

**OPINION 8**  
FARMERS BACK  
IN THE FOLD

**WORLD 12**  
WORLD CONGRATULATES  
NARENDRA MODI

**SPORT 15**  
MARY BEATS NIKHAT  
IN INDIAN OPEN SEMIS

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# INDIA INCREDIBLY MODI-FIED

## Anti-BJP forces bite dust, party betters its 2014 feat

NAVIN UPADHYAY ■ NEW DELHI

**Modi hai to mumkin hai.** The evocative tagline of the BJP campaign aptly reflects the party's massive victory in the Lok Sabha polls. The brand 'Modi' has outshone every competitor, be it regional satraps or Congress president Rahul Gandhi, who found few takers for his "chowkidar chor hai" jibe at the PM.

The result shows the BJP has emerged as a pan-India force as the saffron party made big inroads into the strongly protected fortresses of Mamata Banerjee's West Bengal and Navin Patnaik's Odisha. Except Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the footprint of the BJP is clearly visible all over the country.

The result emphatically negated pre-poll calculations that the coming together of anti-BJP forces in several States could stop Modi's juggernaut there. While the Uttar Pradesh mahagathbandhan of Samajwadi Party and BSP did pull down the BJP a bit, but in Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Maharashtra, no one could withstand the force of the all-pervasive Modi wave.

The outcome is particularly worrisome for West Bengal

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who had emerged as the most vocal critic of the Prime Minister during the poll campaign. All the seven phases of the polls were marred by violence, and both the PM and BJP chief Amit Shah had warned that those engaged in bloodletting will pay for it after the elections. Now, that the BJP stands neck and neck with the TMC in terms of tally and its voting percentage has increased phenomenally, the party is expected to make a big push to grab power in the State in next Assembly polls.

The West Bengal result shows that, like in every other part of India, there has been a significant consolidation of Hindu voters in the State with 27 per cent Muslim population. The BJP's strategy to centre its campaign around Hindutva paid off rich dividends.

The BJP victory is all the more significant because the party crossed halfway mark of 50 per cent seats in 17 States such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, UP, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh among others.

The Congress will have a lot to think after its pathetic show. Rahul Gandhi may have

won from Wayanad with a record margin, but his humiliating defeat at the hands of Smriti Irani in the family pocket borough of Amethi is the cruelest blow the BJP has inflicted on the Congress chief.

The results show that in direct contest with the BJP, the Congress has no chance to survive. The two parties were locked in direct contest on 184 seats, of which 174 went to the BJP.

There is no denying the fact that Hindutva and nationalism were the two most prominent agenda for the BJP. No surprise Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur was able to vanquish veteran Digvijaya Singh despite calling Nathuram Godse a nationalist. Giriraj Singh's massive victory over Kanhaiya Kumar is also reflection of the success of the party's Hindutva agenda.

The BJP victory is undoubtedly fuelled by the support of all sections and caste, but it is believed that even a significant section of the Muslim voted for the saffron outfit. Senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi put this number to 30 per cent.

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BJP workers welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he arrives at the party headquarters to celebrate the party's victory in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections in New Delhi on Thursday. Ranjan Dimri / Pioneer

## It is victory of people, avows Prime Minister

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Stating that the landslide repeat mandate has surprised the whole world and put forward a "new narrative" for India for waging a decisive battle against poverty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday promised that he would go all-out to live up to the "big trust" reposed on him by the people. The PM said he would carry all political parties along to make the country prosperous and strong.

Modi, who walked into the BJP headquarters in the evening along with party chief Amit Shah to a tumultuous welcome with thousands of workers chanting "Modi-Modi", "Bharat Mata ki Jai" and "Vande Mataram", said the ultimate victor in the elections are people of India who "fought the polls".

He said political pundits will have to re-visit their tools to analyse the repeat "prachand bahumat" (massive mandate) saying "this is new India".

Taking a dig at political parties deriving their sustenance from the "tag of secularism", Modi said they were silenced by the big political victory of BJP in 2014. "2014 tak us jamat ne bolna band kar diya", he said saying they were "de-masked".

Vowing that he would go beyond caste-based considerations, the Prime Minister said, "Caste-based political parties received a big shock this election", adding, "with the spirit which prevailed during freedom movement we can remove poverty during 2019 to 24".

Detailing his welfare schemes which fulfilled aspirations of youth, farmers, labourers and middle-class, Modi said his Government would fast-track its war against

poverty next five-year. Taking a dig at Left parties and their alleged commitment to the welfare of workers, he said the BJP Government provided pension to 40 crore labourers in the unorganised sector.

Even as Shah in his address to workers directly attacked dynasty, caste and politics of appeasement and the setback they got in the poll results, the Prime Minister said he would let go of what happened during polls and run the Government with the consensus of all.

"Governments are formed by majority but run by consensus of all", he said adding "we have to look ahead" and taken even our political rivals with us for making India a prosperous and strong country.

Thanking all party workers for their "selfless work", Modi said "aapne is fakir ki jholi bhar di" and it is time "I fulfil my promises". In 2014, he said people did not know him but trusted and "now you trusted after knowing me".

Shah, in his speech, said BJP won more than 50 per cent votes in 17 States including in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. He said this (50 per cent) vote was achieved by shaking up the traditional caste calculations.

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## Southern comfort for red-faced Rahul

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

After its success in the three Assembly elections last year, the Congress once again performed miserably against the BJP at the national level. Party president Rahul Gandhi faced the mortification of a humiliating defeat at the hands of Smriti Irani in the family bastion of Amethi.

The party scored a duck in 18 States and saw nine of its former Chief Ministers biting the dust. For the second time, the grand old party did not get enough number to bag Leader of Opposition post in the Lok Sabha.

While Rahul lost from Amethi, there were no takers for sister Priyanka Gandhi in UP. The party lost all the seats where Priyanka campaigned or conducted roadshows.

The only face saver for Congress was Kerala (15) and Punjab (8) which helped the party reach a tally 51 (till 8pm) seats which is merely seven more from the tally of 2014

general elections.

The States where the Congress could not even open its account include Rajasthan, Gujarat, Delhi, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Apart from these, the Congress also has no presence in Andaman and Nicobar, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura.

The UPA which has Congress as its main constituents could not even touch three digit figure with its major alliance partners like NCP, JD(S) and others showing a dismal performance.

Senior Congress leaders who lost included Lok Sabha leader Mallikarjun Kharge from Kalaburgi in Karnataka, former Delhi CM Sheila Dikshit from North East Delhi, former Madhya Pradesh CM Digvijaya Singh from Bhopal, former Maharashtra Chief Ministers Ashok Chavan from Nanded.

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## OVERALL 542/543

NDA	UPA	OTHERS
349	81	97

Following a clear lead on over 300 Lok Sabha seats, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday addressing BJP party workers at the BJP Headquarters said, "Even a single political party could not mislead the country by wearing a mask of secularism." He emphasised how the Opposition could not make inflation or corruption an election issue

## BJP storms Mamata's citadel

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Left and Congress were blown off, LTMC lost much of its roof in the Saffron Fani as 2019 election results on Thursday saw BJP seriously denting Mamata Banerjee's stronghold.

In an extraordinarily polarised atmosphere, the Lok Sabha poll results found BJP making massive inroads into TMC "green fort" of Bengal apparently getting a huge chunk of Left Front votes to swing its way.

According to	BJP	Congress	TMC
last reports — even	18	18	22
as VVPATs were	18	22	22

being counted — the ruling Trinamool Congress was leading in 22 seats conceding 12 seats to the BJP which was leading in 18 seats.

The Congress which won four seats in 2014 was leading in only two seats with former PCC president and sitting MP Adhir Chowdhury clinching the Behrampur seat and AH Khan Chowdhury lead-

ing from the Malda South seat.

Making a record of sorts the Left Front not only transferred 23 per cent votes to the saffron outfit but also for the first time since 1955 drew a blank sending no MP from the erstwhile Red citadel.

Percentage-wise the TMC polled about 43 per cent votes while the BJP got about 41 per cent votes wresting almost 23 per cent votes from the Left which got just about 8 per cent.

Continued on Page 6

## Jagan shatters Naidu's dream, sweeps Andhra

L VENKAT RAM REDDY ■ HYDERABAD

The YSR Congress Party wiped out the ruling TDP from Andhra Pradesh with a landslide victory in Assembly as well as Lok Sabha elections on Thursday.

This is almost like repetition of 1983 election results. In 1983, the TDP had won 201 seats out of 294 in the Assembly and secured 46.3 per cent vote share. Then Opposition Indian National Congress had won 60 seats, with 33.58 per cent vote share.

In that way, Jagan has

rewritten the history by securing 145 plus seats, out of 175 Assembly segments. In his own words, this is unprecedented in the history of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh. The TDP was confined to just 24 seats.

