruti Choudhary lost to Dharambir Singh by a margin of over 4 lakh.

In Gurgaon, BJP's Rao Inderjit Singh defeated Congress's Ajay Singh Yadav by over 3.8 lakh votes. In Kurukshetra, Nirmal Singh of the Congress lost by over 3.8 lakh votes to BJP's Nayab Singh.

Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar attributed the party's landslide victory in Haryana to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "people-friendly policies and initiatives". He said: "They [Opposition] launched a personal attack. They used the word chowkidar, for instance. Then they criticised EVMs. Congress workers stood guard outside strongrooms. What are they doing there? They have also become chowkidars."

Bhupinder Hooda said, "We will honour the people's verdict. As far as performance is concerned, we cannot isolate Haryana — it happened across the country. The Modi wave again swept everything away."

## 5 QUESTIONS | CM CAPT AMARINDER SINGH

TALKS TO KANCHAN VASDEV ON THE CONGRESS'S PERFORMANCE IN PUNJAB

Congress has been able to buck the national trend in Punjab.  
How do you look at it?

It shows that not all is lost. If Punjab could remain unaffected by the Hindutva plank and vote for development agenda, then the tide can, and will, turn in other states too.

Yet, Punjab Congress could not achieve its Mission 13. Why?

Yes, that is unfortunate and we will introspect. On the face of it, we lost Gurdaspur because the people got swayed by star power. In Bathinda, it seems Punjab Local Bodies minister Navjot Sidhu's last-minute remarks cost the party a seat.



Should Congress reinvent itself?

The Congress has already started reinventing itself under Rahul Gandhi's leadership.

How do you look at the PPCC president's defeat?

It is unfortunate that people chose the star power of Sunny Deol over the hard work of Sunil Jakhar. Maybe our democracy is yet to become evolved to separate the wheat from the chaff.

## BJP wins all Himachal seats

KAVITA UPADHYAY  
SHIMLA, MAY 23

THE BJP on Thursday won all the four Lok Sabha seats in Himachal Pradesh. The Congress drew a blank for the second consecutive time in the hill state.

The polls were the first electoral challenge for Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur, who was leading the party's campaigns in Mandi, Shimla (reserved) and Kangra seats.

Speaking to the media after the results, the chief minister said, "I worked hard for the polls and visited all state Assembly seats, which is not what is normally done for Lok Sabha elections. The results show that the people of Himachal Pradesh have shown confidence in Modi ji, yet again."

In Hamirpur, Anurag Thakur's victory by a margin of 3.99 lakh votes signalled at the revival of Prem Kumar Dhimal, who was the BJP's chief ministerial candidate in the 2017 Assembly polls but lost the election from



Anurag Thakur won from Hamirpur

Sujanpur. Anurag, who contested from Hamirpur for the fourth time, has always banked on the clout his father wields in the constituency. Anurag said, "I will work harder and take on the responsibilities that my party will give me."

State Congress chief Kuldeep Rathore said, "The result is totally unexpected. The way we were united in Himachal Pradesh, we did not expect such a result. Organisation-wise the BJP was better prepared. Our booth-level preparation was not as strong. But, the issues of unemployment, etc., all became irrelevant and the issue of national security took over after the Pulwama attack and the Balakot air strikes. It looks like people voted based on emotions."

## JAMMU &amp; KASHMIR

## NC wins Valley, BJP Jammu &amp; Ladakh

ARUN SHARMA & NAVEED IQBAL  
KATHUA, SRINAGAR, MAY 23

IT WAS almost Jammu and Ladakh versus Kashmir in Jammu and Kashmir, as BJP won the two seats from Jammu and the lone Ladakh seat, while the National Conference (NC) won the three seats of Kashmir Valley.

The BJP, in its manifesto, had promised to abrogate the special status provided to J&K by Indian Constitution through Articles 370 and 35-A. The NC — like the PDP — promised to fight attempts at changing this, as also work for getting more autonomy for J&K.

Raising concern over the verdict, NC vice-president Omar Abdullah noted that it "doesn't bode well that votes are divided down the middle in the state, and that's something we are going to have to address".

In Jammu, Union minister Jitendra Singh was re-elected from Udhampur, defeating Congress's Vikramaditya Singh, while BJP's Jugal Kishore retained Jammu seat, defeating Congress's Ramashwar Bhalla. In Ladakh, BJP's JT Namgyal won against Sajjad Hussain, an Independent supported by both NC and PDP.

Even though NC and PDP lent support to Congress candidates in the two seats in Jammu division, the victory margin of all three BJP candidates increased significantly this time.

Rebel BJP leader and two-time state minister Chaudhary Lal Singh, who floated Dogra Swabhiman Sangathan before the elections and backed demands for CBI inquiry into the rape and murder of a young girl in Jammu last year, polled only 18,000 and 6,486 votes in Udhampur and Jammu constituencies, respectively.

After his victory, Jitendra Singh said the journey of development that began under

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will continue.

In Kashmir, the PDP, which won all three seats in the Valley in 2014, came a cropper this time, with party chief and former CM Mehbooba Mufti finishing third in Anantnag. Mufti had won from the constituency in 2014.

NC president Farooq Abdullah, who won the Srinagar seat, said: "We have to fight for protection of the country's secular visage. The mammoth task before us is to put up a strong front against forces inimical to J&K's special status."

Conceding her defeat, Mufti tweeted, "I've been fortunate to get the love & affection of my people. They have every right to express their anger for my failings. Accept their verdict with humility..."

NC's Hasnain Masoodi won from Anantnag despite limited campaigning.

Former Speaker of J&K Assembly Mohammad Akbar Lone won from Baramulla.

## J&amp;K 6 SEATS

	BJP	03	2014	03
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	CONG	00	2014	00
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	PDP	00	2014	03
--	-----	----	------	----

	NC	03	2014	00
--	----	----	------	----

MEHBOOBA MUFTI (PDP)

Loses from Anantnag, finishes third after NC's Hasnain Masoodi and Congress's G A Mir

FAROOQ ABDULLAH (NC)

Wins from Srinagar, defeats Aga Syed Mohsin of the PDP by a margin of 70,050 votes

BHUPINDER HOODA (CONG)

Loses from Sonipat, finishes behind BJP's Ramesh Chander Kaushik by 1,64,864 votes

RAO INDERJIT SINGH (BJP)

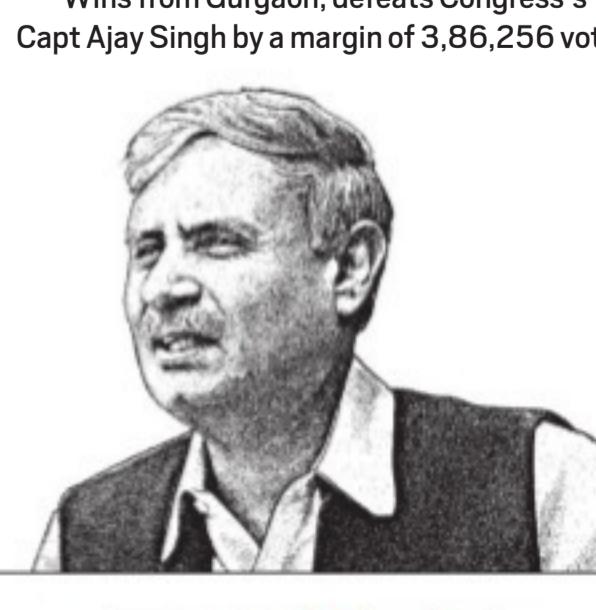
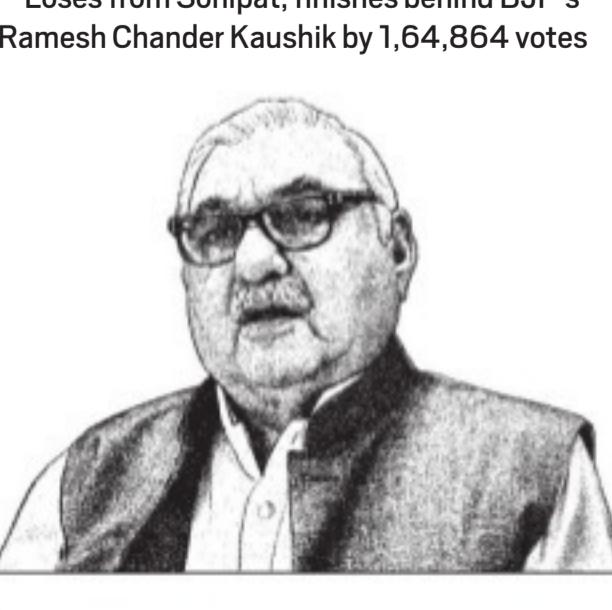
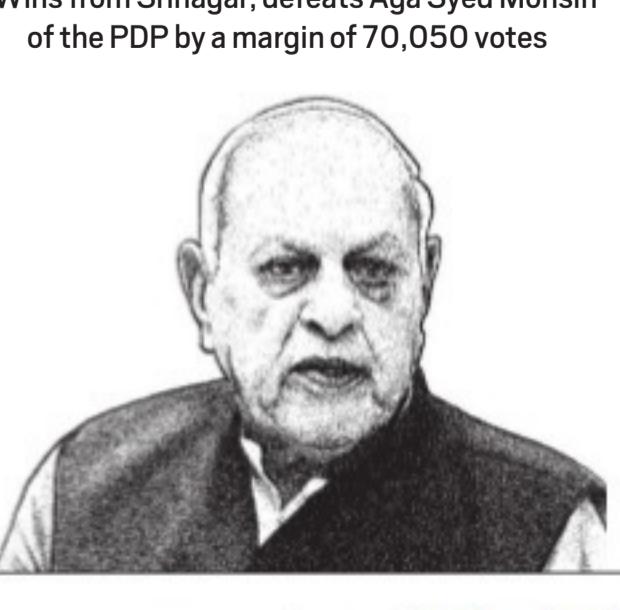
Wins from Gurgaon, defeats Congress's Capt Ajay Singh by a margin of 3,86,256 votes

SUNNY DEOL (BJP)

Wins from Gurdaspur, defeats Congress's Sunil Jakhar by a margin of 82,459 votes

BHAGWANT MANN (AAP)

Wins from Sangrur, defeats Congress's Kewal Singh Dhillon by a margin of 1,10,211 votes



## MEANWHILE IN JALANDHAR

## PREMATURE MOURNING

Independent candidate in Jalandhar, Neetu Shutteran Wala, broke down around noon when he found he had got 5 votes though his family had 9 members. Neetu's vote count later climbed to 856.

## Amarinder shows Cong the way, Badals stay afloat

KANCHAN VASDEV,  
MAN AMAN SINGH CHHINA  
& NAVJEEVAN GOPAL

CHANDIGARH, MAY 23

STEMMING THE Modi wave in Punjab, the Congress won eight of the 13 Lok Sabha seats in the state, confirming Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's position as among the tallest leaders of the party. The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and BJP won two seats each and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) retained one.

At a time when the Congress was swept away even in the states where it had won the recent Assembly polls, Amarinder delivered a second win for the party after the impressive win in the 2017 Assembly elections. The Congress win even bucked the post-Balakot surge for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with Amarinder, an ex-Armyman, accusing him every rally of using air strikes to garner votes.

Among the biggest Congress wins was in Patiala, where Amarinder's wife Preneet Kaur defeated Surjit Singh Rakha of SAD.

The other big winner of the Congress was Manish Tiwari from Anandpur Sahib, while among its biggest losers was Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar, who lost to actor and first-time contender Sunny Deol of the BJP from Gurdaspur.

While the Akali Dal fared poorly, losing by huge margins in eight seats, the wins for both president Sukhbir Singh Badal and wife Harsimrat will consolidate the hold of the family on the party. In 2017, the Akali Dal had suffered its biggest rout, winning only 15 seats, triggering a revolt against the Badal family. Sukhbir's decision to contest this time had shown his willingness to take the bull by the horns, especially with father Parkash Singh Badal almost out of the picture. It was the first time both he and Harsimrat were in the fray together. However, the tally of four with the BJP is one of SAD's worst performances in parliamentary elections since 1999.

For the BJP, which won Gurdaspur and Hoshiarpur in 2014, the biggest embarrassment was Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri's loss from Amritsar, to Gurjeet Singh Aujla of the Congress.

The AAP, which won four seats in Punjab in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, lost Patiala, Fatehgarh Sahib and Faridkot. Bhagwant Mann was the only saving grace.

Apart from Gurdaspur, the BJP retained Hoshiarpur, after changing sitting MP Vijay Sampal.

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# SOUTH



# DECISION 2019

## ANDHRA PRADESH 25 SEATS

YSRCP  
222014  
16TDP  
32014  
9TRS  
92014  
NABJP  
42014  
NACONG  
32014  
NAAIMIM  
12014  
NA

Leads/results till 1 am

"Elections are over, results have come. In a democracy, it is our responsibility to accept people's verdict...We will review how the party should now function and go forward."

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU, TDP chief

## TELANGANA 17 SEATS

TRS  
92014  
NABJP  
42014  
NACONG  
32014  
NAAIMIM  
12014  
NA

## AND THE WINNER IS

YSR Congress Party supporters celebrate the party's success in the Assembly and Parliamentary elections in Guntur on Thursday. PTI

## With 4 seats, BJP's southern corridor extends to Telangana; TRS left with only 9



**SREENIVAS JANYALA**  
HYDERABAD, MAY 23

THE BJP created history in Telangana by making inroads into the hinterland, winning four of the 17 Lok Sabha seats.

Besides Karnataka, Telangana becomes the only southern state where the saffron party won seats in this election.

The results were a big blow for Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao and his party, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), which had won a landslide in the Assembly elections held last December and was hoping to win 16 of the state's 17 Lok Sabha seats. In the end, it netted only nine, with the Congress winning the other three seats.

In 2014, in the then undivided Andhra Pradesh, the BJP had won from Secunderabad (now in Telangana), and Visakhapatnam and Narasapuram (in Andhra Pradesh). Among the four seats the saffron party won is Nizamabad, where Dharmapuri Arvind defeated TRS's sitting MP Kavitha, daughter of Chief Minister Rao.

The BJP retained Secunderabad, with its former state unit chief G Kishan Reddy winning there. BJP's Bandi Sanjay won from Karimnagar, and Soyam Bapu Rao from Adilabad.

Telangana Congress chief N Uttam Kumar Reddy won from Nalgonda, and state working president A Revanth Reddy was victorious from Malkajgiri. Congress's Komatireddy Venkatreddy won from Bhongir.

BJP's Arvind, Sanjay and Kishan Reddy, as well as Congress leader Revanth Reddy, had all lost in the Assembly elections just six months ago.

AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi became the Lok Sabha MP from Hyderabad for the fourth consecutive term.

In 2014, the TRS had won 11 seats of the 17 seats. In December, the party won 88 Assembly seats but in an effort to strengthen chances of winning all Lok Sabha seats in the state, the party wooed 14 Congress and two TDP MLAs – all 16 joined the TRS, taking its tally unofficially to 104.

In Nizamabad, Kavitha, besides BJP and Congress candidates, faced 179 turmeric farmers, who were angry at falling prices and contested against her. Kavitha had failed to convince the Centre to set up a Turmeric

## Defeated in state polls, this time it's different for these BJP, Cong candidates

**SREENIVAS JANYALA**  
HYDERABAD, MAY 23

CALL IT a twist of fate, the reaping of benefit of a pro-Modi wave or a localised anti-TRS sentiment, the four BJP Lok Sabha candidates who won in Telangana had actually lost in the state's Assembly elections held last December. Two out of three Congress candidates who won, had also lost in the Assembly elections.

■ **G Kishan Reddy**, the former Telangana BJP state president, had lost to TRS rival K Venkatasham in Amberpet constituency by a margin of 1,008 votes in the Assembly elections. On Thursday, Kishan Reddy won from Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency, where the BJP had dropped sitting MP Bandaru Dattatreya. Kishan defeated TRS's Sai Talasani, son of state minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, who is a close aide of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao.

■ **Bandi Sanjay** of the BJP, who won from Karimnagar Lok Sabha, had lost from Karimnagar City to TRS rival Gangula Kamalkar with a margin of 14,974 votes in the Assembly polls. In the Lok Sabha polls, Sanjay won with a margin of 38,902, defeating senior TRS leader B Vinod Kumar. TRS chief Rao had won from this seat three times and this seat was considered a TRS bastion. Kumar is considered to be a political strategist for the TRS. His defeat is a big blow to the party.

■ **Dharmapuri Arvind** of the BJP proved to be a giant-killer in these elections. He defeated TRS's K Kavitha with a majority of 69,000 votes. Arvind lost from Nizamabad Urban to the TRS in the last Assembly elections. As there was no other candidate to take on Kavitha in Nizamabad Lok Sabha seat, the BJP had nominated him.

■ **Soyam Bapu Rao**, a tribal leader, had lost from Boath Assembly constituency in 2014. He was given the BJP ticket from Adilabad as

there were no better candidate willing to contest from that constituency. In the pro-BJP wave, he won with a majority of more than 50,000 votes.

"As there were no other candidates to take the Telangana Rashtra Samiti, the BJP renominated them and they all won due to the Modi wave. We would have won a fifth seat in Malkajgiri. Unfortunately, our candidate N Ramachander lost with a narrow margin to Congress's Revanth," said BJP Telangana chief Dr K Laxman, referring to the narrow victory of A Revanth Reddy.

Three Congress candidates also cashed in on the anti-incumbency sentiment. They are:

■ **A Revanth Reddy**, working president of Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC), had actually lost in his home Assembly constituency of Kodangal last December. "He could not win as MLA but won as MP...this is incredible," a TRS leader said. A staunch critic of KCR, the TRS had vowed to defeat Revanth Reddy in the Assembly elections but were unable to defeat him in Lok Sabha polls. Revanth Reddy won with a margin of over 10,000 votes.

■ **Komati Reddy Venkatreddy** of the Congress won in Bhongir against his TRS rival with a narrow margin of less than 5,000. In 2014, the TRS's B Narasimha won with a majority of over 5,000 votes.

■ **N Uttam Kumar Reddy**, the TPCC chief, recorded one of the biggest victories for the Congress in Nalgonda. Uttam had won the December Assembly elections from Huzurnagar, under Nalgonda Lok Sabha seat, with a margin of 25,499 votes. This time, Congress president Rahul Gandhi hand-picked him to contest from Nalgonda Lok Sabha seat. Uttam won with a margin of 25,388 votes, defeating TRS candidate V Narasimha Reddy.

■ **Konda Visheshwar Reddy** of the Congress was leading in Chevella Parliamentary constituency where there is a neck and neck fight going on.

Board.

the 179 farmers together polled nearly 48,000 votes, which in the end proved crucial for Kavitha.

While some TRS leaders tried to allege that the BJP and the Congress colluded to defeat Kavitha, the outgoing MP stated that she accepts the defeat.

The TRS won from Mahabubabad, Bhongir, Mahbubnagar, Medak, Peddapalle, Warangal, Khammam, Nagarkurnool, and Zahirabad.

In 2014, the TRS had won from Adilabad,

Bhongir, Chevella, Karimnagar,

Mahabubabad, Mahbubnagar, Medak,

Nizamabad, Peddapalle, Warangal and

Zahirabad. The BJP had won from

Secunderabad, TDP from Malkajgiri, YSR

Congress Khammam, the AIMIM from

Hyderabad, and the Congress won two seats:

Nagarkurnool and Nalgonda.

**K KAVITHA(TRS)**

loses Nizamabad to BJP's Arvind Dharmapuri by a margin of 70,875 votes

**ASADDUDIN OWAISI(AIMIM)**

wins Hyderabad, defeating BJP's Dr Bhagavan Rao by 2,82,186 votes

**UTTAM KUMAR REDDY(CONG)**

wins Nalgonda, defeating TRS's Vemireddy Narasimha Reddy by 25,682 votes

**JAYADEV GALLA(TDP)**

wins Guntur, defeating TRS's Modugula Venugopala Reddy by 4,216 votes

"Elections are over, results have come. In a democracy, it is our responsibility to accept people's verdict...We will review how the party should now function and go forward."

