

**Buy at VBJ and win Gold!**

Contest organized by Chennai Gold Club

Vannidil Bangaru Jewellers,  
"Rani Seshai Hall" 603 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 006.  
Ph: 827 9652, 827 4636

**GEM COOLING TOWERS (P) LTD**

QUALITY PRODUCT  
AFFORDABLE PRICE  
PROMPT SERVICE

GEM COOLING TOWERS (P) LTD

# NDA to meet today

**By Our Special Correspondent**

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 7.** As a first step towards government formation, the Prime Minister has called a meeting of the constituents of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at his residence even as results of the Lok Sabha elections gave the NDA a clear and comfortable majority.

All leaders of the NDA or their nominees are expected to attend the meeting tomorrow afternoon, where the modalities of the formal election of a leader and the process of government formation are expected to be discussed. All the pre-poll alliance partners have been invited for the meeting. There could also be some special invitees such as the National Conference, which has indicated its willingness to join the new government.

To take stock of the results that have given a clear victory to the NDA, the BJP's senior leaders met this evening at the Prime Minister's residence. The meeting also prepared the agenda for the full and formal meeting of the party's office-bearers, scheduled for October 9.

As of now the plan is that the BJP's new MPs will meet on October 10 morning to elect their leader; this would be a formality since the party has already declared that Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee would lead the NDA government. Later in the afternoon, the MPs of the NDA will also meet to elect Mr. Vajpayee as their choice for Prime Minister.

The stage will thus be set for a formal communication to Rashtrapati Bhavan, which is expected on October 11, informing the President that the NDA had won a clear majority in the Lok Sabha and that it had elected Mr. Vajpayee its leader.

At the meeting this evening, the party took stock of the election results. Clearly, there was much to rejoice about though there is unhappiness in the party on account of the poor showing in Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.

The party general secretary, Mr. M. Venkaiah Naidu, was frank enough to admit that in Karnataka the anti-incumbency factor against the Patel Government was responsible for the lower-than-expected results. On the question of some "action" by the party for the poor UP results, Mr. Naidu admitted that "some corrective steps" would have to be taken. He said that at present "there was no proposal for any disciplinary action against Mr. Kalyan Singh".

Mr. Naidu described the 1999 verdict as a "mandate for the continuation of the Vajpayee Government" and a "mandate against those who had destabilised the Vajpayee Government" formed after the 1998 elections.

He pointed out that since the first elected government in the country, the 1999 elections had proved to be the most disastrous for the Congress(I). He read this as "rejection" of Ms. Sonia Gandhi as a leader because of her "foreign birth". He did not think that by electing Ms. Gandhi from both Bellary and Amethi the people had rejected the "foreign birth" issue raised by the BJP and Mr. Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party.

The process of government formation is expected to be far smoother this time because the NDA has a clear majority unlike in 1998. Of course, this does not mean that pressure will not be exerted on the Prime Minister from the various constituents for plum positions in the Council of Ministers.

The general feeling though is that given the NDA's victory under Mr. Vajpayee's leadership, the Prime Minister will have more authority to form a Cabinet of his liking. Not only will the partners be unable to push the BJP around, but also the RSS will not be able to breathe down the neck of the Prime Minister, unlike in 1998 when it forced a last-minute change in the Prime Minister.

# VAJPAYEE STARTS WORK ON GOVT. FORMATION

## Comfortable majority for NDA

**By Harish Khare**

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 7.** With the results available for almost all the Lok Sabha constituencies, the BJP and its allies in the National Democratic Alliance today notched up a reasonably comfortable majority; an impressive tally in Bihar for the BJP-JD(U) combine has enabled the NDA alliance (including the National Conference of the Jammu and Kashmir) to cross the psychologically important 300-seat barrier. What is more, the BJP itself seems poised to have the satisfaction of equalling, if not surpassing, the 181-seat tally it had in the last Lok Sabha. By this evening there were no doubts that Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee would be heading the NDA coalition Government at the Centre.

As the results from Bihar came in, the mood in the NDA turned from cautious satisfaction to positive optimism. Mr. Vajpayee was reported to be in consultation with his senior party colleagues as to how to go about the initial formalities towards formation of the next Government. A timetable was being drawn — in consultation with allies and astrologers — for ceremonial installation of the next Vajpayee Government.

**Laloo loses**

The BJP and its allies had quite a lot to celebrate in Bihar, with the Janata Dal (U) president, Mr. Sharad Yadav, getting the better of his *bete noire*, Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav, by 30,000 votes in the Madhepura Lok Sabha constituency. After Mr. Sharad Yadav's victory all the elaborate protests which the BJP and its allies had launched over the alleged rigging by the RJD Government, seemed rather farcical and a little overdone.