Actor-turned-politician Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena suffered humiliating defeat as Pawan himself lost both the seats he contested from Gajuwaka and Bhimavaram Assembly seats. Jana Sena won just one seat.

The YSRCP chief Jagan Mohan Reddy will take oath as new CM of Andhra Pradesh on May 30 in Vijayawada.

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## SP-BSP-RLD alliance fails to 'caste' its spell

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The BJP trounced the caste-based alliance of SP-BSP-RLD in Uttar Pradesh, and along with its ally Apna Dal (Sonelal), bagged two-thirds of 80 Lok Sabha seats with Prime Minister Narendra Modi winning Varanasi constituency by more than 4.5 lakh votes.

Although the SP-BSP-RLD alliance did not perform as expected, the BSP turned out to be the major gainer with 10 seats, while the SP could manage only 5 seats, less than 2 it won in 2014. However, the BSP had drawn a blank in the last Lok Sabha elections.

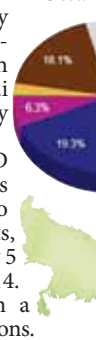
The Congress was in for its biggest setback as party chief Rahul Gandhi lost to BJP's Smriti Irani by over 50,000 votes.

However, Congress bagged sole seat Rae Bareilly of UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi.

It was mixed fortune for the Yadav clan of the SP. Top SP leaders Mulayam Singh Yadav won Mainpuri with 95,000 margin, and Akhilesh Yadav won by 2.5 lakh votes in Azamgarh.

But his cousins and sitting MPs Dharmendra Yadav and Akshay Yadav lost Budaun and Firozabad seats.

While trailing for long, RLD chief Ajit Singh's son and party vice-president Jayant Chaudhary lost in Baghpat.



## JD(U), LJP ride on Modi wave

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Riding high on the Modi-Shah magic, the formidable BJP-Janata Dal (United) alliance won 39 out of 40 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections in Bihar.

The grand alliance, which includes RJD), Congress, RSP, HAM Secular, and VIP managed to win only one seats in the State. Congress candidate Dr Mohd Jawed defeated JD(U) candidate Syed Mohd Ashraf by a margin less than 1,00,000 votes in Kishanganj.

People of Bihar voted for the BJP and its alliance JD(U) and LJP, rising above caste, class, creed and religion.

Continued on Page 6

## BJP wins Delhi, 3 AAP nominees forfeit deposit

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is on course to retain all the seven seats that it had won in 2014 in Delhi. BJP candidates continued to dominate the trends with five of its candidates taking the lead by the highest margins ever. BJP's roller coaster victory that remains a mere BJP 7 already went into celebratory mode with jubilation supporters of the Aadmi Party (AAP) being relegated to second place on five and two seats respectively.

The AAP's rout in Delhi was complete with its treasurer Pankaj Gupta from Chandni Chowk, Dileep Pandey from North east and Brijesh Goyal from New Delhi seat forfeited their deposits.

The poor performance of AAP in Delhi was complete

after it failed in security lead in the 67 Assembly seats that it had won in 2015 Delhi Assembly elections.

Its candidates were placed third in vote share in 48 Assembly constituencies. Even Gole Market and Patparganj seats held by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia voted poorly in favour of AAP candidates. The BJP already went into celebratory mode with jubilation supporters of the saffron party starting to burst crackers and shouting slogans at various counting centres. Singer-turned-politician Hans Raj Hans was leading in the Northwest Delhi constituency with a whopping margin of 5.04 lakh votes. He is pitted against AAP's Gagan Singh, who is on the second position and Congress' Rajesh Lillothia at the third spot.

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Snippets

The PM aspirants or the probable kingmakers could not save their own turfs — from Chandrababu Naidu to Mamata to Sharad Pawar to Mayawati to Akhilesh — they all shared a common fate

Out of the total 13 seats in Punjab, Cong romped home to impressive victory on eight seats, surprising both the SAD-BJP combine and the AAP and improving its tally from three in 2014

Sadhvi Pragya, from prison to Parl: From her controversial entry into the poll fray to defeating Congress veteran Digvijay Singh in Bhopal, Pragya Singh Thakur of the BJP was perhaps the most talked about candidate of this general elections

Motormouths and controversial leaders from the BJP like Anant Kumar Hegde (Uttar Kannada), Nalin Kateel (Dakshin Kannada), Sadhvi Pragya Thakur (Bhopal), Sakshi Maharaj (Unnao), Giriraj Singh

Congress' young turks fail to deliver, while those from the BJP ride on Modi wave to register wins: Jyotiraditya, Jitin Prasada, Gaurav Gogoi, Sushmita Dev all have lost but Anurag Thakur, Poonam Mahajan, Varun Gandhi have won

# BJP's electoral shock to caste-based politics

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Bharatiya Janata Party achieved a hat-trick in inflicting a huge blow to parties pursuing caste-based politics in Uttar Pradesh.

This is the third consecutive electoral shock dealt by the Bharatiya Janata Party to parties like Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and Rashtriya Lok Dal in the last five years.

In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the BSP and RLD drew a blank in UP while the SP managed to win five seats — all by the party's first family.

However, three years later, in March 2017 Assembly elections, the SP's tally was reduced to 47 seats, of BSP to 19 while RLD could win only one seat.

In the 2019 general elections, against the expectation of winning 50 or more seats, the tally of these three parties is not likely to exceed 20.

To fight the BJP and prevent it from retaining power at the Centre, these three parties forged a pre-poll alliance under which BSP contested 38 seats, SP 37 and RLD three seats. The political alliance banked on the arithmetic of Dalit, OBC and Muslims, constituting nearly 80 percent of voters in UP.

The SP, which was reeling under the impact of a prolonged family feud, took the lead in stitching up the alliance with the BSP, putting aside the hostilities of the past.

The BJP, however, upset all calculations when it focused on non-Yadav OBCs and non-Jatav Dalits, wooed them effectively to turn the arithmetic around.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi created a class war replacing caste war, by claiming that his caste was the caste of the poor. Yogi Adityanath further dissolved caste lines with his aggressive Hindutva



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath celebrated BJP victory with Cabinet colleagues and leaders at Party office in Lucknow. Pioneer

campaign.

All these, not only decimated the power of caste politics but also put a question mark on the future of the alliance.

The results also indicate that the SP and the BSP were unable to transfer their votes to each other and hostile social equations between Dalits and OBCs, especially Yadavs, prevailed over compulsions of electoral politics.

While the BSP has benefited from the alliance by ensuring its presence in the Lok Sabha, it is the SP that emerged the loser. Two of the SP's first family members, Dharmendra Yadav from Budaun and Akshay Yadav from Firozabad, lost, dealing a major blow to family politics.

The setback to the SP is likely to spur dissidence within by those who were left out of the electoral process due to alliance with BSP and RLD. Akhilesh may also face resistance from within the family as estranged uncle Shivpal Singh Yadav is likely to be the rallying point for the dissidents.

After floating his own party, Shivpal had consistently opposed the alliance calling it a 'Thugbandhan'.

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## Promises to fulfill

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With people reposing faith in the Bharatiya Janata Party once again and giving a resounding mandate to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it will be a trying time for the ruling party leaders to fulfil the promises they have made during the election campaign.

Sample the promises that the BJP leaders made during the poll campaign:

**RAJNATH SINGH**

- Lucknow to be made one of the most beautiful cities of the world. Projects worth ₹50,000 crore are in the pipeline which will make Lucknow commuter-friendly and one of the cleanest cities of India.

**YOGI ADITYANATH**

- If the BJP comes to power in 2019, the NDA government will set up a sports university in Meerut.

- Green Expressway from Delhi to Saharanpur to Yamunotri.

- Vasudev Tirth Sthal to be developed in Amroha and efforts to be made to clean the river Ganga there.

- Dholak trade to be developed under One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.

- Behmai bridge to be completed.

- An auditorium will be constructed in Varanasi.

**SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI**

- A medical college and a Central school in Fatehpur.

- Rail Park in Fatehpur city.

- Drinking water to be provided in 64 villages near Ganga by constructing overhead tanks and installing 64 hand pumps.

**ANUPRIYA PATEL**

- Mirzapur to be developed as a tourist destination which in turn will generate employment at village level.

- Temple of Vindhyaachal will be brought under religious tourism map.

**SANTOSH GANGWAR**

- The famous rubber factory to be re-opened in Bareilly.

- Four industrial areas of Parsakheda, Rajau, Bhojipura and Faridpur to be developed.

- Textile Park to be developed in city.

- Mega Food Park will be re-opened.

## Booth management, govt welfare schemes did the trick

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Bharatiya Janata Party was able to counter caste politics through booth management and welfare schemes which the Central government launched for the marginalised sections.

"This election is a clear testimony of BJP breaking the spell of caste politics unleashed by caste-based parties like Bahujan Samaj Party and Samajwadi Party. The party was able to overcome the challenge through better booth management," a senior BJP leader said when asked how the party was able to accomplish such an onerous task.