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU, TDP chief

## Padayatra pays off: Jagan decimates TDP, wrests power in Andhra Pradesh

**SREENIVAS JANYALA**

HYDERABAD, MAY 23

ON JANUARY 9, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy completed the longest padayatra by any politician in the country, walking 3,648 km across 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh in 241 days. His support team estimated that Jagan interacted with more than 2 crore people, directly or indirectly, and predicted a pro-Jagan wave decimating the TDP three months later.

Now, the YSRCP looks set to win more than 151 of the 175 Assembly seats and 22 of 25 Lok Sabha seats in the state, sweeping away the ruling TDP and all other parties. This is the first time the son of a chief minister who died in harness (Y S Rajasekhara Reddy) went on to start a new political party and came to power on his own.

Actor-turned-politician Pawan Kalyan, who supported the TDP in 2014, became its nemesis in 2019 as his fledgling Jana Sena Party cut up to 9 per cent of TDP votes, ensuring a total rout of the ruling party. The BJP and Congress scored nil.

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu was leading in his constituency of Kuppam in Chittoor district, but his son Lokesh was trailing from Mangalagiri in the heart of Amaravati Capital Region. All 15 TDP ministers and many of their kin who contested were trailing.

"This is the victory of Andhra people over TDP's corruption and misrule. I dedicate this victory to the people of Andhra," said Jagan. The YSRCP's Legislative Party will hold a meeting on Saturday when Jagan will be elected as the leader, and he will take oath on May 30 in Vijayawada.

As the first trends came in, Naidu said, "There was anti-incumbency, but we did not anticipate that it was this strong. Whether in power or out of it, we will continue to work for the welfare of the people."

While in 2014, the difference in vote share between TDP and YSRCP was less than 2 per cent, this time it was more than 10 per cent. While YSRCP got approximately 51 per cent votes, TDP got 38.28 per cent and Jana Sena 8 per cent, SCs/STs and the Kapu community appeared to have voted in favour of Jagan.

The stage was set for the sweeping victory when Jagan and IPAC (his support team) founder Prashant Kishor raised the issue of Special Category status. Even as Jagan ramped up his attack on Naidu for failing to secure this tag for Andhra, YSRCP MPs resigned from Parliament. This forced Naidu to take cudgels with the BJP and Modi, which resulted in the TDP exiting from NDA. This was the first victory for Jagan.

The TDP was contesting alone for the first time. Anti-incumbency, allegations of corruption among MLAs and ministers, and a mood in favour of change after Jagan's record-breaking padayatra all contributed to the TDP's rout. And Jagan's statement that he would support any party at the Centre that grants Special Category status to Andhra made him emerge politically stronger. This posturing catapulted Jagan ahead of Naidu, who was touring the country trying to cobble together a coalition of "anti-BJP" parties. It appears that the pro-BJP mood across the country converted into votes for YSRCP in Andhra rather than the BJP.

There was resentment against Naidu for joining hands with the Congress, which many still blame for the 2014 bifurcation that they see as having left Andhra at a disadvantage. Instead of first concentrating on assistance to the distressed farm sector, tackling drought and creating employment opportunities,

**E** ●

## Battling graft charges, Modi wave

TILL WEDNESDAY, TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu was at the forefront of efforts to form an anti-BJP national front in the hope that an Opposition coalition would get a chance to form the government at the Centre. But the almost total wipeout of the TDP puts a question mark on his role in national, as well as state, politics.

After winning a clear majority in 2014 with the BJP's help, Naidu squandered away his chance of winning another term. While there were many factors at play, the main reason seems to be the corruption charges against the government. For YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, it is a reward for his eight years of hard work, including a 3,648-km-long padayatra.

Naidu embarked on constructing a world-class capital at Amaravati, which is yet to take off.

"While concentrating on constructing the new capital, introducing new technologies, wooing foreign and domestic investment and promoting Andhra as a 'Sunrise State', Naidu neglected the masses. It is a mistake he made in his previous term as CM of united Andhra Pradesh," a former TDP minister said.

Naidu's image took another beating when the TDP was decimated in the Telangana Assembly elections in December. Naidu had joined hands with the Congress and Left parties and campaigned against TRS.

However, the biggest advantage Jagan had was possibly his public outreach. "He was among the people through the last five years of TDP rule. People who were experiencing hardship due to the TDP's bad governance, corruption and neglect by the ruling party

MLAs saw Jagan as the alternative for Naidu. They taught Naidu a lesson that no politician can take people for granted," said YSRCP spokesperson Ambati Rambabu.

## 5 QUESTIONS | TDP MLA NARA LOKESH

MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE ANDHRA PRADESH CABINET **NARA LOKESH** SPEAKS TO **SREENIVAS JANYALA** ON THE DEFEAT OF THE PARTY IN THE LOK SABHA POLLS

From 103 in 2014 to less than 25 in 2019, what happened?

We have to examine in depth and

21

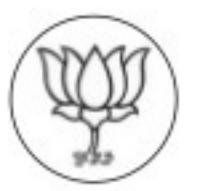
## SOUTH



## KERALA 20 SEATS

CONG  
152014  
8CPM  
12014  
5IUML  
22014  
2

## KARNATAKA 28 SEATS

BJP  
252014  
17CONG  
12014  
9JDS  
12014  
2

Rejected in LS,  
AIADMK wins 9  
of 22 in state polls

ARUN JANARDHANAN  
CHENNAI, MAY 23

THE AIADMK government in Tamil Nadu is set to complete its five-year tenure, as the selective voting pattern ensured that the party won nine of 22 Assembly seats that went to the bypolls. Such was the voting pattern that many constituencies that voted for AIADMK in the bypolls rejected the party in Lok Sabha polls, where the ruling party won a solitary seat against the DMK alliance's 37.

For instance, while AIADMK's alliance partner PMK's high-profile candidate Anbumani Ramadoss was defeated by over 50,000 votes in Dharmapuri Lok Sabha constituency, AIADMK won Harur and Pappireddipatti Assembly seats, in Dharmapuri, with big margins.

Similarly, in Ramanathapuram, where DMK ally IUML defeated the BJP Lok Sabha candidate by a margin of over 1 lakh votes, Paramakudi Assembly segment voted in the AIADMK candidate with a margin of nearly 10,000 votes. The DMK candidate won Dindigul Lok Sabha seat by over 5 lakh votes, while AIADMK sealed Nilakkottai Assembly seat there by over 20,000 votes.

In Thoothukudi, where DMK's Kanimozhi got over 5.63 lakh votes, Vilathikulam Assembly constituency elected AIADMK with a margin of nearly 30,000 votes.

The selective voting also favoured DMK at Theni, the only Lok Sabha seat in the state the AIADMK won - the opposition party won Periyakulam Assembly seat in Theni.



## BIG WIN FOR STALIN

DMK president MK Stalin after his party's victorious performance in Lok Sabha elections in Chennai on Thursday. ANI

## Rahul just one factor, as Congress rides Sabarimala gains in Kerala

SHAJU PHILIP  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MAY 23

BUCKING THE national-level Modi wave, Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) stormed Kerala with its best ever electoral show, retaining the party's traditional strongholds as well as uprooting the CPI(M)'s long-standing fortresses.

The BJP, which had been banking on entering Kerala on the back of the Hindu faithful's sentiments on Sabarimala, again drew a blank.

The UDF ended up getting 19 out of 20 seats, while the sole Left Democratic Front (LDF) seat was Alappuzha, which the CPI(M) won from the Congress. In 2014, the UDF tally was 12 and the LDF eight.

The consolidation of minority voters driven by apprehensions over a resurgent BJP, the anger of Hindu faithful against the CPI(M) government's stand on Sabarimala, and the candidature of Congress president Rahul Gandhi from Wayanad, all are believed

## WAYANAD BRINGS RESPITE TO RAHUL GANDHI

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Congress president Rahul Gandhi, who lost Amethi, won in Wayanad constituency in Kerala. Gandhi got a margin of 4.31 lakh votes in the contest. While Gandhi bagged 7,06,367 votes, his nearest rival LDF candidate P PV Suneer got only 2,74,597 votes. BJP ally BDJS has contested from the seat from NDA fold, but its candidate Thushar Vellappally got only 78,816 votes. In 2014, then BJP candidate R S Rasmil Nath had got 80,757 votes. Congress has been winning from Wayanad seat since its formation in 2009. ENS

to have fuelled the UDF's massive win.

Apart from Rahul, other prominent Congress winners were sitting MP Shashi Tharoor, senior party leaders K

Muraleedharan and Kodikkunnil Suresh.

More than the Congress, it was the CPI(M) that had raised the "Modi spectre" in Kerala during campaigning. It had also projected itself as the best option for minorities against the BJP, underlining the switch of several Congress leaders to the BJP in many states.

However, the fact that it was the Congress that reaped the dividends of minority voting, particularly Muslims, was evident from the huge gains for the UDF in North Kerala, where Muslims have a significant presence.

Meanwhile, the Hindus hurt by the Pinarayi Vijayan government's support for the court decision to allow women of all ages into the Sabarimala shrine appear to have swung behind the Congress, with the party seen as better placed to defeat the CPI(M) than the BJP. Among those seen to have voted for the UDF on the issue were women from Communist parties.

The swelling margin of winners underlined the pro-UDF wave. Of the 19 UDF winners, at least seven won by more than 1 lakh votes. In contrast, in 2014, the difference be-

tween the UDF and LDF in Kerala was only 3,35,570 votes. Only part of the change can be attributed to the increase in polling percentage this time: 77.68% from 74.02% in 2014.

The silent anti-farmer sentiments against the LDF government in flood-hit Idukki also worked in favour of the Congress, with the party's Dean Kurialose winning by 1.71 lakh votes.

The CPI(M) also again lost from its strongholds of Vatakara and Kozhikode. It also lost Kasaragod after 35 years, to the Congress's Rajamohan Unnithan, while in Kannur – the home town of Politburo members Kodiyeri Balakrishnan and Pinarayi Vijayan – CPI(M) central committee member P K Sreemathi lost to Congress heavyweight K Sudhakaran. A dominating theme in these North Kerala constituencies had been recent political killings, for which the CPI(M) was in the dock.

The prominent losers were the BJP's Kummanam Rajasekharan, who quit as Mizoram governor to take on Tharoor in the state capital, CPI(M) sitting MPs M B Rajesh,

## BJP registers biggest win, bags 25 seats in Karnataka

JOHNSON TA  
BENGALURU, MAY 23

WITH A nearly eight per cent surge in vote share over its performance in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP in Karnataka registered its biggest-ever victory in the state winning 25 of the 28 Lok Sabha seats. The party managed to garner 51.2 per cent of the votes, outdoing its 2014 performance when it received 43.37 per cent of the votes.

The election also saw several Congress and JD(S) stalwarts losing their deposits. While former prime minister and JD(S) leader H D Deve Gowda lost in Tumkur, Congress's Mallikarjun Kharge, Veerappa Moily and K H Muniyappa lost in Kalaburagi, Chikkaballapur and Kolar respectively.

Of Gowda's two grandsons fielded by the JD(S), Prajwal Revanna, who contested from the family bastion of Hassan, a seat vacated by the former PM, managed to sail through comfortably. Karnataka CM H D



Tejaswi Surya

The Congress has only won the Bangalore Rural seat, which was held by party strongman D K Shivakumar's brother, D K Suresh.

Leaders who served as ministers in the previous Union government – Ananth Kumar Hegde, D V Sadananda Gowda, Ramesh Jigajinagi – and key BJP politicians like state president B S Yeddyurappa's son B Y Raghavendra, his confidante Shobha Karandlaje, Dakshina Kannada leader Nalin Kateel registered comfortable victories.

Ahead of the polls, Yeddyurappa had said that he had sensed a 15 per cent surge in the popularity of PM Modi in Karnataka since the 2014 polls, especially after the airstrike in Balakot.

"The people of Karnataka have given an appropriate answer to the behaviour of the Congress-JDS government, their corruption, failure to implement promises, lack of development and attack on the prime minister (in poll campaigns)," Yeddyurappa said Thursday.

Commenting on the result, CM

Kumaraswamy said, "The results of the elections are unexpected. I respect the mandate of the people and congratulate Prime Minister Narendra Modi for emerging victorious for the second time."

He added, "Leaders of both the parties will hold a discussion on the losses suffered by the JD(S)-Congress coalition candidates. Our party has seen many victories and losses over the years and party workers need not lose heart."

While congratulating the BJP and Modi, Congress leader and former CM Siddaramaiah said, "I am wishing for a government that is liked by the people and that provides the kind of administration which makes the country a garden of peace for all people" as wished by the Kannada poet Kuvenpu.

He added, "Victory and loss are a part of political life. This is the beauty of democracy. Even though our party has suffered an unprecedented defeat, we have to bow our heads before the people's verdict."

# DMK leads Oppn alliance sweep in Tamil Nadu, AIADMK gets just one seat

ARUN JANARDHANAN

CHENNAI, MAY 23

TAMIL NADU 39 SEATS



AIADMK  
1  
2014  
37



DMK  
23  
2014  
0



CONG  
8  
2014  
2



Bucking the wave

THE MODI wave across the rest of India had no impact in Tamil Nadu. While the DMK swept the Lok Sabha polls in Tamil Nadu, the AIADMK, a BJP ally, just about managed to save face in the Assembly bypolls. Nationally, while the Opposition parties failed to capitalise on the impacts of demonetisation, GST and other central policies, the DMK used these to its advantage in the state. DMK president M K Stalin put up a strong opposition against the AIADMK alliance, underlining his role as a strong regional leader. On the other hand, both TTV Dinakaran's Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam and actor Kamal Haasan's Makkal Needhi Maiam failed to make a mark.

Another former minister said the presence of smaller parties such as TTV Dinakaran's AMMK and Kamal Haasan's MNM, which were expected to cut into DMK votes, as they also banked on the anti-AIADMK and anti-BJP sentiments, in fact impacted the AIADMK.

## 5 QUESTIONS | CONG MLA RAMESH CHENNITHALA

SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER AND OPPONENT LEADER RAMESH CHENNITHALA SPEAKS TO SHAJU PHILIP ON HOW THEY MANAGED THE VICTORY OF THE PARTY IN KERALA

## What made this huge win possible?

Rahul Gandhi's presence in Wayanad energized the Congress workers across Kerala. Besides, people of Kerala are against Modi at the Centre, which has done little for the state.



## Did community consolidation favour Congress?

Certainly, both minority and majority Hindu communities stood with UDF.

## Why Hindus did not prefer BJP which fought for Sabarimala issue?

This win calls for unity of secular parties. If all secular and democratic parties stand together, Modi could be defeated.

They (BJP) took the issue to the streets. But, we adopted a very moderate stand, which went well with the Hindu-faithful.

How would this result reflect upon the state? This is a victory against Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. He should quit as Chief Minister.

How do you see Modi win at the national level?

This win calls for unity of secular parties. If all secular and democratic parties stand together, Modi could be defeated.

## KANIMOZHI (DMK)

Defeats BJP's Tamilisai Soundararajan in Thoothukkudi by 347209 votes



## SHASHI THAROOR (CONG)

Defeats BJP's Kummanam Rajasekharan from Thiruvananthapuram by 99989 votes



## MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (CONG)

Loses to BJP's Umesh G Jadhav in Gulbarga by 95452 votes



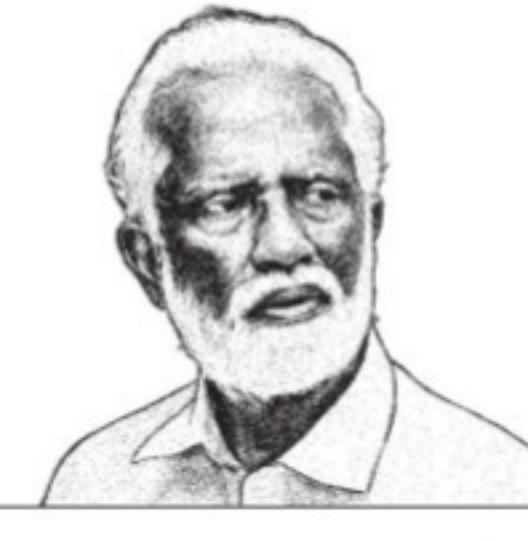
## HD DEVE GOWDA (JD-S)

Loses to BJP's G S Basavaraj in Tumkur by 13339 votes



## K RAJASEKHARAN (BJP)

Loses to Congress's Shashi Tharoor in Thiruvananthapuram by 99989 votes



## PRAJEEV (CPI-M)

Loses to Congress's Hibi Eden in Kerala's Ernakulam by 169153 votes



22

## WEST

DECISION  
2019

GUJARAT 26 SEATS

MAHARASHTRA 48 SEATS

BJP  
262014  
26BJP  
232014  
23SENA  
182014  
18NCP  
42014  
4CONG  
12014  
2AIMIM  
12014  
0

(Includes the leads)



## SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

I humbly accept people's verdict.  
Congratulations to Shiv Sena BJP for their huge  
victory in Maharashtra....

SANJAY NIRUPAM, Mumbai West Congress candidate

BJP repeats 2014 sweep  
in Gujarat, vote share  
rises to 62 per centEXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
GANDHINAGAR, MAY 23

THE BJP not only repeated its 2014 tally by heading towards a win in all the 26 Lok Sabha seats in Gujarat, but also improved its vote share from 59% in 2014 to over 62% this year as the party returned to power at the Centre with a larger mandate.

Leading the BJP's win in the state was party president Amit Shah, who won from the prestigious Gandhinagar constituency with a margin of over 5.57 lakh votes.

In Gujarat, voting was held in a single phase on April 23, which had witnessed a record turnout of 64.11%.

In a rebuke to Congress's "Chowkidar Chor Hai" campaign against Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the Rafale deal, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani said that the people of India voted for "Imaandar Chowkidar (an honest guard)".

Rupani credited three factors for the BJP's thumping victory. "One, he (Modi) ran the government with honesty and credentials. Second, his hard work. He dedicated every second of his life to the country. Third, patriotism, where nation was first... People have directly voted for Modi. Such is the pride among the voters," he said.

The BJP this time had dropped its 10 sitting MPs. Among them was party founder member L K Advani, who has traditionally contested from the Gandhinagar seat. Advani was replaced by Amit Shah, who defeated Congress candidate Cj Chavda with a margin of over 4.84 lakh votes.

Another important BJP MP dropped by the party this time was Union minister Haribhai Chaudhary from Banaskantha con-

stituency. Instead of Chaudhary, BJP had fielded sitting MLA from Tharad constituency and minister in Gujarat government Parbat Patel. Patel defeated Congress's Parthibhai Bhatol by over 3 lakh votes.

Apart from Parbat Patel, BJP had also fielded three of its sitting MLAs – Hasmukh Patel (Amraiwadi), Ratansinh Rathod (Lunavada) and Bharatsinh Dabhi (Kheralu).

The BJP also made a clean sweep in by-polls to four Assembly seats – Manavadar in Junagadh, Jamnagar (Rural), Dhrangadhra in Surendranagar and Unjha in Mehsana – all held by the Congress. The seats had fallen vacant after the Congress MLAs – Jawahar Chavda (Manavadar), Vallabh Dharaviya (Jamnagar Rural), Parshotam Sabariya (Dhrangadhra) and Asha Patel (Unjha) – defected to the BJP over the past few months.

While BJP fielded Chavda, Sabariya and Asha Patel from their respective seats, it fielded another Congress turncoat, Raghavji Patel, from Jamnagar (Rural). With this, the BJP's strength in the 182-member Assembly has now reached 104. In the 2017 Assembly elections, the party had won 99 seats with a simple majority. Later, Congress MLA from Jasdan, Kunvarji Bavalia, joined the BJP and went on to win the Assembly bypoll.

The Congress conceded defeat and said that party workers fought against "BJP's power, money and tricks". "The results have been contrary to our expectations, but we accept them with grace... Whatever shortcomings our organisation might have, we will contemplate and try to improve and raise issues such as unemployment and corruption. Our fight to ensure nyaya (justice) for the people of Gujarat will continue," said state Congress chief Amit Chavda.

## 5 QUESTIONS | GUJARAT CM VIJAY RUPANI

SPEAKING TO RITU SHARMA HE CREDITS PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI FOR THE BJP SWEEP IN THE STATE



changing...