Notwithstanding Mr. Sharad Yadav's theatrics, the defeat of Mr. Laloo Yadav is perhaps the most dramatic reversal so far in this election. This is the first time an opponent has handed Mr. Laloo Yadav an electoral defeat since his arrival a decade ago at the centre-stage of Bihar politics. But the perhaps the best news for the NDA was the belated and narrow victory of Mr. Nitish Kumar in the Barh Lok Sabha constituency, after initial reports that the former Railway Minister had been made to bite the dust.

If Bihar brought cheer to the BJP camp, Uttar Pradesh continued to bring bad news. The most formidable challenger for a BJP candidate was reserved in Rae Bareilly for Mr. Arun Neh-

ru, the latest star in the Vajpayee firmament, and someone who was expected to blunt Mrs. Sonia Gandhi's invocation of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. Mr. Arun Nehru finished fourth behind the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party candidates while Capt. Satish Sharma of the Congress(I) emerged the winner by a handsome margin of over 70,000 votes.

**Sonia wins in Amethi**

In the neighbouring constituency of Amethi, Ms. Sonia Gandhi had posted an emphatic victory in the prestigious Amethi constituency by a record margin of 3,00,015 votes against her BJP rival, Mr. Sanjay Singh. Ms. Gandhi's margin of victory in Amethi, a few Congressmen were quick to point out, was higher than notched up by any leader of the NDA alliance, including that of Mr. Vajpayee in Lucknow and Mr. L.K. Advani in Gandhinagar.

The Congress(I) victories in Amethi, Pratapgarh and Rae Bareilly were marred by the extremely poor show of the party candidate, Ms. Deepa Gul, in the neighboring Sultanpur constituency, which is also regarded as part of the "Amethi belt".

Irrespective of the very impressive victory Ms. Gandhi has notched in Amethi, the Congress(I) failure to improve over its last tally of 141 has begun the process of introspection and debate within the party. It is only natural that doubts should be murmured, if not raised loudly, about the leadership. In the days to come, the Congress (I) could find itself internally preoccupied.

The failure of the Congress(I) to make its presence felt in any dramatic manner in the 13th Lok Sabha has also dampened whatever lingering hope the "Third Front" leaders might have had of delaying the installation of a Vajpayee-led NDA coalition Government. In the absence of any accretion to the Left strength, the "third front" leaders found themselves to be in a subdued mood. By this evening, the remorseless logic of the emerging numbers in the new Lok Sabha was obvious to one and all. All that these leaders can hope for now is to wait for the proverbial contradictions in the NDA to emerge, starting with a possible bad blood over the choice of portfolios.

Curiously enough while the National Conference unilaterally announced its intention to join the coalition Government at the Centre, two of the most crucial allies — the Telugu Desam and the DMK — pretended to be undecided about joining the Vajpayee team. However, irrespective of whether or not the Telugu Desam joins the Central Government, there was no doubt that with at least 27 Lok Sabha members in his pocket Mr. Chandrababu Naidu has replaced Ms. Jayalalitha as the new prima donna in the NDA ensemble. And, not far behind Mr. Naidu would be the DMK with its 12 members, though the party today vowed to be a responsible and becoming coalition partner.

Nonetheless, there is already considerable speculation as to which ally would demand — and get or be refused — which Ministerial portfolio. If Mr. Vajpayee chooses to repeat the formula of representation he followed last time, the next Union Cabinet could well be dominated by the allies. In the midst of all the speculation and celebration, Mr. George Fernandes has been most conspicuously and inexplicably absent.

**Sonia calls for introspection**

PTI reports:

In a statement, Ms. Sonia Gandhi said the reverses suffered by her party in the Lok Sabha polls called for "introspection, frank assessment and determined action" and "we accept unhesitatingly the verdict of the people". She said the results had not "come up to our expectations and the party has suffered reverses".



The Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani, offering sweets to the Prime Minister, Mr. Vajpayee, at his residence in New Delhi on Thursday. — Photo: Anu Pushkama.

## Elections '99: Party Position

States with No. of seats	BJP + Allies	Congress(I) + Allies	Others
Andhra Pradesh (42)	36	5	1
Arunachal Pradesh (2)	0	2	0
Assam (14)	2	9	2
Bihar (54)	40	10	0
Goa (2)	2	0	0
Gujarat (26)	19	7	—
Haryana (10)	10	0	0
Himachal Pradesh (4)	4	0	0
Jammu & Kashmir (6)	1	1	4
Karnataka (28)	9	19	0
Kerala (20)	0	12	8
Madhya Pradesh (40)	28	12	—
Maharashtra (48)	28	10	10
Manipur (2)	0	2	0
Meghalaya (2)	0	2	0
Mizoram (1)	0	0	1
Nagaland (1)	0	1	0
Orissa (21)	19	2	0
Punjab (13)	2	8	3
Rajasthan (25)	16	9	0
Sikkim (1)	0	0	1
Tamil Nadu (39)	26	13	0
Tripura (2)	0	1	1
Uttar Pradesh (85)	29	10	46
West Bengal (42)	11	1	30
Andaman & Nicobar (1)	1	0	0
Chandigarh (1)	0	1	0
Dadra and Nagar H. (1)	0	0	1
Daman and Diu (1)	1	0	0
Delhi (7)	7	0	0
Lakshadweep (1)	0	1	0
Pondicherry (1)	0	1	0
<b>Total (543)</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>108</b>

\*Elections not held for 4 seats in Bihar and 1 seat in Assam.