In early January, when Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav announced the formation of an alliance, which was later joined by Ajit Singh's Rashtriya Lok Dal, political pundits started writing requiem of the BJP as the caste arithmetic posed threat to it. The vote banks of Yadav, Muslim, Dalit and Jats when combined came up as a formidable combination with a staggering vote share that surpassed BJP's vote share of 2014.

The Bharatiya Janata Party revised its poll strategy and launched 'Mera Booth Sabse Mazboot' campaign under which programmes were launched to beef up booth management. Booth adhyaksh and panna pramukh (in-charge of the page of voters' list) were appointed and the party brass kept in touch with these people.

What actually turned the table in favour of the BJP was identification beneficiaries of government schemes and BJP workers were asked to remain in touch with them.

"There were 3.86 crore beneficiaries of government schemes like Ujjawala, Saubhagya Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. The BJP members (numbering 1.36 crore) got in touch with the beneficiaries and they were used as mascot of government's successful schemes," said BJP state general secretary Vijay Bahadur Pathak.

"These beneficiaries became the talking points of the success of government projects. As the Union government did not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed or religion in the extension of these schemes, the message went deep in all sections of society and helped in breaking the caste barrier," he said.

The Bharatiya Janata Party did its homework very well. The party identified 54 constituencies which were tough for them as the caste arithmetic was against them. "We used social chemistry to dilute caste obduracy. This is the reason why the party got 53 per cent of votes against a target of 50 per cent," he said.

In the 2014 elections, the BJP and its ally Apna Dal (Sonelal) had won 73 out of 80 seats in UP. This time the tally has come down to 60 but increase in vote percentage has made the party brass happy.

## BJP maintains edge in reserved seats

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Out of the 17 Reserved seats in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP maintained a significant edge on 14 whereas BSP candidates were ahead on three seats.

In Nagina (Reserved), Lalganj (Reserved) and Machhlishahr (Reserved) seats, the BSP led the pack.

In Nagina, BSP candidate Girish Chandra was ahead of BJP's Yashwant Singh by 1.63 lakh votes, whereas in Lalganj (Reserved), BSP's Sangeeta Azad was leading BJP's Neelam Sonkar by 1.28 lakh votes.

In Machhlishahr seat was witnessing a neck-to-neck fight with BSP's Tribhuvan Ram ahead of BJP's Bholanath by a thin margin of 1,144 votes.

In the rest of the 15 seats, BJP candidates seemed to have pipped their opponents.

In Bulandshahr, BJP's Bholu Singh was ahead of BSP's Yogesh Verma by 2.84 lakh

votes. In Hathras, Rajveer Diler of BJP was ahead of SP's Ramji Lal Suman.

In Shahjahanpur, BJP's Arun Kumar Sagar led his nearest rival, BSP's Amar Chandra Naushad, by 1.38 lakh votes.

On the other hand, BJP's Jay Prakash was steering ahead of nearest contender, SP's Usha Verma, by over 52,000 votes in Hardoi.

Similarly, BJP's Ashok Kumar was ahead of BSP's Dr Neelu Satyarthi in Mishrikh.

In Mohanlalganj, BJP candidate Kaushal Kishore defeated his closest rival CL Verma of BSP by 89,800 votes.

In Etawah, BJP's Ramashankar Katheriya was ahead of SP's Kamlesh Kumar by about 35,000 votes whereas in Jalaun, BJP's Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma was leading BSP's Ajay Singh by about one lakh votes.

In Kaushambi, BJP's Vinod

Kumar Sonkar was leading SP's Indrajit Saroj while in Barabanki, BJP's Upendra Rawat was ahead of SP's Ram Sagar Rawat by over 71,000 votes.

In Bahraich, BJP's Aksharwar Lal was ahead of SP's Shabbir Valmiki by 1,28,000 votes whereas in Bansgaon, BJP's Kamlesh Paswan was ahead of BSP's Sadal Prasad by 1.40 lakh votes.

In Agra, BJP's Satyapal Singh Baghel was ahead of BSP's Manoj Kumar Soni by over 90,000 votes.

In Robertsganj, Pakauri Lal of Apna Dal (Sonelal) was ahead of SP's Bhai Lal by 54,336 votes.

The 17 reserved seats of the state were in the BJP's kitty in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. In the 2009 general elections, 10 reserved seats went to the SP, whereas the Congress, BSP and BJP bagged two seats each with one seat going to RLD.

## Akhilesh's experiment fails again

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the second successive defeat of Samajwadi Party under his leadership, the challenges before Akhilesh Yadav are set to mount.

The SP lost the March 2017 UP Assembly election under the leadership of Akhilesh Yadav. In 2017, he was not only the Chief Minister of UP, but also the national president of the party.

Defying the wishes of his father Mulayam Singh Yadav, Samajwadi Party had contested the 2017 UP Assembly election in alliance with the Congress. The SP had conceded over 100 seats to its new ally but the alliance proved to be a disaster for both the parties as the tally of the SP plummeted to 47 and that of the Congress to 7 in the 403-member UP Assembly.

The SP had won 224 seats in the 2012 Assembly election and for the first time had formed the government on its own strength.

Refusing to draw lesson from the past mistakes, the SP again forged alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party and later



included Ajit Singh's led Rashtriya Lok Dal in it.

As per the seat sharing formula, SP contested only 37 Lok Sabha seats — there was no SP candidate in rest of the 43 Lok Sabha constituencies in UP. Mulayam Singh Yadav had opposed this alliance also but Akhilesh Yadav chose to ignore his father.

Sources in the Samajwadi Party said the results of the Lok Sabha elections have proved that alliance with the BSP was a costly bargain for the party.

"It was the BSP which gained immensely from the alliance as it raised its tally of seats from zero to 12 while we could add only two seats to our tally of 2014 Lok Sabha elec-

tions", said a SP leader.

The SP cadre is however confident of the party's good future and endorses the decision of Akhilesh Yadav to go for alliance with the BSP and RLD.

"There is no question of despair. Akhilesh Yadav has already asked the rank and file of the party to start preparation for the 2022 UP Assembly elections," said SP MLC Rajpal Kashyap.

Meanwhile, the good showing by the BJP in Lok Sabha elections in UP had its impact on the SP. The party's state office on Thursday wore a deserted look as Akhilesh Yadav went into a huddle with senior party leaders to discuss future strategy.

Some party workers were seen discussing the future prospects of the party and future of its alliance with the BSP and the RLD.

A shop outside the SP office which usually does brisk business wore a deserted look with no buyers though the torrid weather also came in the way of people stepping out of their homes.

## Congress goes into coma in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Already gasping for breath in Uttar Pradesh, Congress on Thursday went into coma in the state with party chief Rahul Gandhi set to lose his Amethi parliamentary seat to BJP's Smriti Irani.

In the 2017 Assembly polls in UP, Congress could win just seven seats and in the 2019 general elections, it was expected to win only UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi's traditional seat of Rae Bareilly, setting danger bells ringing for the party.

This could be Congress' worst electoral performance in UP since 1977 general election after the Emergency. That time, the Congress had lost all the 85 Lok Sabha seats in UP, including that of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (Rae Bareilly) and her son Sanjay Gandhi (Amethi).



UPCC office in Lucknow wore a deserted look as election trends trickled in on Thursday. Pioneer

What is shocking is that the newly-appointed Congress general secretary in-charge UP (east), Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who

was expected to better the party's prospects, also failed to deliver. Despite her extensive campaigning in Amethi, she failed to arrest the slide

in Congress pocket borough — Amethi.

While Rahul was set to lose in Amethi, Sonia Gandhi won the Rae Bareilly

seat, though with a reduced victory margin of 1.67 lakh votes.

Besides the Gandhis, no former minister of the UPA regime from UP could perform up to the expectations and were set to come a poor third at most places.

Disappointed over trailing by a huge margin after 20th round of counting in Fatehpur Sikri, UP Congress president Raj Babbar left the counting centre in a huff. By that time, Babbar had conceded a lead of 1.77 lakh to BJP's Raj Kumar Chahar.

When questioned by media persons, Babbar chose to be evasive. He was eager to contest from Fatehpur Sikri despite the party brass announcing his candidature from Moradabad. Babbar had filed his papers from Fatehpur Sikri on the last day of filing of nominations.

## Six Muslims elected from UP this time

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

No Muslim candidate could win the Lok Sabha election from Uttar Pradesh in 2014, but this time six Muslims, three each of Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party, have been elected to the Lower House of Parliament.

Senior SP leader Mohammad Azam Khan has been elected to Lok Sabha from Rampur, where he defeated Bharatiya Janata Party candidate Jaya Prada while ST Hasan of the SP has been elected from Moradabad. He is former mayor of Moradabad.

Shafiqur Rahman Burq, also of SP, has been elected from Sambhal seat.