**What is the difference between the victories in 2014 and 2019?**

In 2014, (the victory) was against UPA's ten-years (rule)... The nation voted against (corruption) and saw Modi as an option and voted to see him as the PM. However, this time, Modi's five years work was discussed... People know that the nation is safe in his hands...

No discussion has been done yet.

**Will there be an expansion of the Cabinet?**

No discussion yet.

**Has importing MLAs from Congress become the new formula for the BJP?**

We are not importing from Congress, it is being exported from there. We do not import and this is the reason I say that Congress is disintegrating which will further break in the coming days...

## ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN NORTHEAST

## BJP confident of forming govt in Arunachal

ABHISHEK SAHA  
GUWAHATI, MAY 23

THE BJP was set to win the Assembly elections in Arunachal Pradesh on Thursday, with the border state's 60-member Assembly simultaneously going to polls with the general elections on April 11.

The BJP maintained a clear lead in both Lok Sabha seats in the state, with Union minister Kiren Rijiju having a lead over his Congress rival Nabam Tuki in Arunachal West at the time of going to press.

Rijiju tweeted, "Counting is going slow due to tallying of the VVPAT with the EVMs. After 6 rounds of counting, I'm leading by more than 80,000 votes from Arunachal-West Lok Sabha seat. BJP is also heading towards landslide victory in the State Assembly election in Arunachal Pradesh."

State BJP president Tapir Gao – who was leading in the Arunachal East Lok Sabha constituency – told *The Indian Express*, "The lotus will bloom in the Himalayas of Arunachal Pradesh... We will form the government by winning over 40 seats and Pema Khandu will be returning as the chief minister."

According to the Election Commission website, which showed results of only 43 constituencies at the time filing the report, the BJP either won or was leading in 28 seats. The BJP has already won three seats uncontested.

However, BJP national general secretary and Northeast in-charge, Ram Madhav, tweeted, "In Arunachal Pradesh Assembly elections BJP is leading in 43 out of 60 seats. It will be an elected BJP government for first time in state."

In the 2014 Arunachal Assembly elections, Congress won a clear majority, securing 42 of the 60 seats. But a series of political twists followed, culminating in Congress leader and Chief Minister Pema Khandu defecting in December 2016 – first to the People's Party of Arunachal and then to the BJP. Pema was followed by mass defections by other legislators.

Meanwhile, Tirong Aboh, the 45-year-old National People's Party MLA from Khonsa West constituency who was killed along with nine others in a suspected militant ambush on Thursday, won his seat by a margin of 1,055 votes against BJP's Phawang Lowang.

A massive military operation is underway against the killers.

## SIKKIM 32 SEATS

SKM  
172014  
10SDF  
152014  
22OTHERS  
02014  
0

22

WEST

GUJARAT 26 SEATS

BJP  
262014  
26

MAHARASHTRA 48 SEATS

BJP  
232014  
23SENA  
182014  
18NCP  
42014  
4CONG  
12014  
2AIMIM  
12014  
0

(Includes the leads)

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray in Mumbai on Thursday. Prashant Nadkar

## BJP-Sena alliance sweeps through Maharashtra, Cong-NCP routed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

MUMBAI, MAY 23

RIDING ON a Modi wave, the BJP and Shiv Sena alliance swept the 2019 Lok Sabha elections in Maharashtra on Thursday, winning 41 of the state's 48 seats.

In a near replay of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the Congress-NCP alliance was completely routed. While the Congress was leading in just one seat Chandrapur (Vidarbha), its ally NCP won four seats – Satara, Shirur, Baramati in western Maharashtra and Raigad in Konkan region. The AIMIM, under the banner of Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), won from Aurangabad in Marathwada. In Amravati, an independent candidate (backed by NCP) was leading.

For its part, the BJP won 23 of the 25 seats it contested. The Shiv Sena, which contested 23 seats, bagged 18, despite facing severe anti-incumbency in 10 of the seats.

Despite its relentless criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi before sealing an alliance with the BJP, the Sena entirely banked on 'Moditva' to see its candidates through.

On Thursday, Sena president Uddhav Thackeray lavished gratitude on the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah-Devendra Fadnavis combine.

The BJP-Shiv Sena retained its majority in Vidarbha, Marathwada, north Maharashtra

## Its advantage Fadnavis

THE SWEEP in Maharashtra has given the BJP-led government a major boost, both administratively and politically, ahead of the Assembly elections later this year. The victory will put Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in greater command of the party and coalition government, and will help to tame all Shiv Sena, which had taken on the role of an Opposition party in the last four-and-a-half years. Fadnavis's pledge of a "grand alliance" with the Shiv Sena and RPI for

EXPLAINED

E. The Assembly polls is a pointer to the realisation that the Modi wave that powered the Lok Sabha results may not necessarily work in the Assembly polls. The Congress-NCP's worst-ever performance could lead to major changes in the organisational leadership. For NCP president Sharad Pawar, who had embarked on the twin goals of strengthening the organisation in Maharashtra and taking a lead in forging an anti-BJP front at the Centre, the task ahead is cut out.

and Konkan while making deeper inroads in western Maharashtra, further loosening the Congress-NCP's hold.

The four-phased election in Maharashtra took place in the shadow of severe drought, with the state government declaring 151 of the 355 talukas drought affected. Yet, the agrarian crisis, coupled with unrest in the farming community, did not translate into anger against the BJP-Sena combine.

The BJP-Shiv Sena retained its majority in Vidarbha, Marathwada, north Maharashtra

described the electoral outcome as the people's unwavering faith in Modi's leadership. "There was a strong silent wave in favour of Modi. It turned into tsunami. The election results show people transcended caste, community, class and religion to exercise their franchise in favour of Modi for the developmental plank, specially oriented towards upliftment of poor, farmers and middle class."

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis described the electoral outcome as the people's unwavering faith in Modi's leadership. "There was a strong silent wave in favour of Modi. It turned into tsunami. The election results show people transcended caste, community, class and religion to exercise their franchise in favour of Modi for the developmental plank, specially oriented towards upliftment of poor, farmers and middle class."

Bharipa Bahujan Mahasangh president Parkash Ambdekar's decision to forge an alliance with AIMIM under the banner of VBA proved fatal for Congress-NCP. Though Ambdekar failed to win either of his seats, his outfit cut into Dalit and Muslim voters.

NCP president Sharad Pawar, who had initiated the process of Mahagathbandhan, was candid in expressing huge disappointment. Pawar, who was set to go Delhi, called off the visit. Speaking to mediapersons, he said, "Our estimate was we would win 11 seats."

State Congress chief Ashok Chavan, who had survived the 2014 Modi wave, failed to hold his home turf Nanded, inviting brick bats from the organisation for failed leadership.

Former Opposition leader and senior Congressman Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil fired the first salvo, blaming the state Congress leadership for the performance. Vikhe-Patil was categorical in stating he is set to bid farewell to Congress and join BJP ahead of the Assembly elections later this year. His son Sujay, who had joined BJP ahead of the polls, won from Ahmednagar.

A political manager in the Congress-NCP said, "The Congress-NCP's failure to adopt flexibility, coupled with Pawar's flip flop in Madha, where he declared to contest and then withdrew, was a wrong move. Secondly, the defection of established Congress-NCP political families to the BJP also weakened the moral of the cadre."

In Panaji, Monserrate polled 8,748 votes against BJP candidate Sidharth Kuncalikar's 6,990 votes.

"It shows that without (Manohar) Parrikar, they (BJP) cannot win in the most important seat (in Goa)," Monserrate told the media soon after the final figures were announced. ENS

## In bypoll, Cong wins Parrikar's seat after 25 yrs

Panaji: The Congress on Thursday won the Assembly bypolls to Goa's prestigious Panaji seat, retained by former Defence Minister and Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar since 1994, after 25 years.

Congress's Atanasio Monserrate won by a margin of 1,758 votes, even as the BJP won by-elections to the three other Assembly seats – Mandrem, Shiroda and Mapusa – that went to the polls along with the two Lok Sabha seats.

The BJP now has 17 MLAs against Congress's 15 in the 40-member House. "The government will be more stable now with these wins," Chief Minister Pramod

Sawant said. In Shiroda, BJP's Subash Shirodkar defeated Deepak Dhavalikar of Mahashtrawadi Gomantak Party by 76 votes. The BJP had earlier pulled a coup by getting two MGP legislators to join the ruling party.

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"It shows that without (Manohar) Parrikar, they (BJP) cannot win in the most important seat (in Goa)," Monserrate told the media soon after the final figures were announced. ENS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

PANAJI, MAY 23

THE TWO Lok Sabha seats in Goa saw close contests, with BJP's sitting MP Shripad Naik winning himself a fifth term from North Goa, while Congress candidate Francisco Sardinha had a slim lead over his opponent and sitting MP Narendra Sawarkar.

Naik, battling anti-incumbency, said, "The people of North Goa are with Modi ji."

By evening, Sawarkar conceded defeat to Sardinha, posting on Facebook, "I accept my defeat. I thank everyone for the support and co-operation throughout my tenure as MP."

BJP state president Vinay Tendulkar saw the results as "mixed responses" from a state where he said a lot of "work now needs to be

done to repair the margins".

"In South Goa, we trailed by a huge margin in Salcete taluka, a predominantly minority-populated region. A majority of the 40 per cent of minority voters in Goa live in this region. They seem to be influenced by the opposition's false propaganda against the BJP. The absence of (former) chief minister Manohar Parrikar to convince them against the propaganda was also a big reason (for

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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019

# E. EXPLAINED


**DECISION  
2019**


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#ExpressExplained

If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@expressindia.com

**SIMPLY PUT  
QUESTION & ANSWER**

## DECODING THE VERDICT

How does the BJP triumph compare with the one in 2014, which it has bettered? Where does it leave the Congress and the Left, and what is its significance for the voter? What are the implications for Rahul Gandhi and other 'dynasts'? **The key takeaways from the verdict that has returned Narendra Modi to power**

**PVAIDYANATHAN IYER &  
MONOJIT MAJUMDAR**

NEW DELHI, MAY 23

**In what ways is Decision 2019 similar to, and different from, Decision 2014?**

Late on Thursday evening, the BJP had won or was leading at 303 seats, 21 more than its 2014 tally. The saffron splash across a swathe of northern and western India is similar to 2014. With gains in new areas, the BJP voteshare nationally has risen from 31% to approximately 37.5%. Of the 60.37 crore votes polled in this election, more than 22.6 crore have gone to the BJP — a 32% increase over the 17.1 crore votes it got five years ago.

Like in 2014, the BJP's stunning victory revolves around Narendra Modi — the party's refrain was that each vote for the BJP was going into "Modi's account". The strategy of contesting a presidential-style election paid off again; the difference being that it turned this election also into a referendum on Modi.

In UP, the BJP has all but repeated its performance of 2014 — a formidable achievement. Despite the *gathbandhan* of the SP, BSP, and RLD, it is down only nine seats from its tally of 71 the last time. These losses were more than made up by its gains in new areas. The BJP polled nearly 50% of the votes in Uttar Pradesh, seven percentage points more than in 2014.

The BJP is no longer a fringe player in West Bengal and Odisha. In Bengal, it has won over 40% of the popular vote and 18 seats, a leap from the 17% vote and two seats it got in 2014. In Odisha, it has won 38% of the vote and eight seats, up from the 22% vote and one seat in 2014. In Telangana, it has made a small but significant gain of four seats.

While the 2014 campaign was a campaign of hope, one in which Modi sold India a vision for the future, the 2019 campaign was in large part negative — the BJP reminded the people of what might happen if it was not voted back.

**Broadly, what has the verdict affirmed, and what has it rejected?**

The one clear message: Voters who have given Modi a second term buy into his argument that the damage and the mess of the last 60 years needs undoing, and that process takes time.

In becoming the first non-Congress Prime Minister to return with an increased majority after a full five-year term, Modi has established that 2014 was, in fact, not a 'black swan' event. The verdict marks a clear acceptance by the mass of the people of the BJP's idea of 'cultural nationalism', and establishes the importance of 'national pride' in determining voting patterns.

Conversely, the verdict suggests a rejection of the "politics of dynasty" that Modi has been stressing at least since the Assembly elections of 2018. It also shows that economic factors may not, under certain circumstances, translate into anger against the incumbent regime.

Commentators repeatedly stressed that this election was a "normal" election, devoid of a wave in any direction. They have been proved wrong. The conventional wisdom that Indian elections are, in most cases, the sum of state elections, has been rejected — this was a single election in most of the country, with Modi being the 'candidate' everywhere.

**What does the verdict say about the rural-urban divide in votes?**

Given the sweep of the BJP's victory, it would appear that both villages and towns have voted alike. Differences, if any, will perhaps be discernible only in the margins of victory in individual seats. The BJP's core message seems to have been accepted with mostly equal enthusiasm everywhere. The nationalist fervour that followed the Balakot airstrikes worked to numb the pain of the rural economic distress and flatten out the electoral field.

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**What impact did caste and identity have as a counter to Hindu nationalism?**

The battle in the key state of UP was between what could be called the caste arithmetic of the *gathbandhan* and the chemistry of Modi's appeal. The results show that the arithmetic of identity needed another, accompanying appeal to be effective.

The results in UP and Bihar signal that the politics of Mandal could be reaching its limits. The fact that the SP appears to be winning only five seats in UP (where the father-son RLD duo of Ajit Singh and Jayant Chaudhary, too, have been defeated), the JD(S) just one in Karnataka, and the RJD none at all in Bihar, suggests that even core support bases of the Mandal parties could be wavering.

Also, the BJP's successes in Haryana, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra seem to have defined the boundaries of the politics of the Jats, Patidars and Marathas, who have led large agitations against BJP governments over the last several years.

**How did agrarian distress and jobs — big talking points during the campaign — impact the result?**

The sweeping mandate suggests that the campaign around these two issues was not emphatic enough to influence the result, even though both were genuine concerns. One possible explanation is that many voters, while being hurt by the lack of jobs, had enough faith in Modi's image to believe that he would eventually solve the unemployment problem. In Vidarbha, the theatre of strong agrarian distress, the BJP-Shiv Sena have swept the elections. And while agrarian distress has been at its worst in several years, the fact that inflation has been low has meant that farmers have not felt the pinch as severely as they might have. In the later stages of the campaign, Rahul Gandhi focused away from these issues somewhat, choosing to harp on the alleged corruption in the Rafale deal, instead.

From 44 seats in 2014 to 52 in 2019 — is this a personal failure for Rahul?

To raise the tally by barely 8 seats after five years is a ringing defeat for the party and its president. The first rumblings have started within and Rahul will have to face questions. He was not only the face of the party campaign, he also chose to turn the narrative into a largely personalised one between himself and Modi. Slogans such as "Chowkidar chor hai" were seen as placing "self above party", and didn't work on the ground. Seniors objected to this and his "Gabbar Singh Tax" description of what was, essentially, a reformist measure. His targeting of the PM over Rafale was seen as "lacking sophistication".

Hugging the Prime Minister in Parliament was a joke, and dilly-dallying over decisions to contest from Wayanad and whether or not to field Priyanka from Varanasi only displayed lack of conviction, insiders say.

His defeat in the family stronghold of Amethi is a stinging indictment — in that seat as well as in the national context. Amethi had been won by the Congress 11 times in 13 elections since 1967, including nine times by a member of the Gandhi family (Rahul had won it the last three times) and on two other occasions by family loyalist Satish Sharma. Although Rahul took over the party reins only in 2017, he had been leading its campaign against Modi through the latter's first term, and was credited with last year's Assembly victories in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Coming so close after those wins, the 52 Lok Sabha seats will be seen as an in-

consequential improvement on the 44 of 2014. Seniors are no longer willing to accept him as a leader, and his leadership is seen by party workers as "family entitlement", they say.

**What are the key messages that the voter has given to the Congress?**

One, that if an alternative has to be presented before her, it should be more credible and tangible than a mere attack, without solid evidence, on an individual. There was no overarching counter-narrative against Modi, and no alternative vision. Whether the family — Rahul and sister Priyanka — works for a new generation of voters is a question the party will have to address.

Two, the Congress has to rebuild and rejuvenate its organisation in key states before it can begin to harbour hopes of becoming a political force again. One reason why the promised NYAY scheme failed to connect with the voter could be that Congress workers and the party organisation failed to convey it effectively enough.

Three, nationalism sells. The Congress allowed the BJP to own that narrative entirely, and let it get away with the claim that among all parties, it alone was truly nationalist and patriotic. Worse, by mentioning issues like AFSPA and the repeal of the sedition law, the Congress actually played into the hands of the BJP — in hindsight, a suicidal move in a campaign driven by hypernationalism in the aftermath of the Pulwama terrorist attack.

**Does this election signal the end of the Left as a political force in India?**

The Left has got zero in West Bengal and its voteshare has plummeted to 8% from 34% in 2014. It has got one seat out of 20 in Kerala. In Tamil Nadu, the CPM and CPI have won two seats each.

Five seats will be the Left's worst ever performance in the Lok Sabha elections, and will make for only a feeble voice in Parliament. The Left organisation in Bengal has weakened drastically, its leadership has had no fresh ideas in years, and it holds very little attraction for the youthful, aspirational India of 2019. The Left will struggle to present a compelling argument for its ideology.

**How is it that the BJP swept Rajasthan, MP and Chhattisgarh so soon after losing the Assembly elections?**

While the Congress did form governments in MP and Rajasthan, it was neck and neck with the BJP in terms of voteshare; in fact, the BJP's voteshare in MP was marginally higher (41% versus Congress's 40.9%), while in Rajasthan, they were locked at 39.39%.

Chhattisgarh was the exception, where the Congress swept the Assembly polls with a 10 percentage point higher voteshare.

In MP, the Congress government could not implement the farm loan waiver scheme fully in more than four months, making farmers resentful. Internal bickering in the Congress with the party preferring Kamal Nath and Ashok Gehlot to Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sachin Pilot led to disgruntlement. In all three states, voters sought to give Modi another five years, given the BJP's strong communication with beneficiaries about the Centre's schemes. Voters also seemed to have different choices for the state and the Centre — and early indication was the slogan in Rajasthan, "Raje teri khair nahi, Modi tujhse bair nahi".

**Do the defeats of Rahul Gandhi and Jyotiraditya Scindia suggest a rejection of the politics of dynasty?**

While Rahul and Scindia have lost, vot-

ers have not entirely rejected dynasts. But Modi's constant flagging of "naamdaars" has put the dynasts on the defensive. All five MPs from the SP in 2014 were indeed members of Mulayam Singh Yadav's family. This time, only Mulayam and Akhilesh appear to be retaining their seats. While Modi's primary target was Rahul, the narrative people seem to have bought into is that no constituency can be treated as a family fiefdom, be it Amethi or Guna.

**Why did Congress's NYAY not find resonance with the poor?**

There are two aspects to this.

One, the Congress failed to communicate the salient features of the scheme to the bottom 20% of households, particularly given the absence of a single MP in about 20 states/UTs. In fact, it did not resonate even in states where it was in power, such as Punjab, or where it recently won the mandate such as Rajasthan, MP and Chhattisgarh. Also, given the partial implementation of the farm loan waiver in MP, many questioned if the party would actually roll out NYAY.

Two, it is possible that the poor are no longer that receptive to the idea of a cash handout or a dole.

**What are the implications for lawmaking given the strong mandate in the BJP's favour?**

The new government will find it easy to push through Bills in Lok Sabha. But it may still have to negotiate in Rajya Sabha, where it is short of majority. The BJP has 73 members of its own and, along with allies, about 100 in the 250-member Upper House. In Modi's first term, the government got around this lack of numbers in Rajya Sabha by pushing certain laws as Money Bills. Further, within the Opposition, not all parties may have a common position on all issues. For instance, YSR Congress, TRS and BJD, which will have double-digit strength in the new Lok Sabha, are neither part of the UPA nor the NDA. They will decide their stance based on their ability to draw leverage from the government. The government may not be able to push through Constitutional amendments in Rajya Sabha immediately, but with more states coming under the BJP's fold, it may cross the majority mark along with its allies.