# Krishna, Sharief in the race

**By Our Special Correspondent**

**BANGALORE, OCT. 7.** The Karnataka Pradesh Congress(I) committee president, Mr. S.M. Krishna, who won the Maddur Assembly seat, appears to be the automatic choice for Chief Ministership as he has led the party in both the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the State.

However, Mr. C.K. Jaffer Sharief, former Railway Minister and the party's Bangalore North MP, has emerged as a contender.

Sources close to Mr. Sharief said he was prepared to shoulder the responsibility, although he had retained his Lok Sabha seat. His supporters pointed out that Mr. Krishna, who was a Rajya Sabha member, had been brought back to the State to be the KPCC (I) president. Hence, it would not be improper if Mr. Sharief was asked to assume the Chief Ministership. Also, he had rich administrative experience as Union Minister and would be able to provide an efficient leadership.

## ALL IN THE GAME



"Stop it — you mean you really wanted to call Nawaz Sharif to thank him for our victory?"

# TDP to discuss 'strategy'

**By Our Special Correspondent**

**HYDERABAD, OCT. 7.** The Telugu Desam, which is close to a two-thirds majority in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly and has 27 seats in the Lok Sabha, is to shortly spell out its role at the national level in the context of the National Democratic Alliance's imminent ascent to power.

The TDP president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. N. Chandrababu Naidu, said the party would meet to discuss its "strategy" for the future, the role it should play vis-a-vis the new Government.

At a news conference, Mr. Naidu said the policy of conditional and issue-based support to the Vajpayee Government would continue. The party meeting would discuss relations with the NDA and the lead player, BJP. He said he was volunteering the information to pre-empt media speculation which could cause "confusion among the people and my MPs".

Mr. Naidu persistently stonewalled queries on the likelihood of the TDP joining the BJP-led alliance. He gave an elaborate explanation about how the Telugu Desam's *raison d'être* was anti-Congressism and how it never hankered after power. In 1998, the TDP fielded Mr. G. M. C. Balayogi for the post of the Speaker only to thwart the Congress(I) from grabbing it. The decision to enter a seat-sharing agreement with the BJP was also to avert split of the anti-Congress vote.

He said in politics "it is always a dynamic situation" calling for appropriate responses and decisions. The role differed with the strength. "It differs when we have a dozen MPs and when there are many more."

The TDP and the BJP leaders in Delhi were in touch. "After all, we are alliance partners. We have to do mutual congratulating." Was there pressure from within the TDP to join the BJP-led coalition? He said the results were still coming in. Where then was the question of pressures.

Mr. Chandrababu Naidu said the TDP-BJP alliance had proved useful and delivered the goods. To what extent had the alliance with the BJP helped the TDP? He said there were no parameters to measure such factors.

# Cong.(I) debates tie-up with NCP

**By Angana Parekh**

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 7.** The Congress(I) has begun seriously debating whether or not to shake hands with the Nationalist Congress Party to form a government in Maharashtra. Sources said Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, the Congress(I) president, was in favour of taking the views of the state unit into account. Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, the AICC(I) general secretary in charge of Maharashtra, is learnt to have begun consulting the state leadership on the issue.

"Indirect contact" with the NCP is also believed to have been established. With the Congress(I) poised to emerge as the single largest party in the state with around 80 seats — but far short of a majority — and the NCP likely to win about 60 or thereabouts, the two parties would have to come together if they want to keep the BJP-Shiv Sena out of power in the 288-member assembly. The mantra to justify burying the hatchet would be that it is vital to keep "communal forces" out of power.

Both the Congress(I) and NCP have their own compulsions. For the NCP president, Mr. Sharad Pawar, power in Maharashtra is essential if he wants to keep his flock together. Though Mr. Pawar aspired to enter national politics, he will now have to consolidate his own base in Maharashtra after his party's poor showing in the Lok Sabha elections. For the backbone of his party, the sugar lobby, a hostile government would be a body blow that they would do anything to avoid — even if it means splitting the party. Several of the newly-elected NCP MLAs were earlier independents supporting the BJP-Shiv Sena state government and would therefore have little difficulty in doing business with the saffron combine again. For the Congress(I), forming governments in Maharashtra and Karnataka would be a morale booster that would be at least some consolation for the party after the dismal performance in the Lok Sabha.