Similarly, BSP's Haji Fazrur Rahman from Saharanpur, Afzal Ansari from Ghazipur and Danish Ali from Amroha have won the Lok Sabha election.

As usual, BJP had not fielded any Muslim candidate this time but SP and BSP fielded Muslim candidates in strategic constituencies with significant population of the minority community.

## BJP upper hand in two Assembly bypolls too

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Akin to its performance in the Lok Sabha elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party was leading in the two UP Assembly seats, bypolls to which were held along with the parliamentary elections.

In Agra (North) Assembly seat, BJP's Purshottam Khandelwal was leading his

nearest SP candidate Suraj Sharma by over 30,000 votes.

Similarly, in Nighasan Assembly constituency in Lakhimpur Kheri, BJP's Shashank Verma was leading his SP rival Mohammad Qayum by more than 52,000 votes.

Bypolls to both these Assembly seats were necessitated following the death of BJP MLAs.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE**

Sr.DCM/NR/LKO acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites following E-Tenders closing date 21.06.2019 upto 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

Sl. No.	Item Description
1	Tender for allotment of FSLR-II parcel space in Train no. 12184 originating from Pratappgarh station of Lucknow Division having carrying capacity of 04/3.9 tonnes for a period of five (05) years.
Reserve Price (per day)	Rs. 3,000 (Rs. Three Thousand only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 1,00,000/- Rs. One lacs only
Completion Period	05 years
Tender Closing Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:00 hrs.
Tender Opening Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
Website	www.ireps.gov.in
Cost of Tender document form	Rs. 1,180/- (Rs. One Thousand One Hundred Eighty only) inclusive of GST @ 18%
Eligibility criteria	As detailed in Tender Document

Note: "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional documents shall be entertained after opening of offers. Even suo-moto post letter of the tenders shall be treated as NULL & VOID."

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**North Eastern Railway Corrigendum No. 1**

**Notice Inviting Tender**

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Lucknow invites Open tender through E-tendering system on behalf of President of India from registered lease holder A&B category for the contract of leasing of SLR (04 Tonne) of Mail express train of Lucknow division for the period of 5 year for tender notice no. 05/2019 to 10/2019 date of closing of tender on dated 24.05.2019 at 14.00 hrs. & for tender notice no. 11/2019 to 19/2019 date of closing of tender on dated 27.05.2019 at 14.00 hrs. & Opening date of tender is at 15.00 hrs. on IREPS website. On all tender, cost of earnest money deposit is read as Rs. 1,00,000/- (one lakh). All other terms and condition remain same. Any other information regarding tender is on www.ireps.gov.in website.

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**निविदा सूचना**

पशुआहार कारखाना, रॉची के लिए कच्चे सामग्रियों की आपूर्ति हेतु निविधित आपूर्तिकर्ता या निर्माताओं से मुहुरबंद निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। नये आपूर्तिकर्ता जो इस संस्था को कच्चे सामग्रियों की आपूर्ति करना चाहते हों अपना आवेदन, पेन नम्बर एवं जी0एस0टी0 नं0 की छायाप्रति एवं रू0 5500/- का ड्राफ्ट (जिसमें रू0 5000/- सिस्क्रुडिटी मनी एवं रू0 500/- रजिस्ट्रेशन हेतु है) उपरोक्त पते पर भेज कर निबंधन भी करा सकते हैं। सामग्रियों का विवरण एवं शर्तों की जानकारी के लिये निविदा प्रपत्र हमारे वेबसाइट [www.sudha.coop](http://www.sudha.coop) से डाउनलोड (download) किया जा सकता है। निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 15.06.2019 के संख्या 5.00 बजे तक है। प्राप्त निविदाएं दिनांक 17.06.2019 को 10.30 बजे प्रातःकाल उपस्थित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष इस कार्यालय में खोली जायेगी।

प्रबन्ध निदेशक

**North Eastern Railway E-TENDER NOTICE**

On behalf of the President of India, acting through Chief Administrative Officer/Con., North Eastern Railway, and Gorakhpur invites the following E-Works Tenders:-

E-Tender No.	Approximate Value	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Cost of Tender Form (Rs.)
DYCE-CON-HQ-GKP-17-2019	9,24,20,654.40	6,12,100.00	10,000/-
S.No.: 1, Earthwork and other misc. work for permanent diversion and construction of balance portion of bridge no. 15 (RUB) in connection with rebuilding of bridge no. 16 (18 x 61.00m) Open Web girder for double line on well foundation on river Ghaghara between Manjhi - Bakulaha stations in Varanasi - Chhapra section of N. E. Railway.	78,80,050.00	1,57,600.00	5000/-
DYCE-CON-HQ-GKP-18-2019	78,80,050.00	1,57,600.00	5000/-
S.No.: 2, Fusion welding of 13/39/130/260 meters length rail joints for 60Kg/52Kg rails of 90/72 UTS class-I/II laid in PSC sleepers by Alumino Thermit welding with single short crusible SKV process by preheating technique with three piece mould (using compressed air petrol) on embankment/cutting/bridge/level crossing in mid section/yards in straight/curved alignment in-situ/on cess on main line, loop line and in points and crossing including for glued joints, SEJ etc. under traffic/non-traffic conditions including crossing of railway track in all kinds of climatic conditions/site conditions including carrying out ancillary works as approved by RDSO in Chhapra - Ballia doubling project.	78,80,050.00	1,57,600.00	5000/-

Bidding Start date-03.06.2019 • Last date of submission of above E-Tender upto 15.00 hrs on 17.0

# Rajnath wins by whopping margin

Defeats SP-BSP alliance candidate Poonam Sinha by 3,47,302 votes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh emerged victorious in the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency beating his nearest rival Poonam Sinha of SP-BSP alliance by a margin of 3,47,302 votes. The final (30th) round of counting saw Rajnath Singh securing 6,33,026 votes while Poonam Sinha ended up with 2,85,724 votes and Congress candidate Acharya Pramod Krishnam 1,80,011 votes. There were 15 candidates in the fray for this seat.

Rajnath was leading from the first round itself and it was evident that he would emerge as the winner as the rounds proceeded. Poonam remained at the second position and Acharya Pramod Krishnam at the third place.

There was considerable excitement as the results started pouring in and the people remained glued to their television sets watching the progress of the counting.

At the Rama Bai Sthal the result of the first round was announced around 10 am in which Rajnath Singh had secured 23,777 votes, Poonam Sinha 10,729 and Acharya Pramod Krishnam 6,232 votes. In the second round Rajnath Singh had taken a lead of 15,312 votes by securing 25,492 votes, Poonam Sinha secured 10,630 votes and Acharya Pramod Krishnam polled 5,279 votes. This lead increased with every round with Rajnath Singh leading by 37,419 votes in the third round, by 42,657 votes in the fourth round, by 53,556 votes in the fifth round, 68,200 votes in the sixth round, 79,233 votes in the seventh round, 85,350 votes in the eighth round, 95,966 in the ninth round, 1,09,670 in the tenth round and so on.

By the 21st round Rajnath Singh had secured 48,763 votes, Poonam Sinha 2,32,667 votes and Acharya Pramod Krishnam 1,50,298 votes and by the 28th round Rajnath Singh had received 6,23,159 votes, Poonam Sinha 2,80,790 votes and Acharya Pramod Krishnam 1,77,121 votes.

Apart from the soaring mercury which had people queuing up for water the pro-



Neeraj Singh (above) and Pankaj Singh (top) celebrating their father Rajnath Singh's victory on Thursday

ceedings remained peaceful at the Rama Bai Sthal with no untoward incident being reported. District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma, while talking to *The Pioneer*, said that

the process passed off peacefully and they had no problems with the EVMs. He said that no complaints were received from the counting agents also. "Only one EVM did not

show the result and so the engineer was called and it was decided that the VVPAT will be counted instead of the EVM. This happened in the EVM for this Cantonment constituency

and when the round was completed the counting agents were satisfied," he said.

He admitted that there was a delay in getting the results from Sidhauhi which that was a part of the Mohanlalganj constituency. "There was thus a lag between the announcement of the result between Lucknow and Mohanlalganj and by the time we had announced the results after the 25th round of the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency we had done only 15 rounds of the Mohanlalganj Lok Sabha constituency," he stated.

He said that the counting agents did not make any complaints because wherever there was any issue they recounted the votes in the same round. "We did the recounting for the same round itself then and hence there were no issues. There were several times when the counting was done again and again on the table till the counting agents were satisfied. We had almost completed the counting by 3 pm," said the District Magistrate.

Sharma said that after all the EVMs had been counted in all the five Vidhan Sabha constituencies of Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency the VVPAT lottery was carried out by the observers and the verification by the VVPAT was done. These VVPATs were taken out and brought to the counting table and then the counting was carried out. We went along with the process which is verifying the VVPAT and matching the result with the EVM for the satisfaction of the polling agents," he said.