**Does the verdict put pressure on Opposition governments with thin majorities in MP and Karnataka?**

The BJP's huge majority will give it a psychological edge in attracting independent legislators and those from smaller parties in states where it has numbers to present a viable alternative to the existing government. In MP, it has 109 MLAs compared with 114 of the Congress (two short of majority) in the 231-member Assembly. In Karnataka, it is the single largest party with 104 members in the 224-member Assembly. The Congress-JD(S) alliance has 115 MLAs.

**Does the result provide Modi-II with greater scope for carrying out more radical economic reforms?**

The BJP had an absolute majority of its own even in Modi's first term, but it failed to push through fundamental reforms in areas such as land, labour and privatisation. The repeat of such a mandate opens up possibilities to take bold decisions backed by strong economic rationale.

**What are the big challenges before the new government?**

The primary challenge will be to arrest the powering down of the economy, rekindle private investment and boost consumption demand. The first step will be to unclog the financial sector which is reeling under a severe NBFC liquidity crisis and lack of bank credit. Mending relations with neighbours Pakistan and China will not only bring stability to the region, but will also help the economy. The new government will also have to navigate a not-so-conducive external environment with a global recession looming, the US-China trade war, imposition of sanctions on Iran, and uncertainties over Brexit.



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# VBA proves to be gamechanger for NDA in some seats in Maharashtra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, MAY 23



Prakash Ambedkar

THE VANCHIT Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), led by Prakash Ambedkar, in alliance with Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), proved to be a gamechanger for the BJP and its allies in a handful of seats across Maharashtra, denting the Congress-Nationalist Congress Party candidates' vote share in key constituencies, including Nanded, where state Congress chief Ashok Chavan suffered a defeat.

Prakash Ambedkar said, "The Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi had evolved its own strategy and agenda that was centred around the oppressed and backward segments of the community. Our fight was against both the BJP-Shiv Sena and the Congress-NCP. I was from the beginning open for alliance with Congress-NCP. They have to explain why it failed."

The VBA won a single seat in the state, Aurangabad, but played a decisive role in defeating the Congress-NCP in Nanded, Osmanabad and Parbhani in Marathwada, Akola and Gadchiroli-Chimur in Vidarbha, and Solapur and Hatkanangle in western Maharashtra.

In Nanded, Chavan's losing margin was just over 42,000 votes, while the VBA's Yashpal Bhinge polled over 1,64,000 votes. In Parbhani, the NCP's Rajesh Vitekar, a former Zilla Parishad president who ran a very successful campaign, lost by 42,189 votes. Here, the VBA's Alamgir Khan, an AIMIM candidate from Hyderabad, polled 1,49,946 votes.

Former chief minister Sushilkumar Shinde lost to the BJP's Swami Siddheshwar. The VBA's Imtiyaz Jaleel polled over 32 per cent of the vote and won by a margin of less than 5,000 votes.

Former chief minister Sushilkumar Shinde lost to the BJP's Swami Siddheshwar.

# Former Hizbul militant trapped in Pulwama encounter: police

Zakir Musa, an aide of Burhan Wani, is one of longest surviving militants in Valley

ADIL AKHZER  
SRINAGAR, MAY 23

FORMER HIZBUL Mujahideen militant and head of Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind outfit, Zakir Rashid Bhat, alias Zakir Musa, was believed to be trapped in an encounter that broke out between security forces and militants in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Thursday evening.

A police official said a cordon and search operation was launched in Dadsara village of Awantipora in the district following inputs about presence of mil-

itants in the area.

On Thursday evening, as the search operation was on, militants fired at security forces, triggering an encounter.

A police officer told *The Indian Express* on Thursday night: "Firing is still going on in the area. We had inputs about Zakir's presence in the house and we believe he has been killed in the operation. The body is yet to be recovered. We can only confirm about his killing once the body is recovered."

Till late Thursday night, there was no official confirmation or any release from J&K Police about Zakir Musa being trapped in the

encounter or getting killed. CRPF I-G (Operations), Kashmir, Zulfikar Hassan said the operation is on. Asked about the number of militants, Hassan said, "May be one or two."

Soon after the encounter began, news about Zakir being trapped circulated on social media, clashes erupted in some parts of the Valley. Police sources said restrictions will be imposed in some areas on Friday and people will not be allowed to proceed towards Zakir's home. Mobile Internet was suspended by the authorities.

"Due to security reasons, we have ordered class work to re-

main suspended in all institutions across Kashmir Valley on Friday," Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Baseer Ahmad Khan said.

A former Hizbul Mujahideen commander who was a close aide of Burhan Wani, Zakir Musa had reportedly left the outfit in May 2017 and claimed to head a local affiliate of al-Qaeda, which he named Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind. He was one of the longest surviving militants in the Valley.

Zakir was a civil engineering student at a Chandigarh college before joining militancy. He had gone missing from home in July 2013.

# Punjab: In AAP's also-ran story, Bhagwant Mann only silver lining

MANAMAN SINGH CHHINA  
CHANDIGARH, MAY 23



Mann retained his Sangrur seat

FOR THE second consecutive time, Punjab is the only state in the country to send an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader to the Lok Sabha. The tally, however, has come down this time from four in 2014 to one even as most of its candidates forfeited their security deposits.

Battered by infighting and split within its ranks, the AAP managed to secure a reelection for its state president, Bhagwant Mann, from Sangrur. He is the first MP to score a consecutive win from Sangrur after former Chief Minister Surjit Singh Barnala of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) who had won successive terms from the parliamentary constituency in 1996 followed by 1998.

Mann defeated his nearest rival Kewal Singh Dhillion of Congress by a margin of just over one lakh votes. However, the margin of victory has nearly halved

from 2,11,751 in 2014 general elections. Only Baljinder Kaur from Bathinda and Sadhu Singh from Faridkot could post a respectable tally of votes.

AAP has paid heavily for the infighting, which broke out almost immediately after the 2017 assembly poll debacle and continued in the lead up to the Lok Sabha polls with MLAs breaking away to form their own parties and two of them joining the Congress. The grassroots cadre of the party was as divided as the leadership, which resulted in a loss of confidence among the voters as well as a split in votes among the respective factions.

The massive drop in the number of votes received by AAP candidates in 2019 as compared to

2014 is indicative of the slide that the party has seen in its popularity in Punjab.

In three constituencies of Bathinda, Patiala and Faridkot, the AAP candidates had to face opposition from former party members, two of them sitting party MLAs and one a sitting MP. Former Leader of Opposition Sukhpal Singh Khaira, elected MLA on AAP ticket from Bholath and whose resignation from assembly is not yet accepted, faced off against party candidate Baljinder Kaur in Bathinda. Baldev Singh, party MLA from Jaito took on sitting AAP MP Sadhu Singh from Faridkot, while suspended party MP from Patiala Dr Dharamvira Gandhi contested on a resolution moved by Mann.

While Congress candidate Kewal Singh Dhillon had lost the 2017 assembly polls from Barnala, an assembly segment in Sangrur parliamentary constituency, to an AAP candidate, Mann also benefited from the anger against Akalis for the incidents of sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib during their tenure in Punjab.

There was a feeling within the party too that Sangrur was its best bet for retaining a seat and therefore there was a concentrated focus on the parliamentary seat right from Day 1. Mann was first off the block as far as cam-

paigning in the state for Lok Sabha polls was concerned and his name as Sangrur candidate was announced by the party as early as October 2018.

National Convenor of the party and Delhi Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal, also camped in Sangrur and nearby areas for a week after conclusion of polls in Delhi taking out road shows in support of Mann. A religious card was also played by AAP as there was a repeated emphasis by Mann and Kejriwal in their speeches on the homage paid by Lok Sabha to two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh for their martyrdom at hands of Mughals based on a resolution moved by Mann.

While Congress candidate Kewal Singh Dhillon had lost the 2017 assembly polls from Barnala, an assembly segment in Sangrur parliamentary constituency, to an AAP candidate, Mann also benefited from the anger against Akalis for the incidents of sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib during their tenure in Punjab.

On May 17, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi had withdrawn the protection from arrest granted to Kumar by its February 5 order. However, the court had said his protection would continue for seven days from May 17 to enable him to approach the competent court for relief.

The apex court, on February 5, had granted protection from arrest to Kumar while directing him to appear before the CBI and "faithfully" cooperate with investigation by causing impediments and roadblocks with a view to protect big names and members/leaders of the ruling party in the State of West Bengal".

The court had noted the CBI's claim of having substantial material implicating Kumar, the then Commissioner, Bidhannagar

Commissionerate, of connivance and complicity with the principal accused.

## SARADHA SCAM

# SC agrees to hear plea of Kolkata's former top cop



Rajeev Kumar

Kumar's counsel can approach the apex court registry or the secretary general for listing of the matter before an appropriate bench.

In its May 17 order, the top court had also expressed concern over the confrontation between the CBI and the West Bengal Police in the case, saying "at the receiving end are silently waiting lakhs of small town and rural investors who have been deprived and looted of their savings".

The bench had said the situation was grim as both sides had hardened their stand and there was no administrative mechanism in place to avoid and resolve such conflicts between two wings of the police force in the country.

It had noted that the CBI had issued three notices on October 18 and October 23, 2017, and on December 8, 2018, asking Kumar to appear and join investigation, but he had not responded.

The court had also noted that the West Bengal government and Kumar have alleged "political vendetta" and have made allegations against M Nageswara Rao, a former interim CBI director.

In its order, the court had said

the CBI had alleged non-cooperation and charged the West Bengal Police with "obfuscating investigation by causing impediments and roadblocks with a view to protect big names and members/leaders of the ruling party in the State of West Bengal".

The court had noted the CBI's claim of having substantial material implicating Kumar, the then Commissioner, Bidhannagar

Commissionerate, of connivance and complicity with the principal accused.

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(d)	Western Zone	Mumbai	Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Goa, Union Territory of Daman & Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli and Lakshadweep
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## ON THE CARDS

# Consumption, liquidity issues, labour reforms on the table of the new govt

SUNNY VERMA &  
AANCHAL MAGAZINE  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

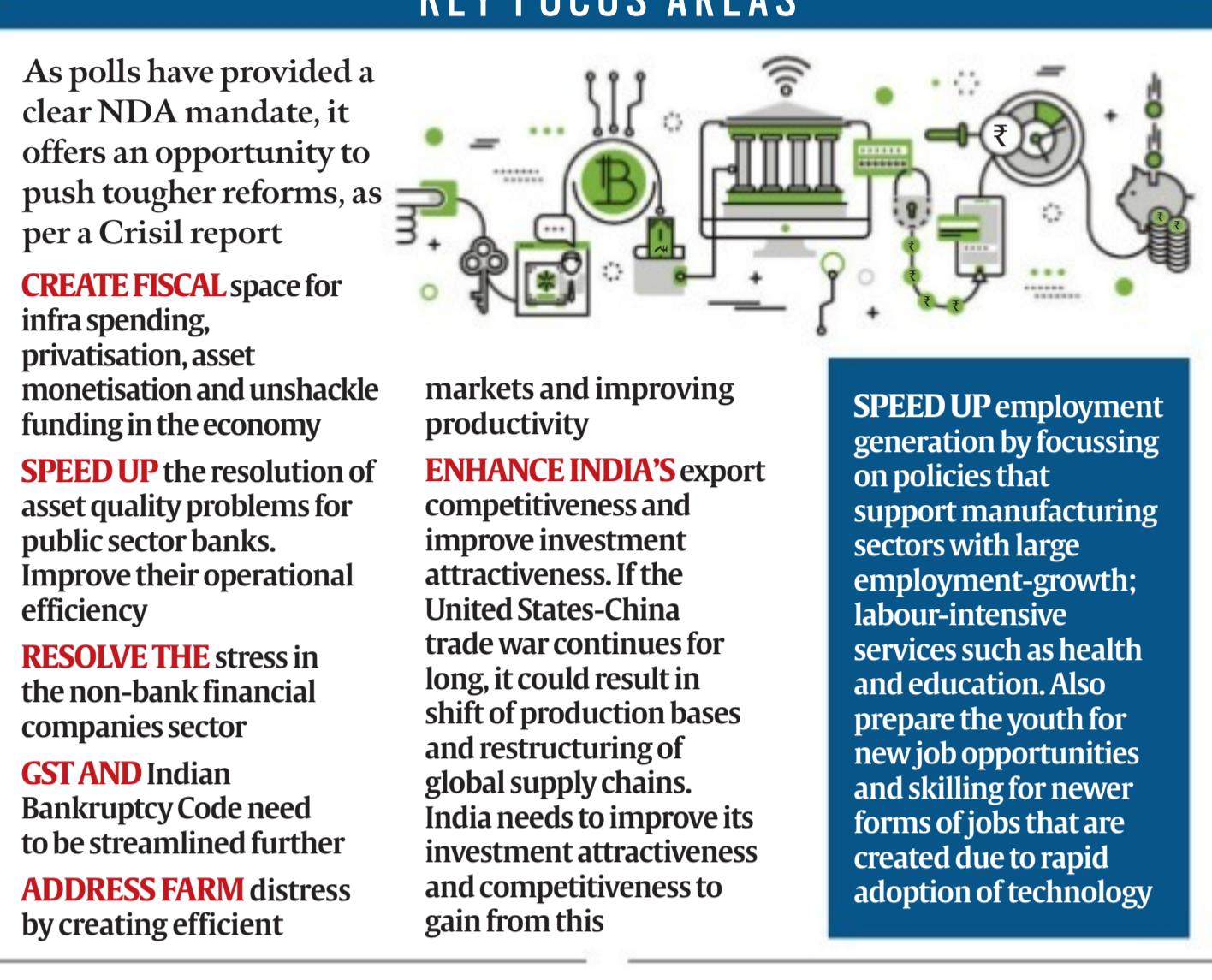
AS THE new government takes shape, among its initial key focus areas are likely to be revival of economic growth, repair of the financial sector, pursuit of direct tax and labour market reforms.

The next phase of reforms roadmap is expected in the backdrop of a cyclical downturn. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth figures for January-March, to be released on May 31, are expected to depict a loss of momentum in India's growth.

A downward slide has already been seen in Index of Industrial Production (IIP), which contracted to a 21-month low of 0.1 per cent in March on the back of weak investment and consumption demand. For the 2018-19 financial year as a whole, IIP growth stood at 3.6 per cent, much lower than 4.4 per cent recorded in previous financial year.

India's slowing consumption story and subdued growth in exports are factors which are expected to keep the country's growth rate under pressure in the months to come. While the automobile sector has been witnessing a subdued growth and the passenger car segment saw a decline of 16 per cent in the month of April 2019, the FMCG sector has also been seeing a slowdown in volume growth.

"The economy is going through a cyclical downturn. The GDP growth in the second half of 2018-19 had fallen to around 6.5 per cent – below the trend rate of growth of India (7 per cent). Apart from measures from the Reserve Bank of India, a key element in the growth revival process will be speeding up bad loan resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), which will free up resources for banks to lend further. Addressing liquidity issues of the



**EXPLAINED**

E.

Consumption demand, which was the bulwark of the economy, has weakened and private investment is yet to show signs of a pickup," rating agency Crisil said in a note Thursday, while suggesting a number of measures to support growth for the new government.

Apart from measures from the Reserve Bank of India, a key element in the growth revival process will be speeding up bad loan resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), which will free up resources for banks to lend further. Addressing liquidity issues of the

Non Banking Financial Companies' sector is expected to be another priority, as crisis in the NBFC sector threatens to engulf the entire financial sector.

A number of NBFCs have put a stop to fresh loan disbursements while many are on the verge of defaulting on their repayments. The government is also expected to further step up capital infusion in public sector banks and pursue consolidation by merging weak banks with strong banks.

Economists and market experts say that while the NBFC sector is choked for funds, their

revival is critical for the economy as they account for a large part of credit disbursal in tier II and tier III towns.

Besides, while the infrastructure segment has seen a pick up in credit demand over the last one year and additional credit to the segment rose by 1.65 lakh crore or 18.5 per cent in FY19, the credit growth for the industrial segment continues to remain weak. There is a sense in the market that the private sector investment needs to revive as it may provide the necessary leg up to the economy. The overall credit demand for the industry went up by only 6.9 per cent in FY19 despite a strong demand from infrastructure segment.

The IBC has been the most

significant financial sector reform launched by the NDA government, aimed at speedy resolution of stressed assets of more than Rs 10 lakh crore. While a recovery rate of around 43 per cent points to early success of the law, delays in successful resolution in nearly 48 per cent of the cases has been its main hurdle. The IBC requires a corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) to be completed in 180 days, which can be extended by another 90 days to a maximum of 270 days. These time limits have been set to ensure that recovery of non-performing assets (NPAs) in a time-bound manner.

On the GST front, no major rejig of tax rates, barring few minor items where there could be some discrepancy, is in the offing. The focus for this financial year is expected to be more on boosting compliance, simplifying procedures and perhaps a move towards inclusion of some of the items that are currently out of GST's ambit such as natural gas and aviation turbine fuel. A dedicated focus on compliance and maintaining rates is being seen necessary for protecting the gross GST revenue target which may falter given the steep monthly aim of Rs 1.15 lakh crore.

Labour reforms did not complete the course mapped out by the government in its first term. In his independence day speech in August 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had spoken about codification of labour laws into four codes.

The labour and employment ministry had drafted four labour codes: industrial relations, wages, social security and welfare, and occupational safety, health and working conditions by amalgamating, simplifying and rationalising the relevant provisions of the existing 44 central labour laws. Yet, not even a single code got enacted through the legislative route.

Employment generation, especially of good quality and with decent wages, would be crucial, especially in absence of a strong economic growth.

## STABLE GOVT TO BOOST GROWTH: INDIA INC



"Government ... will be well placed to give reforms agenda an urgent push to provide much needed impetus to investor confidence"

SUNIL BHARTI MITTAL  
CHAIRMAN, BHARTI ENTERPRISES



"The decisive election results will propel India's growth pace to the next orbit and drive the transformation of the country"

VIKRAM S KIRLOSKAR  
PRESIDENT, CII



"... Stability at Centre will not only allow govt to continue with pace of reforms ... but also brightens chances of extending reform mode"

SANDIP SOMANY  
PRESIDENT, FICCI



"Under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, India stands at a massive turning point in historical development journey in his next term"

UDAY KOTAK  
PRESIDENT DESIGNATE, CII



"Victory of the NDA in elections will be very good for economy. I expect govt to take strong action for revival of GDP growth"

ADIGODREJ  
CHAIRMAN, GODREJ GROUP



"Over the next five years NDA 2.0 must introduce policies that are bold, innovative ... to translate the economic potential into prosperity for all"

KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW  
CHAIRPERSON & MD, BIOCON

## Volatile Sensex hits 40,000, plunges 1,300 pts intra-day as investors book profits

ENECONOMIC BUREAU  
MUMBAI, MAY 23

The BSE building in Mumbai. The Sensex erased early gains to end 299 points lower on Thursday. Pradip Das

The results have raised hopes of the issues being faced by the economy being tackled in a firm and prudent way. This is the first time in short-term. This is because neither the earnings nor the economy has started to pickup and unlikely to revamp immediately as it takes one or 2 quarters before stabilising. These factors along with premium valuation and muted global trend will start to control the momentum of the market as optimism gets digested," said Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services.

The re-election of NDA alliance has put to an end to the uncertainty and raised hopes of momentum gaining in the Indian economy and markets, which logically attained new heights today.

This behaviour can be attributed to the fact that traders took this opportunity to book profits." HDFC twins, Infosys, TCS, Reliance were largely responsible in pulling the indices down, while the index received some support from IndusInd Bank, ICICI Bank and L&T.

Meanwhile, the domestic currency could not hold on to the gains and settled at 70.02 per dollar. "The rupee started at two week's high of 69.50 against American dollar, but erased gains to trade at 70.04 with the loss of 37 paise or 0.52 per cent. Now, the focus will shift to crude oil, trade war and the RBI monetary policy," said V K Sharma, head PCG & Capital Markets Strategy, HDFC Securities.