# TAMIL NADU / DMK HAILS POLL OUTCOME

## Smear campaign belied: Karunanidhi

**By Our Special Correspondent**

**CHENNAI, OCT. 7.** A "deliberate smear campaign" portraying the DMK as enemy of minorities, the dalits and certain other communities following its poll alliance with the BJP, has clearly come a cropper, the DMK president and Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, asserted today.

"The poll victory in Tamil Nadu has come as a fitting reply" to those who did such disinformation campaign, Mr. Karunanidhi said reacting to the verdict. "The results have shown that the minorities are with us." It was the combined effort of all the NDA constituents which made this victory possible," he said.

Asked about the AIADMK winning ten seats despite corruption charges faced by several of its former Ministers, Mr. Karunanidhi said in some constituencies voter-preferences were different. However, the reasons for the DMK-led front losing these seats should be examined and corrective measures taken, he added.

Mr. Karunanidhi did not think that the TMC snapping ties with the DMK had hurt the latter electorally at the ground-level. "But they (TMC) being not with us has affected me personally," he said.

Asked whether TMC's quitting the DMK-led front had cost the latter in the Tiruvattar and Natham Assembly by-elections, and whether there were chances of ties with TMC being revived, Mr. Karunanidhi said, the TMC had walked out of the alliance because "we had an understanding with the BJP." How things unfold in future remained to be seen.

Dismissing a proposition that the DMK had not fared well in the southern districts as one dominant community there, the 'Mukkulathors', did not vote for the DMK, Mr. Karunanidhi said he did not wish to make such caste-based distinctions in voting patterns. "I do not want to stoke such caste feelings," he said.

Mr. Karunanidhi did not agree with the view that the DMK-led NDA in Tamil Nadu winning 26 seats this time was still less than the 30 seats the AIADMK-BJP alliance won in the last election. "While in 1998 the DMK won only six seats this time we have won 12; also, the partners, the BJP, PMK and the MDMK, have each picked a seat more," he said.

**Engineered verdict: Jayalalitha**

**By Our Special Correspondent**

**CHENNAI, OCT. 7.** The AIADMK General Secretary, Ms. Jayalalitha, today described the election results in Tamil Nadu as an "artificial poll verdict" engineered by the BJP and the DMK through misuse of their authority and power.

"This is neither a setback nor a defeat for us," she said in a statement. "The election that took place here cannot be considered to have been fair and free," she added.

Because of the long gap of five months between the announcement of elected and the actual polling dates, both the DMK and the BJP made elaborate plans to rig the voting on a massive scale. The two-phase polling in Tamil Nadu afforded the DMK a very convenient opportunity to organise rigging. "The BJP-led government at the Centre, in collusion with the Government at the State-

# Sensex zooms by 265 points

**MUMBAI, OCT. 7.** A comfortable majority for the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre set the Bombay Stock Exchange into a flurry of activity with the benchmark index skyrocketing to a new historic peak of 4985.15, an unprecedented rise of over 265 points in a single session today. Share values spurted on an avalanche of buying enquiries, notably by speculators.

The day's big jump in the Sensex was the seventh largest in the history of the BSE and first after seven years when the Sensex gained 344.76 points on May 13, 1992. The Sensex also breached its previous high of 4965.79 recorded on August 30 this year. — PTI

# Move to repeal Pressler law unfortunate: PM

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 7.** The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has firmly told the United States that the repeal of the Pressler Amendment and resumption of military supplies to Pakistan would be viewed in India as a "very negative development".

At this time, enabling this legislation will only be viewed by elements in Pakistan as an endorsement of their misguided policy," Mr. Vajpayee said in a letter to the U.S. Congressman, Mr. Gary L. Ackerman. — PTI

**Detailed report: Page 13**

**JOIN THE CHENNAI GOLD FESTIVAL AT PRINCE AND WIN MORE THAN 10 KGS OF GOLD.**

**WIN**

- One bumper prize of 1 kg gold
- 10 prizes of 100 gms of gold
- 250 ARY Gold Square Bars of 2 gms

**Every week. For 4 weeks.**

All you have to do to win these prizes is to purchase jewellery from our exclusive jewellery collection and fill in a coupon.\* The winning coupon gets the weekly gold, free!

Hurry! Here's an opportunity to win 24 carat gold bars.

**PARTICIPATING JEWELLER**

**PRINCE® JEWELLERY**

Pangal Park, T. Nagar, Chennai - 600 017  
Phone: 4346783, 4363138, 4363137  
Open on Sundays

\*Conditions apply. This is a contest of skill not of chance.

Today's issue has 32 pages which includes an 8 page section containing Friday Review