On being asked what was done once the counting was over, he said that the EVMs were sealed and then placed in the carrying box which was sealed again and then they were placed in the trunk with each one having at least 10 EVMs and it was also sealed. This was then placed in the strongroom and would be done on Thursday itself," he added.

He said that these EVMs would remain in the strongrooms till the next order of the Election Commission came or if some election petition was filed then they would be kept in the same strongroom till the court order came.

# BJP office bathed in saffron hue



NEERAJ JOSHI ■ LUCKNOW

As the sun set down on Lucknow on Thursday, its gorgeous saffron hue shifted to BJP's state headquarters on Vidhan Sabha Marg with workers smearing saffron gular on each other as a curtain raiser to the huge victory in Lok Sabha polls.

For BJP workers celebrations started early on Thursday as the trends started being aired by various news channels and the fervour was set to continue to late into the night.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the BJP headquarters amid bursting of firecrackers and showering of petals around 4 pm. The jubilation peaked with Deputy

CMs Keshav Prasad Mairya and Dinesh Sharma along with Shiv Kumar, mayor Sanyukta Bhatia, MLA Neeraj Bora and others joining the animated celebrations on a platform.

Yogi stayed on the platform for nearly 20 minutes and exchanged pleasantries and greetings with other leaders before leaving for his official residence.

Since announcement of Exit Polls two days back, mood in the BJP office remained upbeat and by Thursday evening, it reached the crescendo. Party office bearers and workers started flocking to the BJP office and as the win-

ning trends continued, the cheering got louder. By afternoon the party workers started beating drums, burst crackers, smeared each other with saffron gular and exchanged congratulations.

The Lucknow Nagar Nigam (LNN) watered the road from VVIP guest house to the BJP office through Raj Bhawan and GPO Park. Security arrangement were put in place and traffic was diverted from Royal Hotel crossing, causing inconvenience to commuters.

Till late evening, the route remained affected as VIPs continued to pour into the party office to express happiness and met top leaders.

# Deafening silence at SP, BSP offices



BSP and SP officers wear a deserted look on Thursday afternoon

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

As the tall claims of the SP-BSP alliance fell flat with the declaration of Lok Sabha election results on Thursday, the silence was deafening. The results turned out almost exactly as predicted in some of the exit polls and the gathbandhan failed to make inroads as expected by the supporters.

Leaders preferred to stay mum and away from media glare till late afternoon.

The offices of Bahujan Samaj Party, Samajwadi Party, RLD and Congress wore a deserted look as the trends showed a landslide victory for the BJP.

A Congress leader said that the party failed to convey the message of its dissociation from the SP-BSP alliance and attacked the BJP on Pulwama and other issues while the opponents won the confidence of people and emerged victorious.

About the change in trend in Amethi, where BJP candidate Smriti Irani beat Congress president Rahul Gandhi, he said Priyanka Gandhi's late entry might have resulted in the damage. However, he maintained that anything concrete could be said after brainstorming by the senior leaders.

At the BSP office, no one was available for comments as the offices were closed. The Samajwadi Party leaders also preferred to stay away from media queries.



Fireworks at celebrations at the BJP office following party's landslide victory in the Lok Sabha elections



Pioneer

# Kaushal Kishore upstages SP-BSP alliance candidate

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

## MOHANLALGANJ CONSTITUENCY

BJP candidate Kaushal Kishore, who contested from Mohanlalganj Lok Sabha constituency, beat his closest opponent CL Verma of BSP-SP alliance by 89,800 votes.

Kaushal Kishore secured 6,26,972 votes while CL Verma 5,37,172 votes and RK Chowdhary of Congress 59,632 votes. In the first round, Verma had taken a lead of 1,055 votes over Kishore. However, as the rounds progressed, it was a neck-and-neck fight and the BJP candidate finally upstaged Verma. The results of Mohanlalganj, which has four Vidhan Sabha constituencies including Sidhauhi, BKT, Sarojnagar and Mohanlalganj, were slightly delayed because the results of Sidhauhi were being e-mailed



from Sitapur to the counting venue in Lucknow.

In the first round, Kaushal Kishore secured 17,208 votes while CL Verma secured 1,826 votes and RK Chowdhary 1,370 votes. After the second round, Kaushal had established a lead of 591 votes. In the fourth round, his lead swelled to 1,084 votes and in the fifth, he was leading by 4,543 votes. By the eleventh

round, his lead had increased to 28,325 votes.

By the 29th round, Kaushal Kishore had received 5,77,244 votes and CL Verma 4,99,995 votes and by 30th, Kishore had received 5,91,594 votes while CL Verma 5,08,959 votes. By the 31st round, Kaushal Kishore secured 6,00,315 votes as against CL Verma's tally of 5,17,003 votes.

# Lesser known LS candidates in city humbled by NOTA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Most of these candidates had candidly admitted earlier that they were not in the race but were contesting to give people more options

NOTA got more votes than some of the lesser known candidates in the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency. Out of the 7,416 votes for NOTA, 7,259 were cast through EVMs and 157 through postal ballot.

Among the 12 lesser known candidates who were in the fray from Lucknow, the maximum votes (2,104) were secured by Amar Kumar Jaiswal, followed by Ram Sagar Pal (1,251), Sanjay Singh Rana (981), Shameem Khan (935), Zimidar Singh Yadav (859), Ramesh (739), Prof DNS Yadav (675), Avinash Chandra Jain (594), Mohammed Faheem (572), Girish Narayan Pandey (569), Ganesh Chowdhary (515), and Kapil Mohan (471). Most of

these candidates had candidly admitted that they were not in the race but were contesting to give people more options with their clean image. Some of the people who went for NOTA said they found no better alternative than it in the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency.

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**NOTICE TO THE BORROWER INFORMING ABOUT THE SALE (30 DAYS NOTICE)**  
**(RULE 6(2)(b) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002)**

**DETAILS REGARDING ACCOUNTS**

S. No.	Name of the Account & Outstanding	Description & owner of property All that part and parcel of the property consisting of	Date of Demand Notice dt. of possession Notice Reserve Price
<b>Branch - Hewitt Road, Lucknow-</b>			
1	Borrower/Borrower : M/s Shri Balaji Associates, through its Managing Partners Mr. Ajay Singh & Mr. Harsh Mohan Singh and Mrs. Nidhi Zindal W/o Mr. Rajeev Zindal, Address- 308, Sriram Tower, 13 Ashok Marg, Lucknow. Guarantor: Mr. Amit Agarwal S/o Lalit Kumar Agarwal, Address: Shop No. 102/244, (Western Portion at Shivaji Marg), Hewitt Road, Lucknow. Account No. 21551310000034	1. Building Office -admeasuring approximately 327 Sq.ft. situated at Office space No. 308-B at Third floor, Sriram Tower, 13 Ashok Marg, Lucknow. Bounded by: East-Open to Sky, West-Common Passage, North-Other Space, South-Other Space. 2. Residential Land and Building-admeasuring approximately 1757 Sq.ft. situated at Commercial building municipal No. 102/244, Western portion at Shivaji Marg, Hewitt Road, Lucknow. Bounded by: East-Remaining Portion of 102/44, West-102/44KA, North-House of Mr. Singhal, South-Road.	02.08.2018 16.11.2018 Rs. 24,26,000/-

Sub: Sale of property belonging to you for realization of amount due to Andhra Bank under the SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT (ACT 54 OF 2002.)

Whereas you have defaulted to pay the amount due from you in spite of demand made by me/ Bank through Demand Notice U/s. 13(2) dated above I, in exercise of the powers conferred under the above Act, took possession of the below mentioned property on dated above. Even after taking possession of the property, you have not paid the amount due from you to Andhra Bank. As such, it has become necessary to sell the above mentioned properties on the reserve prices mentioned above of by inviting e-auction after 30 days from the date of this notice.

The date and time of auction and the details of the service provider shall be informed through a Sale Notice which shall be issued separately, and the property would be sold to the person who offers highest price.

Since, the property may be sold by private Sale also or obtaining quotations from the persons also, subject to terms and conditions acceptable to Bank.

If you have any such proposal of selling the property to any person by private sale or by getting quotation, the same may be communicated to me within 30 days from date of receipt of this notice.

Failing which it will be construed that you have no such proposal and I will proceed forthwith, with sale of property by inviting tenders/public auction/auction/Private Treaty.

Please take notice that if you pay the amount due as specified in the Demand Notice mentioned above with subsequent interest thereon along with cost and expenses incurred by the bank till date before the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of secured assets, no further action shall be taken for sale of the property mentioned in the schedule.