"Any credit implications of the

### 'First 5 years of Modi govt: M-cap jumps ₹64.24 lakh crore'

Indian investors have become richer by around Rs 64.24 lakh crore as the market capitalisation, or the market value of all listed shares, shot up by around 75% in the last five years, according to BSE data

₹150.17 LAKH CR

is the market capitalisation on May 23, 2019

₹85.93 LAKH CR

was the market capitalisation on May 23, 2014

14,118-POINT

rise in Sensex to 38,811.39 in the last five years

₹12.75 LAKH CR

FII investment as of May 23, 2019



### FPI INVESTMENTS (₹ CRORE)

YEAR	EQUITY	DEBT	HYBRID	TOTAL
2014-15	111,333	166,127	0	277,461
2015-16	-14,172	-40,04	0	-18,176
2016-17	55,703	-7,292	0	48,411
2017-18	25,635	119,036	11	144,682
2018-19	-88	-42,357	3,515	-38,930
2019-20 **	17,706	-7,378	2887	13,215
Total	904,207	364,539	6,413	12,75,156

### SENSEX MOVEMENT ON THURSDAY

Open	39,591.77
High	40,124.96
Low	38,651.61
Close	38,811.39

(Previous close : 39,110.21)

## Credit view hinges on policies of govt: Rating agencies

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

outcome of India's general election

will be determined by the policies adopted by the government in the next few years. These policies are yet to be formulated," Moody's Investors Service VP Sovereign Risk Group William Foster said.

Moody's expects the broad push towards fiscal consolidation to remain, although with greater policy emphasis on supporting low incomes, Foster added.

As per the trend, BJP-led NDA will form the government at the Centre for the second successive term with absolute majority. In 2017, the rating agency upped India's rating to 'Baa2' from 'Baa3', changing outlook to 'stable' from 'positive', and said reforms would help stabilise rising levels of debt.

Deviating from the fiscal con-

### EYEING REFORMS

■ Fitch Ratings' Asia-Pacific Sovereigns team said that of particular importance from a credit perspective will be the extent of the next government's efforts to improve India's "weak fiscal finances"

■ Moody's said its credit view will depend on policies of the new government

government in February's Interim Budget pegged the fiscal deficit for 2019-20 at 3.4 per cent of GDP, as against the original target of 3.1 per cent. In 2018-19, the fiscal deficit was 3.4 per cent of GDP.

Thomas Rookmaaker, director in Fitch Ratings' Asia-Pacific Sovereigns team said "The BJP's apparent landslide victory marks an easing of political uncertainty and is likely to improve business sentiment and the outlook for private investment. We expect the government to remain reform-minded, as the BJP's manifesto highlighted the aim to improve the business environment and governance standards, strengthen infrastructure, and stimulate the manufacturing sector through a new industrial policy".

Fitch said another area of potential reforms is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of government administration, and the legal and judiciary system. "Of particular importance from a credit perspective will be the extent of the next government's efforts to improve India's weak fiscal finances. Fiscal consolidation stalled under the BJP in recent years, and its campaign promise to support farmers' incomes has added to spending pressure. Fitch expects the fiscal deficit to remain manageable in the next few years, but we have seen little indication so far that the government will pursue significant deficit reduction of the order needed to meet the general government debt ceiling of 60 per cent of GDP by March 2025..."

# Limit raised for TDS relief on bank interest for senior citizens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, MAY 23

SENIOR CITIZENS with a taxable income of up to Rs 5 lakh can now submit in banks and post offices Form 15H to claim exemption from TDS on interest income on deposits, according to a CBDT notification. Earlier, the limit for seeking Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) exemption was Rs 2.5 lakh.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has issued a notification amending Form 15H to give effect to the Budget announcement. The Union Budget 2019-20 has given full tax rebate to individuals having a taxable annual income of up to Rs 5 lakh, benefitting around 3 crore middle class taxpayers.

The amendments by the CBDT states that banks and financial institutions would accept Form 15H from assessees whose tax liability is 'nil' after considering rebate available under Section 87A of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Senior citizens, above 60 years of age, have to submit Form 15H to banks at the beginning of a financial year to ensure that no tax is deducted at source on interest income.

To provide tax relief to the taxpayers earning income up to Rs 5 lakh a year, the Budget increased the rebate under Section 87A from Rs 2,500 to Rs 12,500, thereby ensuring that those earning income up to Rs 5 lakh do not have to pay any taxes.

## TAXABLE INCOME UPTO ₹5 LAKH

■ As per a CBDT notification, senior citizens with taxable income up to Rs 5 lakh can now submit in banks and post offices Form 15H to claim exemption from Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) on interest income on deposits

■ Earlier, the limit for seeking TDS exemption was Rs 2.5 lakh

Nangia Advisors (Andersen Global) Executive Director Neha Malhotra said the banks will now have to accept Form 15H from those earning income up to Rs 5 lakh, since eventually after claiming the rebate under Section 87A, their tax payable shall be 'nil'.

"Had this change not been brought, taxpayers earning income up to Rs 5 lakh would have suffered TDS on interest from banks and would have had to file a tax return to claim refund of such TDS. This change not only saves the taxpayer from the hassle of filing ITR to claim refund but also reduces the administrative burden of CPC (central processing centre) to process such returns and issue refunds," Malhotra added.

## Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited

(A Joint Venture of Gol & GoK)

e-Mail: [bmrc@dataone.in](mailto:bmrc@dataone.in) Website: [www.bmrc.co.in](http://www.bmrc.co.in)

No: BMRCL/SCMS-1/NIT/271/ELE/2018 Date: 24.05.2019

### TENDER NOTIFICATION

BMRCL invites sealed Tenders through International Competitive Bidding (ICB) from suitably qualified, eligible, reputed and experienced Tenderers for the work of "Consultancy Services for detailed study and advisory Services on Stray Current Mitigation Measures, Track fastening system, Track Insulation Measurement and Stray Current Monitoring System (SCMS) for Phase-II Project of BMRCL" under Single stage, Two envelope system. Cost of Tender documents (non-refundable): INR 28,000/- [25000+3000 (GST@12%)] (OR) USD 401 [358+43 (GST@12%)]. Online Sale of Documents: From 24.05.2019 until midnight of 28.06.2019. Submission of Tenders: 05.07.2019 from 11.00 Hrs (IST) to 15.00 Hrs (IST). Opening of Tenders: 05.07.2019 at 15.30 Hrs (IST). For further details, visit our website: [www.bmrc.co.in](http://www.bmrc.co.in) from 24.05.2019.

Sd/- Managing Director

## BHARATI RESERVE BANK NOTE MUDRAN (P) LIMITED

(Wholly owned subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India)

P.O.: R.B.N.M.L., Salboni - 72112, West Midnapore, West Bengal

Phone No.: 03272-280176 / 280177; Fax No.: 03272-280744 / 280222

### INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (ICB) [GLOBAL TENDER]

Sealed Tenders under two-part bidding system are invited from experienced, resourceful and bonafide suppliers/manufacturers/dealers for the following item:

1. GLOBAL TENDER FOR DESIGN, MANUFACTURING, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, COMMISSIONING, TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE TESTING OF TWO (02) NUMBERS OF PHYSICAL VAPOUR DEPOSITION (PVD) BASED CHROME PLATING SYSTEM - ONE EACH FOR BRBNMPL SALBONI & BRBNMPL MYSURU [GT/002/SAL/PUR/2019-20]

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (NCB)

Sealed tenders are invited from experienced, resourceful & bonafide service agencies/suppliers/ manufacturers/ dealers (as applicable) for the following:

2. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DG STATION AT BRBNMPL SALBONI - TENDER ENQ. NO. 001/SAL/MAINT/2019-20 - [ESTIMATED COST - ₹48.00 LAKHS PER ANNUM]

3. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF MAIN POWER SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AND ILLUMINATION WITH IN PLANT AREA AT BRBNMPL SALBONI - TENDER ENQ. NO. 002/SAL/MAINT/2019-20 -[ESTIMATED COST - ₹73.20 LAKHS PER ANNUM]

4. SUPPLY OF 15000 CFT OF LOCAL WOOD FOR MAKING PACKING BOXES (BATTEN) FOR SALBONI PRESS - TENDER ENQ. NO. 015/SAL/PUR/2019-20 - [ESTIMATED COST - ₹4.50 LAKHS]

5. SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF REAL TIME X-RAY VIEWING SYSTEM (RTVS) AT SALBONI PRESS- TENDER ENQ. NO. 016/SAL/PUR/2019-20 -[ESTIMATED COST - ₹40.00 LAKHS]

The last date for submission of filled-in tender documents:

For Sl. No. 2, 3, 4 & 5: 25/06/2019 till 11.00 hrs and For Sl. No. 1: 09/07/2019 till 11.00 hrs.

For further details of individual tenders including amendments, if any; as well as downloading the tender documents, please visit our website:

[https://www.brbnmpl.co.in](http://https://www.brbnmpl.co.in).

General Manager

## VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED (Government of Karnataka Enterprise)

Office of the Executive Engineer, Yettinahole Project Division No

4, Madhugiri, Tumkur Dist-572132 Ph: 08137-282112

E-mail: [eyeytmadhugiri4@gmail.com](mailto:eyeytmadhugiri4@gmail.com)

### Short Term Tender Notification (TWO COVER SYSTEM) (Through E-procurement system)

On Behalf of Managing Director, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limited, Bangalore the Executive Engineer, VJNL, Yettinahole Project Division No.4, Madhugiri, Karnataka invites tenders

on "Percentage basis" vide Notification no:01/2019-20 Dt:22-05-2019 through e-Procurement portal from registered contractors enrolled in VJNL Category I / KNNL Category I Contractors for the work of.

Name Of Work Amount put to tender (in Lakhs)

Construction of Gowribidanur Gravity Feeder from Km 0.000 to Km 81.600 Comprising of Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Gravity MS Pipe, including Structures, under Yettinahole Project (Indent no.: 1221) (Call-2)

73712.70

The contractors can download and submit the completed bid documents through e-procurement website [www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in) from 25.05.2019 to 24.06.2019, 16.30 hrs tender shall be submitted through E-proc. Details such as EMD amount/Tender Processing fee/ Tender Clarifications /Qualification of bidders/ Tender Conditions etc can be obtained through e-procurement. The competent authority to accept the tenders shall have the right of rejecting all or any of the tenders without assigning any reasons. Tender quarries or any further information required may be obtained from the undersigned during office hours upto 10.06.2019 16.30 Hrs.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,

V.J.N.L, YP Division No.4, Madhugiri.

25.05.2019

24.06.2019

16.30 hrs

tender shall be submitted

through E-proc. Details such as EMD amount/Tender Processing fee/ Tender Clarifications /Qualification of bidders/ Tender Conditions etc can be obtained through e-procurement. The competent authority to accept the tenders shall have the right of rejecting all or any of the tenders without assigning any reasons. Tender quarries or any further information required may be obtained from the undersigned during office hours upto 10.06.2019 16.30 Hrs.

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I need to focus on my athletic career now. I don't want my personal life to be a matter of speculation in the media nor do I want to be misquoted."

DUTEE CHAND



## EYES AWAY FROM THE PRIZE

Eoin Morgan, Virat Kohli, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Jason Holder and Gulbadin Naib at the captains' press conference in London. AP

# In Kohli's wishlist: Faf, Archer

Indian skipper picks his South Africa counterpart and England fast bowler in his dream eleven

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON, MAY 23

INDIA CAPTAIN Virat Kohli would pick South African skipper Faf du Plessis in his side if he ever got a chance to pick someone from the other participating teams in the World Cup. All the 10 captains were given a hypothetical situation wherein they could pick any player from the other side and there were some interesting answers with answers ranging from Jasprit Bumrah to Rashid Khan.

"It is very difficult to choose someone. We feel we are such a strong side. But if I have to choose one from the current lot...since AB (de Villiers) is retired now, I would choose Faf (du Plessis)," said Kohli at the official captains' media conference.

Kohli then dwelled on England's quest for 500. "England seem to be obsessed with getting to 500 before anyone else," Kohli said. "It could be high-scoring, but I think 260, 270 will be as difficult to get in the World Cup as 360, 370. I see 250 being defended, too. I don't see many high-scoring games happening in the latter half of the tournament. That's the kind of pressure the World Cup brings.

Not all teams are going to be in a great position. Teams that have to get a result (to make the semifinals) will be under the most pressure. It won't be gung-ho from ball one."

Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Mortaza picked Kohli to be a part of his side. Pointing towards Kohli, Mortaza said: "I would choose that guy." Du Plessis preferred to pick bowlers rather than batsmen but when asked if he would not like to have Kohli in his

team, the South African said "Virat is my batting team".

"I will pick a few players, mainly bowlers. For bowling attack...Jasprit Bumrah, he is bowling really well at the moment. As Virat said, he is multi-format bowler. Then there is exciting spinner Rashid Khan, Pat Cummins from Australia.

Team that will go till the end of the tournament will be the ones that do well with the ball. Bowlers who have capabilities of taking wickets," said du Plessis.

New Zealander Kane Williamson agreed with his South African counterpart, saying bowlers will play a key role. "Bowlers will play a big part and I would love to have Rashid Khan in my team," said Williamson. England's Eoin Morgan said: "I won't change anything about my team. Ponting is part of Australia's coaching side, so I would take Ricky Ponting."

Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed picked up Jos Butler, while Australian Aaron Finch went for Proteas strike bowler Kagiso Rabada. "Rabada is one guy who has amazing energy. He is a superstar," said Finch. Choice for Sri Lankan captain Dimuth Karunaratne was Ben Stokes. "He (Stokes) is a game changer. We know what he can do."

### Archer, the X-factor

Jofra Archer will be England's "x-factor" in the upcoming World Cup because of his "very different" skill-set reckons India skipper Virat Kohli, who himself is a target of the Barbados-born pacer. Archer has played only three ODIs but has been an asset on the T20 circuit with his death bowling, which is expected to pose problems for visiting sides.

"He is probably going to be their X factor. He holds a skill-set that is very different from the rest. He can generate a lot of pace and he is just a great athlete. I am sure England is delighted to have him. It would be exciting to watch him in the World Cup," Kohli said at the official ICC press conference for the captains. Archer, who had an impressive IPL for Rajasthan Royals, recently made his international debut, and has world's No 1 batsman's wicket on his wish-list. He recently said that he is eyeing Kohli wicket in World Cup.

"Jofra saying that is a big compliment because he himself is a world class bowler. The way he has come up in the last couple of years, I have seen him in the IPL, there is a good reason why he has been fast tracked into playing for England in a tournament like World Cup," the Indian skipper added.

However Kohli at the same time, made it clear that he is hardly bothered about a bowler's goal. "You don't focus on these things. Even as an individual you don't focus on who is wanting to get you out or you being spoken about. Our focus is mainly to contribute to the team in whatever way we can. I take a lot of pride in performing for the team, making impact performances for the team in every game."

Kohli also praised the talented Rashid Khan, saying that it was the first time during the recently concluded IPL that he could read the Afghan's deliveries, sitting in the RCB dug-out. "I have seen him for three years now and this year was the first time I didn't play against him. This was the first time that I could sit outside and predict 9 out of 10 balls that he bowled. Yes, it's first time in three years and that's how good he has been," Kohli complimented

**"It is very difficult to choose someone. We feel we are such a strong side. But if I have to choose one from the current lot...since AB (de Villiers) is retired now, I would choose Faf (du Plessis)."**

VIRAT KOHLI

Rashid. "He (Rashid) has been outstanding with his skills sets and pace on the ball is the key. Variations are really subtle and he doesn't give you any time on the ball, let alone flight the ball and before you realise it hits the bat or through the pads and you get bowled or lbw or stuff like that," said Kohli.

What Kohli likes most in Rashid's bowling is his fast-bowler like aggression. "He brings that fast bowler like intensity as a spinner, which is rare to see. I love competitive guys and his attitude is absolutely outstanding. When he bowls well, you want to sit and watch him bowl. He will be very important for Afghanistan."

The Indian skipper admitted that losing a home series 2-3 to Australia was a humbling experience and also showed that how self-belief trumps everything else even when a team is in dire straits. "If a team on a given day gets together against a very experienced side and they believe that they can win, then they can. I think that is what we learnt from that series loss."

"We were 2-0 up and we thought we would definitely win but they showed more passion, more character and more determination. They enjoyed every moment. We took a lot of learning from the series," he said.

# After year of shame, stars align for Australia's title tilt

REUTERS  
MELBOURNE, MAY 23

FOLLOWING ONE of Australian cricket's most humbling years, the stars have aligned for the World Cup champions and Aaron Finch's team head to England with the form and personnel to mount a successful title defence.

After having lost every one-day series in a woeful two-year period dating back to January 2017, Australia suddenly found their groove in the subcontinent in March, coming back from a 2-0 series deficit to overhaul Virat Kohli's India 3-2. With Finch shrugging off dire form as a prolific opening partnership with Usman Khawaja, Australia have since whitewashed Pakistan 5-0 in the Gulf while roaring to an eight-match winning streak -- all without Steve Smith and David Warner hitting a ball.

Former captain Smith and opener Warner were once regarded as Australia's sole hope of avoiding embarrassment in England as the team slogged through a grim 2018 with their best batsmen sidelined while serving 12-month bans for ball-tampering. Yet, with the top six gelling superbly without them in recent times, the rehabilitated pair now seem more of a bonus than a prerequisite for a team looking to win their fifth World Cup in six tournaments and sixth overall.

Australia will nonetheless be richer for their presence, and the duo's carefully orchestrated reunion with team mates has been smoothed by some cracking performances since their recovery from elbow injuries. Warner, bearded and rejuvenated, blasted 692 runs for Sunrisers Hyderabad to top the scoring in the Indian Premier League and give selectors no choice but to pick him for England.

Smith's IPL was more subdued but he found touch when back in Australian colours, scoring two unbeaten half-centuries in an unofficial warm-up series against New Zealand earlier this month. Smith and Warner were decisive in the 2015 World Cup triumph on home soil, with the former leading his team's runs list and the latter setting the platform with opener Finch.

Khawaja has barely put a foot wrong at the top of the order but few will be surprised if Warner and Finch reprise their opening partnership, with Smith likely to bat at four. With all-rounders Glenn Maxwell and the muscular Marcus Stoinis in the squad, Australia have depth, versatility and the 'X-factor' in their batting.

Their bowling is also potent and varied, with a good mix of quality spin and pace. In

Adam Zampa, selectors finally have a wrist-spinner they feel confident to pick regularly, the first since Shane Warne, the man who revived the craft. There are some queries about the pace attack -- but they are mainly quibbling ones.

Spearhead Mitchell Starc, the player of the 2015 World Cup, is coming back from injury and Jhye Richardson's withdrawal due to a shoulder problem was a blow. Between Pat Cummins and the support quicks Nathan Coulter-Nilim and Kane Richardson, there is an undeniable gap in class. A fit and firing Starc could paper over those cracks should his body hold up for seven weeks. "He's proved it in big moments that he can get the job done," said Finch.

### Warner set to march

Warner will bring one of the game's biggest bats to the World Cup along with possibly a bigger chip on his shoulder as he bids for redemption in England after a year in the international wilderness. Much more than a member of the ball-tampering trio that plunged Australian cricket into disgrace last year, former captain Warner was judged the instigator of the ham-fisted plot and bore the brunt of the shaming from an angry public.

Stripped of leadership roles for life, the father-of-two kept a low profile for much of his 12-month ban but was back in the spotlight at the Indian Premier League, smashing 692 runs for Sunrisers Hyderabad to top the T20 tournament's runs list. The IPL fireworks cemented his place in Australia's World Cup squad as Aaron Finch's men bid for back-to-back titles.

Warner will still have to perform in England to win back home fans, however, with many wary of the man seen as the architect of the Cape Town scandal. Earlier this month, sections of a small Brisbane crowd jeered as he walked to the crease for an unofficial practice match against New Zealand, the 32-year-old's first in Australian colours for more than 13 months. Many more fans were cheering, however, as he smashed a quickfire 39 at Allan Border Field. He can expect a frostier reception at the World Cup where local fans have struggled to warm to a confrontational player who once punched England's Joe Root.

Dressing room harmony may be a bigger factor in England, and Australia coach Justin Langer has been at pains to insist Warner has been welcomed back with open arms. The left-hander has left it to others to judge, even if the other two parties in the ball-tampering debacle have made the public aware of their feelings about Newlands.