**Chief Manager & Authorized Officer**  
Andhra Bank, Zonal Office Lucknow

Date: 23.05.2019  
Place: Lucknow



# ASPIRING KINGMAKERS' BASTIONS BREACHED

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

**Mamata Banerjee:** The most vocal and combative, TMC chief and West Bengal Chief Minister nursed Prime Ministerial ambitions; launched a blistering campaign against Narendra Modi and was averse to backing Congress president Rahul Gandhi as the UPA's PM candidate. Given her complete supremacy in the state, even pundits were skeptical about the BJP's chances. However, the saffron brigade stunned everyone by storming her citadel. Having failed to stop the BJP from making strong inroads in a big way into her bastion, she will have to rethink her strategy to defend her turf in the 2021 Assembly polls.



**N Chandrababu Naidu:** Ahead of the results, Andhra Pradesh chief minister and TDP chief Naidu was the most active in trying to forge an Opposition alliance in case the NDA did not get past the post. Besides Mamata, he had been the most critical of Modi. He must be ruing his decision to quit the NDA. Despite his political acumen, he could not decipher the public mood with Jaganmohan Reddy's YSR Congress Party sweeping the polls in the state. TDP has been almost wiped out from the Lok Sabha too dealing a massive blow to his political clout. Naidu's problems could compound in the coming days if Jagan join hands with the NDA.

**Akhilesh Yadav:** Having taken over the mantle of SP from his father and veteran politician Mulayam Singh Yadav, Akhilesh's plans to play a major role at the centre - even burying the over-two-decades-old hatchet with BSP supreme Mayawati in the process - have come to a naught with the party faring badly in its stronghold Uttar Pradesh. Though the young leader never openly aired his political ambitions, he was eyeing a king-maker's role. He vigorously campaigned for the 'Mahagathbandhan' to put up a united front against the BJP. Facing a drubbing for the second consecutive time in the Lok Sabha polls, the SP will have to reinvent itself to remain relevant in fast changing political dynamics.



**Mayawati:** The BSP supremo and former chief minister of UP had made no bones about her Prime Ministerial ambitions and hence, did not even allow Congress to join the 'Mahagathbandhan' to ensure she had a larger share of seats to fight in UP. She also gave no-holds-barred speeches against Modi during the campaign but the frontal attack failed to spin magic in her favour. Her caste combinations failed to trump Modi's charisma. Along with the SP, the BSP also fared badly. The stunning reversal brushing aside caste and other related factors will make it all the more necessary for Mayawati to present a new image for her party to survive in the most politically-crucial State.

**K Chandrashekar Rao:** Having swept the Telangana state assembly polls last year, the TRS chief and chief minister was nursing ambitions to project himself at the national stage. He met several leaders including DMK chief M K Stalin and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee. However, as Rao was busy with his efforts to forge a federal front, the BJP breached his fortress to make a debut from the State in the Lok Sabha. Even the Congress managed to make inroads in the State. Though Rao played the most important role in the creation of Telangana, the voters, however, preferred to vote for Modi at the national level.



**HD Deve Gowda:** The former Prime Minister and JD(S) chief has a lot on his plate now after his party which in coalition with the Congress is running Karnataka with his son H D Kumaraswamy as the chief minister could not withstand the Modi wave. Deve Gowda was considered to be one of the king makers in case of fractured mandate due to his seniority and stature. Trailing in the electoral battle till last trends came in, Deve Gowda like other aspirants Akhilesh, Mayawati and Pawar is now on a very weak wicket to play a role at the state and national level. Coming days will see the JD(S) chief definitely taking stock where his electoral strategy failed even as the BJP's win could impact the survival of his son's government too in the State.

**Sharad Pawar:** The Maratha strongman and NCP chief, rated to be one of the most astute and shrewd politicians of the country, was a PM candidate even as he sought to play the mentor's role in bringing together the opposition camp to face the BJP. But the Modi juggernaut, with the Shiv Sena, simply brushed aside any challenge posed by the NCP along with the Congress. Pawar's clout nationally has taken a severe beating. The NCP has already blamed the Congress for not performing upto expectations.



## BJP's young guns sail through

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

Congress' young turks failed to deliver, while those from the BJP rode on the Modi wave to register win in the high-voltage Lok Sabha polls.

Sitting Congress MPs — Jyotiraditya Scindia, Sushmita Dev and former Union Minister Jitin Prasada, Milind Deora, who all are in the close circle of party chief Rahul Gandhi, lost badly. They had been the most vocal inside and outside the Parliament on every issue.

On the other hand, sitting BJP MPs Anurag Thakur, Poonam Mahajan, Dushyant Singh and first timer Tejaswi Surya registered win from their respective Parliamentary constituencies.

Amongst the losers, the biggest one is Jyotiraditya Scindia, who was seeking his fifth term from his family bastion Guna Lok Sabha seat. He lost to BJP's Krishna Pal Singh. Prior to Jyotiraditya, his father Madhavrao Scindia, the erstwhile titular ruler of Gwalior, had won the seat in the 1999 elections. Madhavrao died in 2001 and since then Jyotiraditya Scindia has represented the seat. In 2014, he was among the only two leaders from MP who were able to hold on to his seat.

Another surprise loss was Mahila Congress President Sushmita Dev, who lost to BJP's young gun Rajdeep Roy from the most high-profile Silchar Lok Sabha seat of Assam. Both Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi campaigned for her. Sushmita's father late Santosh Mohan Dev, won Silchar seat five times. Both Jitin Prasada and Milind Deora who's father Jitendra Prasada and Murli Deora, too lost.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's son Vaibhav lost in Jodhpur to BJP's Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. In Rajasthan's Barmer, Manvendra Singh, son of Jaswant Singh, founding member of BJP lost by over 3.2 lakh votes. Manvendra



was contesting on a Congress ticket. Ajit Pawar's son Parth, and Shankarrao Chavan's son Ashok Chavan too lost in Maharashtra to BJP candidates.

On the other hand, Anurag Thakur retained Hamirpur Lok Sabha seat alongwith her another party colleague Poonam Mahajan in North Mumbai. While Thakur is son of former CM of Himachal Pradesh Prem



Dhuma, Punam is daughter of late BJP's strategist Pramod Mahajan.

Another big win registered was by Tejaswi Surya, BJP's youngest candidate from Bangalore South, against Congress heavyweight BK Hariprasad.

Former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Rajee's son Dushyant Singh too



emerged victorious from the Jhalawar-Baran Lok Sabha seat who defeated his Congress rival Pramod Sharma. Sharma, a BJP rebel, had joined the Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha election and contested the polls for the first time. Rajee had represented the seat for five terms from 1989 to 2004 after which her son was elected from the seat.

## Dynasts get mixed results

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a poll pitch against parivarvad by the BJP, the political dynasts had a mixed fate during the Parliamentary polls. While some political families have managed to secure their bastions, others like Congress president Rahul Gandhi lost their prized seats.

While former UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi is projected to win in Rae Bareilly, her son Rahul lost out to BJP's Smriti Irani in his so called pocketborough Amethi. Rahul has already conceded defeat against Irani and congratulated her.

However, the Congress president is all set for a comfortable victory in Wayanad constituency of Kerala where he is leading by over 4 lakh votes.

The other mother-son duo from the Gandhi family — Maneka and Varun — who are contesting on BJP tickets from Sultanpur and Pilibhit respectively are heading towards a victory in their respective con-



A deserted view of National Congress headquarters during the day of counting for 2019 Lok Sabha elections in New Delhi on Thursday

stituencies. Union Minister Maneka Gandhi who was engaged in a see-saw battle in Sultanpur eventually won defeating BSP's Chandra Bhadra Singh "Sonu".

In the Samajwadi Party, patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav led in Mainpuri while Akhilesh looked comfortable to win in Azamgarh.

However, Akhilesh Yadav's wife Dimple Yadav was trailing in Kannauj constituency and that could be bad news for the Yadav clan.

As per the available trends,

the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) — a constituent of the BSP-SP led 'mahagathbandhan' is projected for a mixed outcome. While RLD chief Ajit Singh is moving ahead in Muzaffarnagar, his son and party vice-president Jayant Chaudhary is trailing from Baghat.

In Haryana, former State Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda is trailing in Sonapat. Bhopinder, a sitting MLA from Rohtak district who contested the Lok Sabha polls after a gap of 14 years, was behind sitting MP Ramesh

Chander Kaushik.

The performance of Bhopinder Hooda, who had defeated former deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal from the Rohtak LS seat earlier, is a major setback for the Congress.

However, Bhopinder's son Deepender Hooda is engaged in a sea-saw battle in Rohtak, where fortunes are fluctuating between Deepender and his nearest BJP rival Arvind Sharma as the figures are changing with each round of counting.

Down South, former Prime Minister and JD(S) patriarch H D Deve Gowda was trailing in Tumkur against BJP's G S Basavaraj. His grandson and Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil was also trailing against independent candidate - Sumalatha Ambareesh, supported by the BJP, in the bitterly fought Mandya constituency.

However, Gowda's other grandson Prajwal Revanna, son of minister H D Revanna, is leading in Hassan against A Manju of the BJP.