Skipper Aaron Finch and Steve Smith during Australia's warm-up match against the West Indies in Southampton. AP

## AMERICA CALLING

# Hoopster's dream: Vaishnavi makes it to NCAA, aims to play in WNBA

SHIVANI NAIK  
MUMBAI, MAY 23

VAISHNAVI YADAV knew it wasn't going to be enough to be a dashing 5'7" even if her ball career was going swell. The 17-year-old hoopster knew her monstrous individual scores of 71 and 53 in one season (to go with her mini nationals record of a voracious 63 points) might also not clinch her the opening she wanted – a chance to play in the USA's NCAA. What she needed was decent SAT scores to get into a good University.

"I looked at the fat book for SAT preparations, and thought, if I have to study so much to be able to play basketball in the US, I might as well appear for IAS (Civil Services)," she laughs raucously.

On Thursday, Vaishnavi, India's super-skilled forward with a big-scoring game and massive appetite for adventure, was picked by the Pensacola State College in Florida. She follows Sanjana Ramesh and Kavita Akula, who have made inroads into collegiate basketball – an important stepping stone to aim for the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), the world's biggest league.

But all of it had seemed like a fanciful flight when the SAT tome sat in front of her, and she kept dozing off just thinking of the enormity of the challenge. "For athletes who are on the court all the time, suddenly getting back into



Vaishnavi (9), a super-skilled forward, is best known for her stepback-jump shots.

study mode was a nightmare. Firstly, Allahabad did not have a SAT coaching centre," she recalls.

Help came from three sources—Sanjana would guide her on WhatsApp, while a brother studying at IIT Chennai chipped in with the Math section. "And there was Google! But it's not the same as face-to-face teaching! Even as the exam date approached, I was very chilled

and would sleep comfortably."

She remembers being temporarily shaken at the Algebra section. "Phir tick maari gayi" she chuckles. She confidently told her disbelieving brother she'd cross 1,000 because it sounded swell. "When I ended with a score of 700, I was over the moon, because I'd got that without any coaching," says the player known

on the circuit for her smashing self-belief to pull back teams from improbable leads.

Considered India's brightest talent with her hugely creative game that hoopsters from Varanasi and Allahabad specialise in, Vaishnavi is known for her stepback-jump shots, though she gets glutinous on 3-pointers and racks up massive scores too. She started at the Amitabh Bachchan Stadium in Allahabad, idolised Sania Mirza and almost picked up tennis but finally after she wound up in basketball, moulded her game on the lines of state-mate Vishesh Bhaguvanshi.

### Injury and rehab

However the last year – after that 71-point game – has been a mix of dealing with injury and a post-surgery rehab. The injury wreaked havoc with her confidence that usually translates into her breezy attitude – she loves telling tales and laughing louder than anyone, making for a sunny, chortling disposition. She was due to appear for the NBA Academies Women's programme trials, but felt under-baked and guilty. Returning from injury, she had to take off to Delhi to consult a doctor who gave her the go-ahead of fitness, and miss out on the initial shortlisting.

"What happened was my coaches told me even if I gave trials only on the last day, I would still be ahead of other girls because of my game. But I thought that was partiality and I was stealing someone else's chance. I was thinking I'm

not as good as I used to be, so I made the coach make me a stand-by till the doctor gave the go-ahead," she recalls. She had missed the Commonwealth Games, the U-18 internationals and a 3x3 India chance, and believed her career was crashing before taking off.

"I spoke to my grandmother," recalls the hoopster of the lady who has pushed her the most to chase her dreams after her two sons gave up on cricket careers. "She comes from a village near Allahabad, but no one's encouraged me more. She told me to think of how a lion hunts its prey. It takes two steps back, so that it can get a longer jump! She told me my setbacks were necessary to get my career leap."

While at the NBA academy in Delhi, her biggest joy was being free to play without the necessary national-campers' drudgery of washing clothes. "The Delhi camp felt like I was a Princess because I didn't have to wash clothes (there were machines). You don't know how much washing clothes is dreaded by athletes!" she laughs.

Part of the NBA programme was one-hour career guidance talks in the conference room. "They were telling us things useful to us, but we were idiots to yawn through it," she recalls. It's when they mentioned SAT exams that she knew things were getting serious. "Anyways now that I've cleared it, I can't believe how cool I am – at studies and in my game," she affably gloats. In fact, Vaishnavi had to convince her mother that playing abroad was good for her.

"I'm her favourite obviously, because I'm the only daughter," she says. "So she would say 'why do you need to go abroad? Just play for India'. She'd cry when I left. So I told her, 'Kya meri shaadi nahi karaogi kya? Assume I'm married and gone, and make one of your two sons your daughter!'

She anticipates some food-trouble while in Florida. "Main thodi vegetarian hoon naa," she says, of her occasional dabbling at eggs and chicken. Her mother once blurted out that she feared Vaishnavi would find an American for herself. "Someone like Justin Bieber," she cackles, before adding, "look my game is too important! I want to play the WNBA."

Vaishnavi will complete her graduation in Humanities, but is excited about meeting people from different cultures in the melting pot that's NCAA. "I remember flying to Indonesia for a tournament – my first flight. I kept muttering that we shouldn't fly till the rains and lightning stopped. Then we flew over the clouds and there was no turbulence," she recalls. India also saw her eat fish "with its eye intact in it," she exclaims, her adventurous taste in "non-veg which my family doesn't eat." That meant watermelon for lunch, breakfast and dinner.

"But I'll eat watermelons for the rest of my life, give SATs a hundred times and do anything to learn basketball in America. I don't want to become just India's best, I want to shine in the US," she adds.

# Mary thwarts Zareen's challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GUWAHATI, MAY 23

SIX-TIME world champion Mary Kom overcame some stiff resistance to beat promising Nikhat Zareen in a split decision to enter the women's 51kg category final, while the men pugilists dominated the ring by making it all-Indian gold-medal clashes in seven categories at the India Open on Thursday.

In the most-anticipated bout of the day, 22-year-old former world junior champion Nikhat of Telangana was at her aggressive best against her 'idol' Mary Kom, who was happy to play the waiting game before taking the upper hand in the third round to win 4-1. The 36-year-old Mary Kom, making her competitive debut at home in 51kg, took some blows initially but was quick to make amends as Nikhat was not able to connect her punches as the bout progressed.

Using her vast experience, Mary Kom re-

gained her composure and dealt a few telling blows on the Strandja Memorial gold winner and that seemed to have clinched the issue in favour of the London Olympics bronze medalist Manipuri in the third round.

Mary Kom will face Vanlal Duati of Mizoram in the gold-medal bout on Friday.

In the men's section, 17 Indians stormed into the final in 10 weight categories.

Continuing his dream run, former world youth champion Sachin Siwach registered an upset over reigning Commonwealth Games champion Gaurav Solanki in a unanimous decision to set up a 51kg gold medal clash against Asian Games gold medalist Amit Panghal.

A day after he eliminated World Championship bronze medalist Roger Ladon in a well-calculated bout, the 20-year-old from Haryana had his task cut out against his sparring partner but again emerged victorious.

Panghal, who had clinched a gold in his new weight category at the Asian Championship, defeated national champion

P L Prasad in the second 52kg semifinal. Panghal had won the Asian Games gold in Jakarta last year in 49kg.

"Amit has improved a lot of late but this is my big chance to show my prowess at a major competition. I hope to give my best and return a winner," Siwach, who won a bronze at the GeeBee Boxing tournament in Finland in March, said. Shiva Thapa also remained on course to clinch a gold at the same venue where he was crowned national champion three years ago as he fended off a strong challenge from Poland's D Krystian Szczepanski to emerge a 5-0 winner. Szczepanski was at his aggressive best and kept hurling punches but Shiva kept frustrating his opponent by going out of his range.

"It made him tired at the end of every round. I was playing my style, did not give my 100 per cent. I was just trying to be tactical with him and let his punches go in the air and miss so that he loses his control and confidence," Shiva said.

Tiger commits to play in Memorial Tournament

REUTERS  
MAY 23

TIGER WOODS, who missed the cut at last week's PGA Championship after an extended break, on Thursday committed to playing in next week's Memorial Tournament in Ohio ahead of the June 13-16 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach.

Following his April victory at the Masters, where Woods won his 15th major title and first since 2008, he chose not to play again until the year's second major, where he missed the cut by one stroke. But Woods, 43, will not follow that same routine, as he announced on Twitter his plans to use the Memorial, hosted by 18-times major champion Jack Nicklaus at Muirfield Village, as a final tune-up going into the U.S. Open.

"Looking forward to getting out there again," Woods said on his Twitter account.

Woods is a five-times winner at the Memorial with his last victory coming in 2012.

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**Shri Shakti Sinha**  
Director, NMML

**Date:** 25th May 2019 at 4.30 pm  
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HT Correspondent  
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The work on this 1km approach road was delayed due to non-availability of land

and the road is to be constructed.

This bridge is between

Greater Noida's Sector 1/4 and

Noida's Sector 11B/122.

The bridge is 220 metres wide and connects

two culverts and a stretch of road.

"We want to finish the work

as soon as possible, because we

want to improve connectivity

between Noida and Greater

Noida," Aggarwal said.

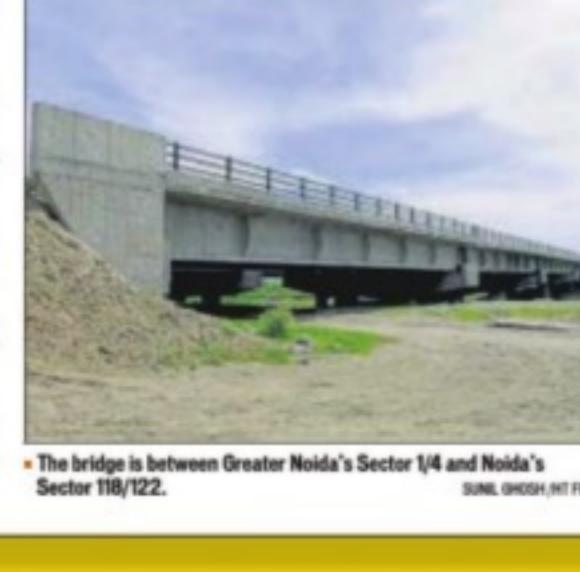
The Noida authority needed

to purchase 1.12,000 square metre land from farmers to build the approach road.

The authority had, in 2015, fixed a rate of Rs 500 per square metre for buying this land, because this bridge would immensely benefit thousands of commuters who face traffic congestion during peak hours.

The authority has started distributing the land compensation to the farmers, who have now agreed to give their land. We have started constructing two culverts and a stretch of road.

"We want to finish the work as soon as possible, because we want to improve connectivity between Noida and Greater Noida," Aggarwal said.



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# Kyrgios circus rolls into Paris

Australian enters French Open after controversial remarks on leading players and quitting a match mid-way

**REUTERS**  
MELBOURNE, MAY 23

WITH TWO completed matches on clay, a pelulant tournament default in Rome and character assassinations of some of the game's leading players, Nick Kyrgios's French Open build-up has been more or less normal by his unorthodox standards.

It may be a little frosty in the locker room Roland Garros after the Australian described 11-times champion Rafa Nadal as a sore loser and Novak Djokovic as obsessed with being liked in an explosive podcast interview last week. The Parisian crowd may also be a little scornful after he said the French Open "absolutely sucks" compared to Wimbledon in a video he shot himself and posted on social media. By his own admission, Kyrgios has virtually no chance of winning the tournament on a surface he "hates", with the odds on him taking out any of the other three Grand Slams not significantly higher.

And yet, few players will be that keen to see his name bracketed with theirs in the draw, for all the likelihood the lanky world number 36 will spontaneously combust mid-match and ease their passage into the next round.

Kyrgios might never have been past the quarter-finals of a Grand Slam, but he has shown he has the tools to topple any one of the titans of the game. The 24-year-old boasts a 2-0 record over Djokovic, is 3-3 in his sometimes heated rivalry with Nadal and beat Roger Federer on clay in their first match in 2015.

In one sparkling week in Acapulco in March, Kyrgios downed Nadal, Stan Wawrinka, John Isner and Alexander Zverev to claim the Mexican Open title, all while partying every night at the coastal resort. "I'm taking the piss out of the sport," he said in the "No Challenges Remaining" podcast.

"I'm lucky to be able to practise for, like, 45 minutes without something going wrong."

For all his boasts of being "a bit of a genius" on court, Kyrgios's fitness is dire compared to the tour's hard workers and his mental game has all the fortitude of puff pastry. His lack of commitment means regular losses to honest tour battlers, like German world number 49 Jan-Lennard Struff who weeks ago dumped him from the first round in Madrid after Kyrgios turned up with a backpack and only one spare racket.

World number 63 Casper Ruud was dragged into the spotlight at the Italian Open last week when Kyrgios threw a chair on the court and stormed off after the unheralded Norwegian had broken him early in the deciding third set.

## Fearful front

Goodwill has dwindled to a low ebb at home in Australia, where one TV chat show panelist described him last week as a "brat" who needs a "slap". His casual attitude toward the game is seen as only a front, to hide the fear of what failure would mean if he buckled down and tried his hardest.

It's a view that holds some currency with Kyrgios – but not one he tends to dwell on for too long. "I don't like waking up every day and (reading) 'this guy's a waste of talent'. There's a limit to this stuff that I can take," he said in the podcast. "Deep down I've had conversations with myself, like, 'is it a front?' But winning a Grand Slam... winning tennis matches for me, they don't make me happy."

Despite that, Kyrgios figures he will keep playing for at least another four or five years, adding to the \$7.24 million he has already won in prizemoney – less the regular deductions for code of conduct breaches. The trick-shots, underarm serves and tirades at spectators are all part of the theatre, and the 'what will he do next?' lure puts bums on seats, in much the same way John Daly still draws a crowd in golf.

Yet Daly, for all his faults and battles with addiction, did actually win two major titles. Kyrgios has yet to win anything of significance but is convinced he could – if only he had the work-rate. "I think that's a talent in itself just to show up every day and be the best you can be," he said. "If I had that, Jesus, I'd probably have a couple of Grand Slams already."



Nick Kyrgios might never have been past the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam, but he has shown he has the tools to topple any one of the titans of the game. *Reuters*

## Anticipation grows ahead of Federer's return

**REUTERS/AFP**  
MAY 23

ALL ROGER Federer had to do was strike a few silly forehands in his first practice session at Roland Garros for four years to create something of a social media frenzy this week.

Ever since the 37-year-old announced he was ending his self-imposed French Open exile, anticipation has been growing and video footage of his gentle warmup on Tuesday sent his legions of fans into a frenzy.

It is 10 years since Federer claimed his one and only title on the Parisian dirt – completing his career slam with victory over Swede Robin Soderling. He opted to skip the French Open for the past three years – a decision based on prolonging his career – but a decade after lifting La Coupe des Mousquetaires he returns not just for old time's sake, but because the Swiss must truly believe he has a chance of a 21st Grand Slam title.

Federer showed enough in a quarter-final run in Madrid – his first claycourt tournament for three years – that he had not forgotten how to slide with the best of them.

He also won a couple of rounds in Rome last week before withdrawing ahead of his match against Stefanos Tsitsipas citing a minor injury concern. Federer will step into a new look Roland Garros this year and admits it has been hard to be away.

Asked why he returned in an interview with French TV channel Stade 2, he explained: "What made me decide to come back to Roland-Garros? In the end, it's envy," he said. "I like slipping, cushioning, riding at odds, playing with angles and to see the fans I have not seen here."

Federer's last match at Roland Garros was a quarter-final loss to fellow Swiss Stan Wawrinka in 2015. Since then he has added two Australian Opens and one more Wimbledon title to his glittering record and he clearly still hungers after the game's biggest prizes.

But with his 38th birthday looming and a host of dangerous claycourters assembling



It is 10 years since Federer claimed his only French Open title. *Reuters*

in Paris, it would surely top any of his previous feats if he reclaimed the title.

"You can't say never because it's Roger," twice French Open runner-up Alex Corretja, told Reuters. "In my opinion he's not one of the favourites because there's a lot of guys who can hurt his game on the clay."

Federer will hope for warm conditions to speed up the courts and perhaps allow him to use the serve-and-volley tactics he employed liberally in Madrid this month when he reached the quarter-finals in his first clay event for three years.

"I always thought that serve and volleying on a hot day on clay almost has more reward than on a grass court sometimes because the ball jumps out of the strike zone," he said.

The conditions, and the luck of the draw, will play a big factor in Federer's prospects over the next two weeks but whatever happens this year's French Open story will be all the more memorable for his return.

"I don't think he has in his mind winning the French Open, he will just go there day by day and whatever he does it will be a bonus," Corretja said. "Whether it's two, three, four or five matches, it will help him arrive at Wimbledon with more rhythm."

## Uncertainty over Serena fitness, Osaka form

*Paris:* Serena Williams heads into this year's French Open as an outsider for a Grand Slam title for possibly the first time in 20 years, with questions surrounding her fitness after a poor start to the season, while Naomi Osaka needs to rediscover her best form to solidify her position at the top of the women's game with a third straight major crown.

The 37-year-old Williams is still waiting for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam triumph, with her last victory coming at the 2017 Australian Open shortly before taking a

break from the sport due to pregnancy.

She impressed initially after returning, but last year twice fell just short of drawing level with Margaret Court's mark, losing in the Wimbledon final to Angelique Kerber before her infamous meltdown en route to another final defeat by Osaka at Flushing Meadows. Williams' 2019 campaign has not gone to plan so far, with a series of injuries seeing her manage just four matches since her Australian Open quarter-final exit to Karolina Pliskova.

But she is confident her work off the court can help her find her best game in the biggest tournaments. "I actually haven't been able to train or practice a lot. I was out much longer than I expected," admitted the three-time French Open champion last week in Rome, before pulling out of the tournament ahead of a second-round tie with sister Venus.

"But I did everything I could to stay fit. I knew that I love the clay season and I wanted to be a part of it. It's not about today or tomorrow. For me obviously it's about playing well at all the big moments... Obviously the Slams, etc, just getting ready for those events."

World number one Osaka has not been overly struggling since surprisingly splitting with coach Sascha Bajin in the wake of her Australian Open title. But the Japanese star has not won a title since, and like Williams, withdrew from the Italian Open through injury before her quarter-final against Kiki Bertens.

It has still been the 21-year-old's best-ever clay-court campaign, having also reached the last eight in Madrid and the semi-finals in Stuttgart, and she feels her big-hitting game is now ready for the red dirt.

"I'm kind of comfortable with it now. It's just like I randomly slip. I feel like if I can get that under control, I'll be good," Osaka, who has never reached the second week in Paris, said. She also does not feel that her lack of a title since Melbourne will have a large bearing on her Roland Garros prospects.

"I can't necessarily say it's been ups and downs because if I think about it, it's definitely been going up," she said.

## BRIEFLY

Tokyo 2020 boxing boss vows to put athletes first

Tokyo: The Olympic official hastily put in charge of organising the Tokyo 2020 boxing competition admitted Thursday he was "totally unprepared" for his appointment, but vowed he would put athletes' interests first. The IOC tapped Morinari Watanabe from the Japanese Olympic Committee to run a special taskforce to organise the Tokyo 2020 boxing competition on Wednesday after stripping the world amateur governing body (AIBA) of the right following misconduct allegations. After months of dancing around each other, the IOC Wednesday delivered a knockout blow to AIBA, removing its right to organise the Tokyo boxing competition but insisting that a tournament would nonetheless take place. *AFP*

## World Cup: Archers to fight for bronze

Antalya: The Indian men's and women's compound teams made it to the bronze medal play-offs on a day their recurve counterparts bowed out in the second round in the Archery World Cup Stage III here Thursday. Rajat Chauhan, Abhishek Verma and Aman Saini pipped their French opponents via shoot-off in the quarter-finals but only to go down to Turkey by one point (233-234) to set up a bronze medal play-off against Russia. The women's trio of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Swati Duhwah and Muskan Kirar also suffered a 29-30 defeat in the shoot-off in the semifinal against Russia after they were locked 232-all. They face Great Britain in the bronze medal play-off. The Indian men's and women's recurve teams met with the same fate as they were eliminated in the second round, both losing in the shoot-offs. The India men's team of Tarundeep Rai, Atanu Das and Pravin Jadhav lost 4-5 (27-29) in the shoot-off against Italy. Deepika Kumari, Bombala Devi Laishram and Komalika Barui lost 4-5 (26-29) to their German counterparts in the women's recurve section. *PTI*

## Gayatri Gopichand begins with a win

Chennai: Top seed P Gayatri Gopichand of Telangana began her campaign in the All-India Junior Ranking Badminton tournament in style with a facile 21-15, 21-15 victory over Khushi Thakkar of Delhi. The 16-year-old daughter of India coach Pullela Gopichand showed deft touch and plenty of confidence as she quelled the challenge of Thakkar, who made it to the main draw of the Under-19 girls singles by getting a bye and winning her next two rounds. The second seed Akashri Kashyap of Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the Under-19 Boys Singles top seed Priyanshu Rajawat of Madhya Pradesh, however, pulled out of the competition, opening up the field for the lower seeds. In the boys' category, Manipur's Maisnam Meiraba (No.2) and Andhra Pradesh's Sai Charan Koya (No.3) will now be the favourites. *PTI*

## Batra set to be elected IOC member

New Delhi: Indian Olympic Association president Narinder Batra is all set to become a member of the International Olympic Committee after his name was proposed for the prestigious seat by the executive board of the world's apex body. The proposal to elect Batra and 9 other new members was submitted on Wednesday by the Executive Board of the IOC to IOC Session that will meet in June in Lausanne, a statement from the world body said. Batra is among the three names proposed to be elected from among persons linked to his or her function in a NOC, chosen in close consultation with the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC). All the proposed members have been vetted by the IOC Ethics Commission, which has conducted integrity checks. *PTI*

## Facing flak, FIFA abandons plans to expand 2022 WC

**TARIQ PANJA**  
MAY 23

FIFA HAS abandoned plans championed by its president to expand the 2022 World Cup to include 48 teams, concluding that it could not host the larger tournament in Qatar or come up with a solution to share the event with the tiny gulf emirate's neighbours. The expansion proposal, proposed and pressed by FIFA's president, Gianni Infantino, might have proved to be a popular one if presented for a vote by FIFA's member associations at the organization's annual congress next month in Paris. But an ongoing political and economic blockade of Qatar by some of its neighbors, most notably Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, created intractable practical obstacles that could not be overcome.

The decision ensures that the first 48-team World Cup will be the one awarded to the United States, Mexico and Canada in 2026. It also will come as a relief to Qatar, which has invested billions in infrastructure and untold amounts of national pride in hosting the first World Cup in the Arab world.



Vladimir Putin and Gianni Infantino at the Kremlin on Wednesday.

"In line with the conclusions of the feasibility study approved by the FIFA Council at its last meeting, FIFA and Qatar have jointly explored all possibilities to increase the number of participant teams from 32 to 48 teams by involving

neighboring countries at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022," FIFA said in a statement.

"Following a thorough and comprehensive consultation process with the involvement of all the relevant stakeholders, it was concluded

## Plans stall for unified Korean team at women's hockey event

**REUTERS**  
MAY 23

SOUTH KOREA will send its own team to the women's Hockey Series Finals next month after talks with North Korea over fielding a unified team at the Olympic qualifying event stalled, Yonhap News Agency reported. The International Hockey Federation's (FIH) deadline for submitting squads for the June 8-16 tournament in Ireland was Thursday.

The two countries agreed to field joint teams in various sports in February but the Yonhap report said South Korea had decided to go it alone in women's hockey after its northern neighbour did not respond to calls for joint training sessions.

Sports diplomacy has been a prominent feature of the thaw in relations between the two countries since early 2018, when they fielded a unified women's ice

hockey team at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang and marched under a unified flag.

They have also expressed interest in jointly hosting the 2023 women's World Cup, but tensions have risen again after nuclear-armed North Korea test fired rockets and at least one short-range missile earlier this month. The rocket drill brought talks about sports and other inter-Korean exchanges to a halt, resulting in South Korea deciding to select a squad for Ireland entirely from its own pool of players, Yonhap reported.

The Hockey Series Finals event in Ireland is one of three from which six teams, two from each tournament, will go through to the FIH Olympic qualifiers for Tokyo 2020.

South Korea, Olympic silver medallists in 1988 and 1996, are ranked 11th in the world while North Korea do not appear in the FIH rankings.

## Classifieds

## PERSONAL

I, hitherto Known as ANKIT Son RAMESH KUMAR in the Residing at,House.No.117 Pocket-12, Sector-22,Rohini,New Delhi-110086,have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as ANKIT SHARMA. 0040495879-1

0040496092-2

I,Sunil Kumar Marwah@Sunil Marwah S/O-Gulshan Kumar Marwah,R/O-209,UP,LGDDA Flats,Motia Khan,Swami Ram Tirth Nagar,Delhi-55,have changed to Sunil Kumar Marwah for all,purpose.

0040496132-4

I,Rajesh Kumar alias Rajesh Kumar Rana S/o Ram Chander Rana R/o-403, Khati-Mohalla, Kapashera-Village, Delhi-37,have changed my name to Rajesh Rana. 0040496092-4

I,RTU NANDA DO-KRISHN KUMAR NANDA R/O-A-1/30C,MAA SHAHT Apartment, PASCHIM VIHAR, DELHI-110063, have Changed My Name After Marriage to RTU BERRY for all,Purposes.

0040496132-3

I,Meena khosla and Preet Pal W/o/Sh.Ravish Khosla R/o-B-47 Sector-55 Noida GB Nagar UP 201301 is the same person, my correct name is Preet Pal for all purposes, from Now on.

0040496119-1

I,Ashima Malhotra D/o Ramesh Chandra Malhotra, R/o-3/238, 3rd-Floor, Janta-Market, Tagore-Garden, ND-27 have changed the name of my minor daughter Palak Malhotra aged 14-Years to Ishita Malhotra.

0040496092-5

I,Yogender S/o-Sh,Shyam Singh R/o-B-127/2, Madhu Vihar,Gali.No.80,Uttam Nagar,New Delhi-110059,have changed my name to Yogender Singh for all future purposes.

0040496132-2

I,Virender Kumar S/o Madan Lal Madaa R/o-G-85, Upper Ground-Floor, Pushkar Enclave, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110063,changed my name to Virender Kumar Madaan

0040496072-4

I,Vijay Kumar S/o Sh.Om Prakash R/o H.No.403, Sector-10, Faridabad, Haryana 121006,have change my name from Vijay Kumar to Vijay Luthra for all purposes.

0040496120-5

I,Tanveer Akram S/o Mohd Khurshid R/o 5993, Basti Harphool Singh, Sadar Thana, Delhi-110006, have changed my minor daughter's name from Samara Akram to Samara Noor. 0040496022-1

I,Surender W/o Pawan Kumar R/o C-2/H-4, Shalimar Garden Extn.-2, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad-201005 have changed my name to Surinder Kaur (DOB 29.06.1969) for all future purposes. 0040496031-1

I,Vishal Aggarwal S/o Surinder Gupta residing H.No. 17/10, Central Town, Jalandhar Punjab have changed my name to Vishal Gupta for all purposes. 0040496108-1

I,Sundeep Kalra S/o Briljal Kalra R/o A-72, Janta Flats, Pocket-00, Sector-2, Rohini, Delhi- 110085 have changed my name to Sandeep Kalra.

0070656804-1

I,Suman Pawar W/O-Rajesh Kumar R/O H.No.193, Street No.5, New-RajaPuri, Somp-Bazar Road, Uttam-Nagar New Delhi,have changed my name SUMAN PAWAR to SUMAN,for all purposes. 0040496072-9

I,Suman Makhija w/o Sanjeev Kumar R/o-7/105, Malviya-Nagar, Delhi-110017,have changed my name to Suman for all future purposes.

0040496072-8

I,Shubham S/o Vijender Singh R/o 137, LG Flat, Hastsal, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-59, have changed my name to Shubham Singh for all future purposes.

0040496044-1

I,Sewa Ram Kalyani S/o Newand Ram Kalyani R/o K-132, 3rd-Floor Kirti Nagar New Delhi-110015,have changed my name to Ravi Kalyani for all Future purposes. 0040496072-2

I,Seerat Saluja D/o Mandeep Singh Saluja R/o 34/22, 2nd Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060 have changed my name to Manserat Kaur Saluja for all purposes. 0040496085-2

I,Seema Srivastava W/o Surrender Srivastava R/o-C-56/1, Third-Floor, Shivaji-Park, New Delhi-110026,have changed my name to Seema Srivastava for all purposes.

0040496092-1

I,Santosh Kumar S/o Ayodhya Singh R/o-194/198 J.J.Dhara Camp Srinivaspuri, South Delhi-65,have changed my name to Santosh Kumar Singh for all purposes.

0040496070-9

I,Sharon Rana W/o Praveen Rana R/o K-212 Kangra Niketan, Vikas Puri Tilak Nagar, Rajouri Garden, West Delhi New Delhi 110016 HaveChanged My Name To Sharon Coates Reid Rana For All Purposes 007065689-1

I,Satish S/o Sh.Shiv Charan R/o C-2/122, First Floor, Sector-20, Rohini Extn., Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Rishi for all purposes.

0040496024-4

I Amit Kumar Jain S/o Sh.Bhushan Kumar Jain R/o H.No.B-84, Second Floor, Kausambi, I.E.Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, P.O.-201010 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Yukta Jain to Manvi Jain for all purposes.

0040496024-5

I, Samanya Mishra S/o Abhineet Mishra R/o-305 Ganga-Tower Kaushambi Ghaziabad U.P. Changed my name to Aryash Mishra for all purposes.

0040496092-2

I, Sahej Saluja S/o Mandeep Singh Saluja R/o 34/22, 2nd Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060 have changed my name to Sehajpreet Singh Saluja for all purposes.

0040496085-1

I, Rinku Gupta W/o Shri Nitin Goel R/o-59, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Have Changed My Name To Mohit Goel. 0040496120-4

I, Mohd Muqeem S/o Abdul Rashid R/o 1130, Rakab Ganj, Behind Delite Cinema, New Delhi-110002, have changed my name to Mohd Muqeem Qureshi for all purposes.

0040496022-2

I, Rinku Gupta W/o Shri Nitin Goel R/o-59, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Have Changed My Name To Mohit Goel for all purposes.

0040496035-1

I, Rajeev Sharma S/o Ishwar Sharma R/o-B-120-121, Sector-11, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Changed My Child Name Yuvraj Sharma To Yuvraj Kaushik.

0040496120-3

I, Pranav Khrabanda S/o Manmohan Kharbanda R/o F-296A, First-Floor, Mansarovar Garden, New Delhi-110015 have changed my name to Pranav Kharbanda.

0040496072-7

I, Pawandeep Singh S/o Gulbir Singh R/o-D-18, First Floor, Pamposh Enclave, Greater Kailash Part-I, New Delhi-110048, have changed my name to Pawandeep Singh Bhatia, for all purposes.

0040496072-5

I, Parma Nand S/o Vir Bhanu Pahua R/o-RZ-D3/17B, UGF, Sanskar Aavlaas, Gali No-7, Mahavir-Enclave-1, Delhi-110045. have changed my name to Parma Nand Pahua, Permanently.

0040496120-6

I, Paramjeet Uppal W/O Jagjit Singh R/o 2853, 2nd Floor, A-Block, Green Field Colony, Faridabad, Haryana-121010, Paramjeet Kaur.

0040496021-0

I, Sameer Khan S/O Sharif Khan R/o-VPO-Nimriwali, Bhiwani, Haryana-127309 inform that name of my mother has been wrongly-written as Suman Khan in my educational documents.The actual name of my mother is Bhateri.

0040496120-7

I, Reeta Devi @ Rita Devi W/o Sh.Ramesh Yadav R/o 204/205, First Floor, Pocket-3, Sector-25, Rohini, Delhi-110085 have changed my name to Reeta Devi for all purposes.

0040496024-2

I, Reena D/O Rakesh Kumar R/O Subroto Park, New Delhi have changed my name from Reena to Reena Yadav vide Affidavit dated 13/05/2019.

0050148837-1

I, Raj Kishore Verma S/o Sh.Om Prakash Verma R/o JG-II/725-B, Outer Ring Road, Opp.CRP Camp, Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Kritika to Kritika Verma for all purposes.

0040496024-3

I, Monika D/O Rakesh Kumar R/O Subroto Park, New Delhi have changed my name from Dipak to Monika to Monika Yadav vide Affidavit dated 13/05/2019.

0050148836-1

I, Mohit S/O Rakesh Kumar R/O Subroto Park, New Delhi have changed my name from Mohit to Mohit Yadav vide Affidavit dated 13/05/2019.

0050148838-1

I, Manoj Kumar Singh S/o Alakhnath Singh R/o Khasra 219, Street No.10, Kaphasera, ND-110037 have changed my name to Manoj Kumar

0040496028-2

I, Manohar Singh Bairwa S/o Dhan Singh R/o 233 Block - A Rangpur Pahadi Nala South West Delhi 110037 Have Changed My Name To Manohar Singh For All Purposes

0070656799-1

I, Kushal Kumar Agrawal S/o Ram Swaroop Agrawal R/o A-86, First Floor, Derawala Nagar, Delhi-110009 have changed my name to Kushal Agrawal for all purposes.

0040496070-4

I, Anu Keshav Ralhan W/o Keshav Ralhan R/o GG-1,51-B, Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018 have changed my name from Anu Popli to Anu Keshav Ralhan

0040496072-3

I, Anupam S/o Santosh Singh R/o-194/198 J.J.Indra Camp, Srinivaspuri, South Delhi-65,have changed my name to Anupam Singh & my correct DOB is-19/02/1998.

0040496070-2

I, Usha W/o Ajay Pal Yadav R/o-RZ-16 Sayed-Nangloj Paschim vihar Sunder Vihar N.Delhi-110087 have changed my name to Usha Yadav.

0040496120-9

I, Sharon Rana W/o Praveen Rana R/o K-212 Kangra Niketan, Vikas Puri Tilak Nagar, Rajouri Garden, West Delhi New Delhi 110016 HaveChanged My Name To Sharon Coates Reid Rana For All Purposes 007065689-1

I, Satish S/o Sh.Shiv Charan R/o C-2/122, First Floor, Sector-20, Rohini Extn., Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Rishi for all purposes.

0040496024-4

I, Devendra Dubey S/o Krishna Kumar Debe residing H.No. 43, Near Bhati Chaupal Village, Narsingpur, Gurgaon Haryana, have changed my name to Devendra Debey for all purposes.

0040496108-2

I,Nitesh S/o Vinod Goyal R/o H-36, Vikas Apartments West Enclave Pitampura, Delhi, have changed my name to Nitesh Goyal permanently.

0040496078-1

I, Mohit Goel S/o Satya Parkash Goel R/o-20/59, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Have Changed My Name To Mohit Goel.

0040496120-4

I, Sahej Saluja S/o Mandeep Singh Saluja R/o 34/22, 2nd Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060 have changed my name to Sehajpreet Singh Saluja for all purposes.

0040496022-2

I, Rinku Gupta S/o Shri Nitin Goel R/o-59, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Have changed my name to Muskan Goel for all purposes.

0040496035-1

I, Rajeev Sharma S/o Ishwar Sharma R/o-B-120-121, Sector-11, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Changed My Child Name Yuvraj Sharma To Yuvraj Kaushik.

0040496120-3

I, Rinku Gupta S/o Shri Nitin Goel R/o-59, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Have changed my name to Muskan Goel for all purposes.

0040496027-1

I, Meyhar Bhamra D/o Abhay Singh Bhamra R/o A-45, Sudershan Park, Motinagar, N.Delhi-110015 have changed my name to Meyhar Kaur Bhamra.

0040496076-2

I, Rinku Gupta S/o Shri Nitin Goel R/o-59, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085. Have changed my name to Muskan Goel for all purposes.

0040496027-8

I, Manish Kumar Gir S/o Ramesh Gir R/o-2132/B-12, 3rd-Floor, Rightside, Gali-03, Prem Nagar, Patel Nagar, N.Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Manish Gir.

0040496092-7

I, Ashok Kumar S/o Lalit Kumar S/o Rakesh Kumar, D-1104, 2nd Floor, Kondli-Gharoli, Delhi-110096. 1.Possession Letter, 12th Class CBSE Certificate, Roll No.8206998 year-2017, finder Contact-9899899822.

0040496092-8

**EASTERN RAILWAY**

Abridged Tender Notice No : HWI-I-02-19-20 (Open Tender) for e-tendering, dated 21.05.2019. Sealed tender notice for e-tendering is invited by Dy Chief Engineer(Con)-I/Eastern Railway, Howrah for the following work :-  
**Name of Work :** Supply of 50,000.00 Cum of 50mm size machine crushed track stone ballast in any type of Railway wagon including all sorts of incidental charges for Bakudhi/Talhiri quarry under the jurisdiction of construction department of Eastern Railway.  
**Tender Value :** Rs. 4,70,50,000/-  
**Earliest Money :** Rs. 3,85,300/- Date of Opening : 24.06.2019 at 12.00 hrs.  
The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through the e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer if received shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected.  
Siddhartha CON-22/2019-20  
Tender Notices are also available at Website [www.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.indianrailways.gov.in)

## **PRASAR BHARTI (INDIA'S PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTER) ALL INDIA RADIO : CIVIL CONSTRUCTION WING**

**PRESS NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS**

The Executive Engineer (Civil), JAMMU Civil Construction Wing, All India Radio, Jammu (Email : [ecjammu2@gmail.com](mailto:ecjammu2@gmail.com)) invites on behalf of President of India online **Composite Item Rate Tenders** in single bid system from approved and eligible contractors of CPWD and those of appropriate list of Railways, MES, BSNL, Department of Post and PWD (B&R) of J & K upto 14:00 Hrs on 06.06.2019 for the following work:-  
**NIT No. : 01/CE/SSW-IEE/C/JAMMU/2019-20/3**

**Name of Work :-** Construction of Indian Institute of Mass Communication at Keran, Bantabali, Jammu (J&K). (SH: Construction of Admin, Building, hostel building, staff quarters Type IV, V and II, Gaurd room, Pump room, ESS and main gate including Electrical installation, fire fighting and ancillary works).

**Estimated Cost :-** Rs. 18,27,38,163/-

**Earliest Money :-** Rs. 28,27,382/-

**Period of completion :-** 18 (Eighteen) Months

**Last date and time of submission of online bid :-** 06.06.2019 upto 14.00 Hrs.

**Last date & time of open of online bid :-** 06.06.2019 upto 15.30 Hrs. The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website [www.tenderwizard.com/AIR](http://www.tenderwizard.com/AIR). Press Notice is also available on website [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in).

**Executive Engineer (C)**

## **HARYANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION BAYS NO. 1-10, BLOCK-B, SECTOR-4, PANCHKULA**

Advt. No. 2/2019 Date of Publication: 24.05.2019

Closing Date : 24.06.2019

The Commission invites Online Application Forms from the Eligible Candidates for the following Posts:-

Sr. No.	Name of Posts	Gen.	SC of Hry.	Total No. of Posts
1.	Deputy Director (Project) (Group-A) (Unreserved) in Industries & Commerce Department, Haryana.	01	-	01
2.	Deputy Director (Industrial Promotion) (Group-A).	04	01	05

1. (a) Closing Date for the Submission of Online Application

(b) Application Fees can be submitted through Online mode only using Net Banking or Debit Card/ Credit Card midnight of Closing Date using only the Link provided by the Commission

(c) The Online Application can be filled upto 24.06.2019 by using Commission's website after which the Link will be disabled. The Candidates are strictly advised to apply Online well in time without waiting for Last Date of Submission of Online Application. No Offline Application Form will be accepted by the Office. Eligibility with regards Qualification, Experience, any Certificate and other conditions of Eligibility etc. will be determined as on Last Date of Submission of Online application Forms i.e. 24.06.2019 (Closing Date).

Note:1. Candidates are advised not to send the Hard Copy of the Application Form. If any Candidates sent the Hard Copy of the Application Form, the same will not be entertained.

2. It will be the sole responsibility of the Candidates to retain a Hard Copy of the Printed Online Application Form with them and produce the same before the Commission as and when sought by it. The Commission will not be responsible for any deficiency in this aspect and it will not provide any other opportunity after the Closing Date of applying Online Application for downloading the Hard Copies of the Application Forms.