## 9 former Cong CMs bite dust

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

What's common for Sheila Dikshit (Delhi), Bhopinder Singh Hooda (Haryana), Harish Rawat (Uttarakhand), Digvijaya Singh (Madhya Pradesh), Ashok Chavan and Sushil Kumar Shinde (both from Maharashtra), Mukul M Sangma (Meghalaya), Nabam Tuki (Arunachal Pradesh) and Veerappa Moily (Karnataka)? They are all Congress stalwarts and former Chief Ministers. And they have all bit the dust in the Lok Sabha Election 2019.

Dikshit, who is Congress Delhi Chief and the only party veteran having donned the Chief Ministers' cap thrice from Delhi (from 1998 to 2013), lost to her rival and city BJP chief Manoj Tiwari from North East Delhi seat while Moily (former Karnataka Chief Minister) was defeated by BJP's B N Bache Gowda in Chikkaballapur, a Congress stronghold. Moily, a former Union Minister, was the joint candidate of the ruling

Congress-JD(S) coalition. He was first elected from Karkala in Udupi district as an MLA in 1992. He won from there six consecutive times.

Two-time Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Nabam Tuki lost to Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju of the BJP. He has been seeking a third term from the State's West Parliamentary constituency. For his part, former Maharashtra Chief Minister and Congress candidate Ashok Chavan lost to Pratap Chikhlikar of BJP in Nanded Lok Sabha seat.

In Uttarakhand, ex-Chief Minister and Congress leader Harish Rawat faced a humiliating loss to BJP's State chief Ajay Bhatt in the Nainital-Udhamsingh Nagar constituency. The BJP swept all the seats in the Hill State.

In Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal, Congress leader Digvijaya Singh suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of BJP newcomer and controversial leader Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, who won the high-profile Bhopal seat. The Malegaon blast accused had

earned a public reprimand from none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself for her controversial remarks against Mahtama Gandhi.

Yet another CM to have lost in the hustings is former Union Home Minister and Maharashtra CM Sushilkumar Shinde, who was defeated by Lingayat Swami from Solapur Lok Sabha seat.

In neighbouring Haryana, former Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda, a sitting MLA from Rohtak, was defeated in Sonapat which was retained by sitting BJP MP Ramesh Chander Kaushik.

Another former Congress Chief Minister who found himself in the list of losers was Mukul M. Sangma. A former Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Sangma is the current Leader of Opposition in the State Legislative Assembly. The Congress candidate from Tura lost to National People's Party (NPP) candidate Agatha Sangma, a veteran politician and former Lok Sabha Speaker late PA Sangma's daughter.

## BJP crossed 50% vote share in 17 States: Shah

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

BJP chief Amit Shah's gameplan of targeting over 50 per cent vote share has succeeded in over 15 States. Comparatively, the Congress managed to do that in just Puducherry, where it recorded about 57 per cent.

As per the Election Commission's preliminary estimates, the BJP has got more than half of the total votes polled. And BJP chief Amit Shah gave these statistics, saying the party crossed the 50 per cent vote share mark in 17 States.

It bagged 69 per cent votes in Himachal Pradesh, 62 per cent in Gujarat, 60 per cent in Uttarakhand, 59 per cent in Rajasthan, 58 per cent in Madhya Pradesh, 57 per cent in Haryana, 57 per cent in Arunachal

Pradesh, 51.5 per cent in Karnataka, 51 per cent in UP, 51.7 per cent in Goa, 51 per cent in Jharkhand and 50.5 per cent in Chandigarh among others.

It was Shah's strategy to have an eye over 50 per cent vote share to trump any caste politics, played by the Opposition alliances. Of the total 90 crore voters, the BJP was eyeing the 50 crore beneficiaries who benefited from the 133 schemes of the Modi Government. The BJP had fought some Assembly elections last year based on the same strategy.

As a result, the BJP has significantly improved its national vote share from 31.34 per cent in 2014 to a new record high, while there seems to be only a marginal change in case of the Congress from its 19.5 per cent score of the last elections. The

Congress was shown to have bagged 22.5 per cent votes till the reports last poured in.

The BJP had got 7.74 per cent vote share in 1984 when it got two Lok Sabha seats, after which it consistently saw an increase till 1998 (25.59 per cent) and then slipped for three consecutive national elections till 2009 (18.8 per cent), before surging again in 2014.

In contrast, the Congress could get a vote share of just about 6 per cent in UP and Bengal, and a little higher at about 7 per cent in Bihar. The score is even worse at just about 1 per cent in Andhra Pradesh and Sikkim. Even in Punjab, where the Congress led the way, its vote share is about 40.10 per cent. It is 37.3 per cent in Kerala, where it was on course to win 15 of the 20 seats. The Congress,

which secured 45 per cent votes in the first parliamentary elections in 1952, saw its voting percentage remain in 40s till the 1971 elections. After a slump to 34.5 per cent in 1977, the Congress again returned to 42.7 per cent in 1980 and then to a record high of 48.1 per cent in 1984/85.

After Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984, the Congress record a vote share of 49.1 per cent, it got 32.14 per cent votes in delayed polls that were held in Punjab and Assam in 1985 — resulting in an overall figure of 48.1 per cent.

The Congress vote share, however, began to dip after that with its voting percentage dropping to 39.5 per cent in 1989 and further to 20s between 1996 and 2009, and even below that mark in 2014.

## Exit polls predict finale right

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

They predicted and they stood vindicated! Nine out of nine exit polls on May 19 had predicted an outright victory for the BJP and six of them had projected the party winning more than 300 seats. The pollsters had also projected the UPA's dismal performance in the wake of the rolling BJP juggernaut. And some had forecast that the Opposition alliance will not touch the three-digit mark.

It made the ruling dispensation (BJP and its allies) gung-ho but invited criticism from the Opposition Congress and others who called it were paid for, unreliable, inaccurate and gossipy.

While the BJP looks set to cross the 300-mark on its own and the NDA hogging 350 seats, the UPA tally was pegged at 85 seats, as per the trends and results last available.

It was also, perhaps, the first time that the pollsters were unanimous in their projections.



All the exit polls gave the BJP a clear mandate and showed the UPA at a distant second.

The India Today-Axis and News 24-Chanakyia exit polls have been bang on target.

Most pollsters also correctly forecast the BJP's performance in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh — where the Opposition Congress recently won the Assembly polls.

Take the case of Rajasthan. Almost all exit polls predicted a clean sweep for the BJP in the Western State, with some exit polls handing them all 25 seats

in the State. The News18-IPSONS exit poll said the BJP is set to get 22 to 23 seats in the desert State, while Today's Chanakyia exit poll predicted all 25 seats to fall in BJP's kitty. The latter hit the bull's eye.

Ditto is the case of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief Amit Shah's home state Gujarat, where BJP, as per the India Today-My Axis India Exit Poll, is set to make a complete sweep in the Gujarat Lok Sabha elections possibly winning all 26 seats.

Axis My India was among those who had successfully

predicted not only the winning party but also the range of their mandate.

The Congress-led alliance was projected as gaining in Punjab, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. And it did. Some pollsters gave Congress a tally as low as 38, less than the 44 it won in 2014. The Congress fared a shade better than 44 but turned true the projections that it would not cross the three-figure mark this time round too.

In the politically crucial Uttar Pradesh with 80 Lok Sabha seats, the pollsters has come up with a mixed bag of results indicating the complexities involved at the ground level. If India Today-Axis gave the BJP-led NDA a maximum of 68 seats and News 24-Today's Chanakyia said its tally could even cross the 70-seats mark, then ABP-Nielsen gave NDA as less as 22 Lok Sabha seats and the SP-BSP-RLD alliance a high of 56 seats. As things stand, the Axis and Chanakyia estimates were the closest.

## Saffron motormouths pass voters' test

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Motormouths and controversial leaders from the BJP like Anantkumar Hegde (Uttar Kannada), Nalin Kateel (Dakshin Kannada), Sadhvi Pragya Thakur (Bhopal), Sakshi Maharaj (Unnao), and Giriraj Singh (Begusarai) are set to register big wins.

Sadhvi Pragya Thakur was leading against Congress' Digvijay Singh by over 3.5 lakh votes and was projected to win the constituency by a significant margin. Pragya had hit the headlines in the run up to the polls by claiming that IPS officer Hemant Karkare was killed in the 26/11 attacks due to his karma and that he was a traitor. She had to later apologise for the remarks. She had also stoked a controversy by terming Nathuram Godse, who had killed Mahatma Gandhi, as a national hero. She had to again tender an apology after the remarks generated a nationwide outrage.



Another BJP leader Anantkumar Hegde, known for making controversial remarks, won the Uttara (North) Kannada seat in Karnataka, defeating his nearest rival Anand Annotikar of the Janata Dal (Secular) by a massive margin of 4.79 lakh votes, according to the results declared by the EC on Thursday.