3. No. of Posts along with reservation of Posts are subject to any variation. If there is any variation, the Candidates will be informed through Announcement Dispersed on Commission's website.

4. Detailed instructions for filling the Online Application form and Deposit of Fees are available on the website: <http://hpssconline.in>. For any Guidance/ Information/ Clarification regarding the filling of the Online Application Form the Applicant can call at Helpline No. 0172-2560754 on all working days from 09.00 A.M. to 05.00 P.M.

5. Candidates can apply Online w.e.f. 24.05.2019.

Sd/-

Secretary,

Haryana Public Service Commission, Panchkula.

Date: 22.05.2019

76432/HRY.

## **RAIL COACH FACTORY, KAPURTHALA**

1. On-line bids are invited by PCMM, RCF on behalf of President of India.

2. For details and making On-line bids, visit Website <http://ireps.gov.in> Drawings/specifications, wherever required can be downloaded from RCF Website <http://www.rcf.indianrailways.gov.in>.

3. Class IIIb digital signature certificate required for on-line bidding, can be obtained from licensed certifying agencies listed at <http://www.cce.gov.in>.

All Limited tender and Advertised tenders will normally close at 11.25 Hrs and 14.25 Hrs respectively on the stipulated date and will be opened at 11.30 Hrs and 14.30 Hrs in the same sequence.

**NOTE :-** "GST No. of RCF is 03AAGM0289C1ZT. All the suppliers are advised to quote this in dispatch documents for the supplies made by them".

**PCMM**

Dated: 23.05.2019

T.No.: G-122-01/PCMM/019/2019-20

## **DEEP SCREENING OF TRACK & OTHER WORKS**

E-Tender Notice No. 03-ENGG-RNY-2019-20: Open E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work.

**Tender No. 1: Brief Description of Item:** Deep screening of track up line and On line at New Bongaigaon yard and standardization of PP shed under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN-II/Rangiya & Sr. DEN-II/Rangiya. Tender Value: ₹42,38,608.38. Earliest Money: ₹84,800/- Date and time of Closing of E-tender at 13:00 hrs. on 11-06-2019.

Date, time and place of opening of tender at 15:00 hrs. of 11-06-2019 in the office of Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Rangiya. For details visit [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) DR (Works), Rangiya NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Serving Customers With A Smile

## **EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**

### **E-TENDER NOTICE**

No. ECR-CAO-CON-NORTH-ETN-22-19-20 E-TENDER IS INVITED ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA FOR THE UNDER MENTIONED WORK

**Particulars :** S.N. 1. Name of work : Supply of 1,00,000 cum 50 mm size machine crushed track ballast for B.G. Railway Track & loading the same into any type of railway wagons F.O.R. Sakari Gali that for various projects under CAO/Con. ECR 2. Approx cost of the work : Rs.8,92,82,00/- 3. Earnest Money : Rs. 5,96,400/- 4. Date and time for closing of tender : 10.06.2019 at 14.30 hrs. 5. Website particular, Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and addressed of the office from where tender form be purchased etc. The above E-tender, E-Tendering document alongwith full information is available on website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in> and also can see in the office of CAO/Con/ECR, MHX, Patna Note : Tenderers are requested to visit the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> atleast 10 days before last date of closing for latest corrigendum/corrections etc in response to this E-tender

SD-  
(Rajendra Prasad)  
Dy. SP (Estt.)  
For Asstt. Director (Estt.)  
Dated: 17 May, 2019  
davp 19117/11/0002/1920

## **BPR&D**



### **WALK IN INTERVIEW FOR ENGAGEMENT OF RETIRED GOVERNMENT SERVANTS IN BPR&D AND CDTIs CONTRACTUAL BASIS ([www.bprd.nic.in](http://www.bprd.nic.in))**

Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India invites retired Central/States Government servants for 'Walk-in-Interview' for engagement against posts of various ranks purely on contractual basis for a period upto 10.08.2019 (extendable) or till attaining the age of 65 years or till regular incumbents join whichever is earlier. Proforma for application, details of post, eligibility criteria, emoluments, selection procedure, date and location of interview, and other terms and conditions etc. are available on BPR&D website: [www.bprd.nic.in](http://www.bprd.nic.in). The applicants may send their application and Bio-Data to Asstt. Director (Estt.), BPR&D, NH-8, Near SSB Office, Mahipal Pur, New Delhi - 110037 (Ph.No.26782185/ 26781327) and/or email to [adadm@bprd.nic.in](mailto:adadm@bprd.nic.in). (For any query, kindly contact at the above number).

SD-  
(Rajendra Prasad)  
Dy. SP (Estt.)  
For Asstt. Director (Estt.)  
Dated: 17 May, 2019  
davp 19117/11/0002/1920

## **AIRPORTS ECONOMIC REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA**

(A Statutory Body of the Government of India)  
AERA Building, Administrative Complex, Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi-110003 Ph: 24695044-47, Fax: 24695048, Website: <http://aera.gov.in>

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

#### **ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO ASSIST THE AIRPORTS ECONOMIC REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA (AERA)**

#### **IN DETERMINATION OF TARIFFS FOR AERONAUTICAL SERVICES AT MAJOR AAI AIRPORTS**

The Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA) is a statutory body established by the Government of India to determine, inter alia, tariffs for aeronautical services rendered at major airports in India. AERA invites proposals from qualified and experienced Consultants to assist the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA) In Determination of Tariffs for Aeronautical Services at Major AAI Airports.

Eligibility In order to be eligible to submit the RFP an Applicant should have assisted at least 1(One) Regulatory Authority or Government Authority in any infrastructure/ essential services sector such as aviation, power, gas, telecommunication, shipping, etc., or assisted any regulated entity viz. airport, port, power distribution company, etc in conduct of studies or audits of similar nature or in related areas. The Applicant should have a minimum turnover of Rs. 3,00,00,000 (Rupees Three Crores) per annum under the head of professional fees during each of the last three accounting years.

Complete details of the RFP documents may be seen on AERA website at [aera.gov.in](http://aera.gov.in) and CPP Portal i.e. <https://eprocure.gov.in>. Bid Submission should be addressed and delivered not later than 1100 Hrs (IST) on 26th day of June, 2019 at the address mentioned below:

Note: All future amendment/ modification will be published on AERA official website only.

Deputy Chief, AERA (Government of India)

AERA Building, Administrative Complex, Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi-110003

Tele : 011-24695041, 24695043, Fax : 24695039

davp 03112/11/0002/1920

## **EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**

### **E-TENDER NOTICE**

No. ECR-CAO-CON-NORTH-ETN-19-20 E-Tender is invited on Behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work:-

**Particulars :** S.N. 1 : Name of work : Supply of portion and welding of 60 KG/52 KG/New/SH, 90/72 uts) rail joints by SKV process (25 mm gap) on cess/in situ as per IRS specification T-19-19945 with contractors material, labour, T&P etc. Including welding, supervisor complete between Narkatiaganj (including) to Valmikinagar ( including) section in connection with Sagauli-Valmikinagar doubling project. 2. Approx cost of the work : Rs. 7,29,22,682.00. 3. Earnest money : Rs. 5,14,600/- 4. Date and time for closing of tender : 10.06.2019 at 14.30 hrs. 5. Website particular, Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and addressed of the office from where tender form be purchased etc. The above E-Tender, E-Tendering document alongwith full information is available on website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in> and also can see in the office of CAO/Con/ECR, MHX, Patna Note : Tenderers are requested to visit the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> atleast 15 days before last date of closing for latest corrigendum/corrections etc in response to this E-tender.

CAO/Con/ North PR/00342/CON/ENGG/T/19-20/44 E.C.Rly, MHX, Patna

HARYANA GOVERNMENT TENDER NOTICE						
SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/EMD (APPROX.) IN Rupees	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1.	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT REWARI	EST FOR DEWEEDING OF SANJHUPUR DISTY, FROM KM 0.00 TO TALI FOR KHARIF 2019 + 9 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 28.05.2019	9.13 LACS	<a href="http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in">www.etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	xen-ws2/rwr.irr@gov.in
2.	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES RAI WATER SERVICES JHAJHAR	DEWEEDING OF PATAUDA MINOR RD 0 TO 35985 + 12 OTHER WORKS	CLOSING DATE 28.05.2019	23.90 LACS	<a href="http://hid.gov.in">hid.gov.in</a>	xenrlisdivir@gmail.com
3.	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES RAI WATER SERVICES JHAJHAR	CONSTRUCTION OF SUBDIVISIONS DRINKING WATER SYSTEM (DRAW UNDERGROUND PRESSURIZED PIPE LINE) FROM KLM 0.00 TO 3.656 OUTFALLING AT RD 5385-L OF ZAHIPUR MINOR	CLOSING DATE 29.05.2019	454.74	<a href="http://hid.gov.in">hid.gov.in</a>	xenrlisdivir@gmail.com

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## AUSTRALIA

Geoffrey Rush wins Australia's largest-ever defamation payout

**Sydney:** Hollywood star Geoffrey Rush won an Australian record multi-million-dollar payout Thursday after a court found that a Sydney newspaper defamed him. Local media reported the Oscar-winning actor has been awarded almost \$2 million for lost earnings and compensation, after he was accused of inappropriate sexual behaviour toward female cast members. In a front-page article published in 2017, the Daily Telegraph wrote that the Sydney Theatre Company received a complaint that Rush had inappropriately touched a female co-star during a staging of "King Lear". A Sydney judge had described the content as a "recklessly irresponsible piece of sensationalist journalism."

## EGYPT

Al-Jazeera journalist held since 2016, freed

**Cairo:** An Egyptian court has ordered the release of Al-Jazeera journalist Mahmoud Hussein, detained since 2016 on allegations of spreading false news and defaming Egypt's reputation. Hussein, an Egyptian journalist working for the Qatar-based satellite network, was detained at the Cairo airport in December 2016, when he arrived on a family vacation from Doha. No official charges were ever raised against him and Hussein didn't stand trial. The Doha-based Al-Jazeera reported the news on its website Thursday, saying Hussein "was arrested without formal charges and kept in prison for 881 days."

## INDONESIA

Suspected rioters pledged support for IS: Police

**Jakarta:** Two men detained by Indonesian police for rioting this week were part of a group that had pledged support to the Islamic State militant group and intended to carry out jihad, or holy war, police said on Thursday. Two nights of rioting and clashes between protesters and police in the capital, Jakarta, followed the release of official election results which showed President Joko Widodo defeated his rival, Prabowo Subianto, in last month's presidential race. "They intended to carry out jihad during May 21 and 22 protests," national police spokesman Muhammad Iqbal.

## CANADA

Canada agrees to remove trash from Philippines by June

**Toronto:** Canada said Wednesday that by the end of June it will remove truckloads of garbage which Filipino officials say were illegally shipped to the Philippines years ago. Canadian Environment Minister Catherine McKenna said the government has awarded a contract to French shipping giant Bollore Logistics Canada that calls for the return of 69 containers filled with household waste and electronic garbage. The trash is expected to be back in Canada by the end of summer.

# Pressure mounts on PM May as govt delays vote on Brexit deal

Commons leader quits over lack of trust in PM's strategy

ADITI KHANNA  
LONDON, MAY 23

EMBATTLED BRITISH Prime Minister Theresa May remained defiant Thursday even as the government postponed a crucial Parliament vote on her revised Brexit deal, which faces stiff opposition from within the Conservative Party.

A UK government whip, Mark Spencer, told the House of Commons that he would update MPs on the publication and debate of the Brexit Withdrawal Bill after Parliament returns from recess in early June. It was expected that the Bill would be tabled on Friday before the Commons breaks up for the brief recess.

"We will update the House on the publication and introduction of the Withdrawal Agreement Bill on our return from the Whitsun recess," said Spencer, who was standing in for Andrea Leadsom — the Leader of the Commons who resigned her Cabinet role on Wednesday evening claiming a lack of trust in May's Brexit strategy.

"We had hoped to hold sec-

EXPLAINED

## E May's latest deal finds few takers

THERESA MAY'S revamped Brexit plan, which she referred to as her "one last chance" to pass a withdrawal agreement, has found few takers on either side. While the opposition lawmakers reject her concessions as too little too late, the rebels in her own party were infuriated by the closer relations with the EU that the new plan envisaged. As a result, it is unlikely that the deal would be passed by Parliament when it comes before it. May had already said that she would resign after the withdrawal agreement was passed, but if it looks like she won't be able to get a majority of MPs to agree to a deal, she may be forced to quit even earlier.



ond reading on Friday 7th June. At the moment, we have not secured agreement to this in the usual channels. Of course, we will update the House when we return from recess," Spencer said.

Downing Street issued a

**Andrea Leadsom's resignation has further shaken May's already precarious position, with increasing pressure on her to resign**

statement moments later to stress that the British PM remains committed to "deliver Brexit".

Speaking after Leadsom's departure from Cabinet, May said she was "sorry to lose someone of passion, drive and sincerity". PTI

"I'm an EU citizen and registered to vote in time, but appar-

## European polls begin: EU citizens angry at being denied vote in UK

REUTERS  
LONDON, MAY 23

HUNDREDS OF EU citizens trying to cast their vote for the European Parliament elections in the United Kingdom on Friday have been turned away because of administrative mistakes, a campaign group said.

Britain was not supposed to be taking part in the elections for the European Parliament as it was due to leave the bloc on March 29. However, the rejection of the divorce deal that Prime Minister Theresa May struck with Brussels meant Brexit was delayed until October, requiring the vote to go ahead.

Large numbers of EU nationals recounted on Twitter how they had arrived at polling stations to find their names had been crossed off the list of eligible voters, saying officials had failed to deal with the necessary forms in time.

"I'm an EU citizen and registered to vote in time, but appar-



At a polling station in London on Thursday. Reuters

ently my form saying that I was going to vote in the UK didn't arrive before the deadline," said Ana Clara Paniago.

The UK's election watchdog said if an EU citizen wanted to vote in Britain rather than their home state, they had to transfer their right to do so 12 days ahead of the poll. "The very short notice from the government of the UK's participation in these elections impacted on the time available for awareness of this process amongst citizens, and for citizens to complete the process," the Electoral Commission said.

The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the request had been made by US Central Command, but added that it was not clear whether the Pentagon would approve the request.

The Pentagon regularly receives — and declines — requests for additional resources from US combatant commands throughout the world.

One of the officials said the requested troops would be defensive in nature.

It is unclear if any specific request will ultimately be presented

## Pentagon mulling US military request to send 5,000 troops to West Asia: Officials

IDREES ALI & PHIL STEWART  
WASHINGTON, MAY 23

THE US Department of Defence is considering a US military request to send about 5,000 additional troops to West Asia amid increasing tensions with Iran, two US officials told Reuters on Wednesday.

Teheran and Washington have this month been escalating rhetoric against each other, following US President Donald Trump's decision to try to cut Iran's oil exports to zero and beef up the US military presence in the Gulf in response to what he said were Iranian threats.

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## BANK CEO CHARGED WITH TRYING TO BUY ROLE IN TRUMP TEAM

New York: Federal prosecutors have charged a banker with trying to buy himself a role in US President Donald Trump's administration by making risky loans to former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort.

Stephen M Calk was arrested Thursday in New York City on a financial institution bribery charge.

Authorities said Calk committed the crime while serving as CEO of The Federal Savings Bank in Chicago. AP

to the White House. The request for 5,000 additional troops was first reported by Reuters.

This appeared to be the latest request for additional resources in the face of what US officials have said are credible threats from Iran against US forces and American interests in West Asia.

The United States has not publicly shown any evidence of what the specific intelligence on the Iranian threat is. REUTERS

## Lanka pardons monk accused of inciting violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
COLOMBO, MAY 23

SRI LANKAN President Maithripala Sirisena has pardoned a firebrand Buddhist monk, Galagodatte Gnanasara, who is accused of inciting violence against minority Muslims and convicted of contempt of court.

Sirisena granted pardon to Gnanasara days after releasing 762 other convicts to mark Vesak, also known as Buddha Jayanti.

"He will be released later today (Thursday), the President had signed all the papers," Witharandeniya Nanda, a Gnanasara peer told reporters.

The magistrate complained of contempt while the court of appeals convicted him. Gnanasara's appeal for pardon was later rejected by the Supreme Court.

Gnanasara who headed the ultra-Buddhist nationalist Bodu Bala Sena, or the Forces of Buddhist Power, was sentenced by the court for contempt. He was given a six-year jail term over his disruptive behaviour in court and intimidation of a woman litigant in 2016.

In 2013, Gnanasara led an anti-Muslim campaign, saying Muslim extremism was on the rise in the Buddhist majority country.

His release comes a month after the Easter suicide attacks by a local jihadist group.

It also comes a week after mobs attacked dozens of mosques, and rows of Muslim-owned houses and shops in Kurunegala and Gampaha districts on May 12 and 13, in the biggest outburst of violence since the Easter attacks.



## DEADLY TORNADO, STORMS HIT MISSOURI, 3 DEAD

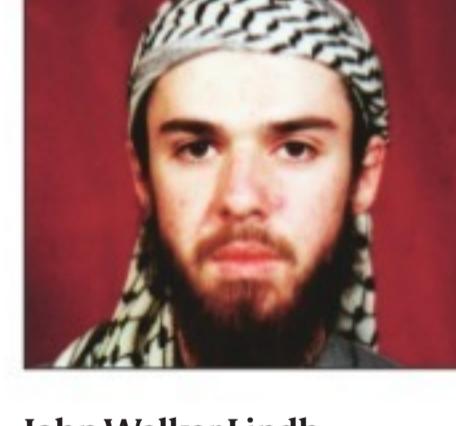
A damaged gas station in Jefferson City, Missouri, on Thursday. A tornado tore apart buildings in Missouri's capital city as severe weather swept across the state overnight, killing at least three people and injuring nearly two dozen others. AP

## 'American Taliban' released from US prison

REUTERS  
TAOS (NEW MEXICO), MAY 23

JOHN WALKER Lindh, the American captured in Afghanistan in 2001 fighting for the Taliban, was freed early from federal prison on Thursday after serving 17 years, the Federal Bureau of Prisons said.

Lindh, who was 20 years old when he was captured, was re-



John Walker Lindh

leased amid concerns about his rehabilitation.

Lindh, now 38, left the prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, Thursday morning.

He had been sentenced to 20 years after pleading guilty in 2002 to charges of supplying services to the Taliban and carrying an explosive during the commission of a felony.

Lindh is among dozens of prisoners to be released during the next few years after being cap-

tured in Iraq and Afghanistan and convicted of terrorism-related crimes following the attacks on the US by al Qaeda on Sept 11, 2001.

His release brought objections from elected officials who asked why Lindh was being freed early and what training parole officers had to spot radicalisation and recidivism among former jihadists.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called Lindh's release "unexplainable and unconscionable."

## UK: Sikh girl banned from taking kirpan to her school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
LONDON, MAY 23

A SIX-YEAR-OLD Sikh girl has been banned from bringing the kirpan to her primary school in the UK after an outcry from other students' parents who refused to bring their children to the school over safety concerns, according to a media report.

The girl brought the kirpan, worn by Sikhs as a mark of their faith, to the Redscope Primary School in Rotherham earlier this month, the Telegraph reported Wednesday.

One parent complained: "I'm

sorry, but, religion or not, a child's health and safety comes first."

Another said: "Most girls are not allowed to wear makeup in school, never mind carry a weapon."

In the letter sent to parents Paula Dobbins, the headteacher of the school, explained the kirpan is a "religious ornament" worn by Sikhs. She said: "The item is not sharp, and is often worn in schools by children of the Sikh faith nationwide."

"However, having spoken to the parents of the child concerned, they have agreed that the child will no longer wear this item in school," she added.

One parent complained: "I'm

attended one of the burned schools, said he didn't trust the Taliban's promises.

"They say they have changed for the good, but we see them blowing up schools and preventing girls from getting education," Khan said.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, denied responsibility for the attacks and said the militants would investigate and punish those involved.

Sosan Aubi, 38, a teacher at one of the schools that were burned last month, said she and other teachers had been optimistic about the chances for peace because of the Qatari talks.

"But after this explosion all of us have lost our hope," she said.

Nayab Khan, a village grocer whose sisters and daughters had

attended one of the burned schools, said he didn't trust the Taliban's promises.

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