Hegde held the portfolio of junior minister in the Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Ministry during Narendra Modi's first term as PM. Hegde had also made headlines for wrong reasons when he had said the Constitution would be changed. He had to later tender an apology in the Parliament.

And amid reports of his controversial remarks on Twitter

about Nathuram Godse, Hegde claimed his account was "hacked". But later asserted there was no question of justifying Mahatma Gandhi's killing.

Before that, Hegde had called Congress chief Rahul Gandhi a "hybrid breed", wondering how can the son of a 'Muslim' father and a Christian mother be a Brahmin.

"...They have no sense about religion. See how much they lie, father is a Muslim, mother a Christian, son is Brahmin. How did it come?" You cannot get such hybrid breed in any laboratory in the world, it is available in our country's Congress laboratory only," he had said, attacking Rahul, at an event in Uttara Kannada district.

Nalin Kumar Kateel (Dakshina Kannada), who had backed Pragya Thakur on the Godse issue, also won by 2.74 lakh votes, as per the results announced on Thursday.

For his part, the vocal Sakshi Maharaj won from Unnao with a record margin of four lakh votes. He had recently stoked

controversy by stating this would be the last election in the country and there would be none in 2024.

Ahead of the nomination for the Unnao constituency, he had warned the BJP that "results would not be good" if he was not re-nominated from Unnao. The BJP had been contemplating dropping him.

In his election affidavit, Maharaj has listed 34 criminal cases promoting enmity among communities, criminal intimidation, robbery, dacoity, murder, forgery, cheating and criminal breach of trust besides rape.

Union Minister and another firebrand leader Giriraj Singh retained the Begusarai seat trouncing his nearest rival Kanhaiya Kumar of the CPI by a huge margin of over four lakh votes.

Singh, who had moved to Begusarai from Nawada, after initial reluctance, polled 6,888 lakh votes out of a total of 12.17 lakhs polled on the elections held April 29.



# Most Union Ministers ride Modi wave

Smriti Irani emerges giant killer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Except Union Minister Manoj Sinha, Hardeep Singh Puri and KJ Alphons, a record number of Union Ministers won their seat due to Modi-Amit Shah wave in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani emerged as a giant-killer against Congress president Rahul Gandhi who conceded defeat from Amethi in one of the most keenly watched contests in the country.

The official announcement on most of the seats was awaited as matching of electronic voting machine (EVM) counts with voter verifiable audit trail (VVPAT) slips was in progress.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi retained Varanasi by over 4.79 lakh votes. He increased his victory margin as compared

to 2014 by over one lakh votes, trouncing Samajwadi Party's Shalini Yadav.

Giriraj Singh, who was up against Kanhaiya Kumar, former JNU president and CPI(M) candidate, in Begusarai, was leading by 4.22 lakh votes. Radha Mohan Singh fielded from Purvi Champaran was ahead of his rival Akash Singh by a margin of nearly two lakh votes. In Arrah, RK Singh led against his nearest rival of CPI(M) by a margin of over one lakh votes.

Ravi Shankar Prasad was leading against Congress' Shatrughan Sinha on Patna Sahib seat by nearly 2.83 lakh votes.

Firebrand leader and Union minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey too sailed through against RJD's Jagadanand Singh, leading by around 1.5 lakh votes.

Cabinet Minister KJ Alphons was facing a humiliating defeat in Kerala. He trailed at the third place behind Congress' Hibi Aeden and CPI(M) candidate P Rajeev on Ernakulam seat.

His colleague and Union

**The big winners included Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari. The official announcement on most of the seats was awaited as matching of electronic voting machine (EVM) counts with voter verifiable audit trail (VVPAT) slips was in progress**

Housing and Urban Affairs minister Hardeep Puri lost in Amritsar by a margin of over 99,000 votes. Another big loss of the BJP was Union minister of state for Railways Manoj Sinha who was down by around 1.15 lakh votes against BSP's Afzal Ansari on Ghazipur seat.

The big winners included Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari. Singh led against Samajwadi Party candidate and Shatrughan Sinha's wife Poonam Sinha in Lucknow by over 3.45 lakh votes.

Gadkari won from Nagpur by a margin of around 1.97 lakh votes. He was up against Congress' Nana Patole. On Chandrapur (Maharashtra) seat Union minister of state for Home Affairs Hansraj Gangaram Ahir had a tough contest on the platter and he was trailing behind Balubhau by over 50,000 votes.

In UP's Baghpat, Satyapal Singh was also engaged in a keen fight with RLD candidate Jayant Chaudhary. Singh was trailing behind with 1068 votes.

Sanjiv Balyan was engaged in an intense contest in Muzaffarpur seat in UP. He was leading over his rival and RLD chief Ajit Singh by thin margin of 3,782 votes.

Maneka Gandhi, who switched to Sultanpur (UP) seat, was leading by a slender margin of 13,859 votes against BSP's Chandra Bhadra Singh.

BJP's biggest winners included VK Singh who led over his rival from SP Suresh Bansal by a margin over five lakh votes in Ghaziabad constituency.

Rajyavardhan Rathor was leading against Olympian Krishna Poonia of Congress by 3.89 lakh votes in Jaipur (Rural) seat. Arjun Ram Meghwal was

sailing on Bikaner seat by 2.5 lakh votes. Anant Kumar Hegde (Uttara Kannada) was leading by nearly five lakh votes against JD(S) candidate Anand Asnotikar.

Union minister Mahesh Sharma was leading on Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida) seat by over two lakh votes, against BSP's Satyapal. In Bareilly, Santosh Gangwar sailed through with around 1.5 lakh votes.

Other ministers of Modi government including Jugal Oram (Sundargarh), Sadanand Gowda (North Bengaluru), Shripad Yesso Naik (North Goa), Ram Kripal Yadav, Jitendra Singh (Udhampur), Rao Inderjeet Singh (Gurgaon), Narendra Singh Tomar (Morena), Babul Supriyo (Asansol), Ajay Tanta (Almora) among others, were on the victory march.

# Defeat of negative politics: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Elated by BJP's resounding victory in the Lok Sabha elections, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the results reflected defeat of negativity emanating from dynastic politics and victory of development and nationalist politics.

"The results are clear indication that people no longer want negative politics of caste and dynasty. They want basic facilities and they voted for development in this election," Yogi told a select group of reporters at his official residence here on Thursday.

He said the BJP leaders talked about development and nationalism in their poll campaigns and the people liked it. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given the slogan of 'Abki baar 300 paar' and the people voted en bloc to fulfil the dream of Modi and the BJP," the Chief Minister said.

"We won because of the leadership shown by Prime Minister Modi and the political strategy adopted by party's national president Amit Shah. Millions of BJP workers worked



CM Yogi Adityanath at the Ailganj Hanuman temple in Lucknow

Pioneer

tirelessly to ensure that the plan made by Modi and Shah was implemented to the T at the ground level. This is the success of the team BJP," the Chief Minister said. Yogi was one of the star campaigners of the party. He was the most sought after and addressed a series of rallies across the country. His prestige was at stake in Gorakhpur from where he was elected MP five times but had lost the seat in the by-election in 2018. He ensured that his protégé Ravi Kishan sails through comfortably. When

asked about the mahagathbandhan, the Chief Minister said that no one could take the voters for a ride any more. "The alert voters have rejected the mahagathbandhan' (grand alliance) of opposition parties. It is high time for the opposition to introspect and shun politics of negativity," he said. Yogi said that this result had dispelled the myth that votes could be transferred on one command. "The political leaders should now realise that people will vote for only that party which will work at the ground level," he added.

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### INDIA INCREDIBLY...

The overall result shows that Modi's personal charisma has once again shattered traditional caste barriers and caught the imagination of the young generation, impressing upon them that their future lies with a powerful India that is both a strong economic and military power - something that could only be achieved by leaving the baggage of narrow caste politics behind.

The BJP capitalised on the horribly mismatch of JD(S)-Congress alliance in Karnataka, rode on Modi wave in Gujarat and regained lost ground in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to leave the Congress licking its wound in the four crucial States where Rahul Gandhi and his managers had gained great hope to take their tally into three digits.

Similarly, the BJP and its ally Janata Dal (U) trounced Bihar Opposition alliance into smithereens clearly showing that the powerful wave of Hindutva had also converged with massive mobilisation of anti-Yadav OBC votes in their favour.

If the consolidation of the anti-Yadav OBC vote in favour of the BJP was the story of the cowbelt, then the success of the BJP in wooing the Dalits to its fold was near pan-India story. The preliminary analysis of the voting pattern even in UP suggests that non-Jatav Dalit went majorly with the BJP.

The poll outcome also shows that despite their grievances with the BJP over demonetisation and ill-implementation of the GST both the middle class and trader community continued to side with the BJP, which expanded its support base by effectively implementing the slogans of "catch them young".

Initial data showed that majority of the first time voters across caste divide preferred Modi over the rest. Modi's war cry against Pakistan and "ghar me ghus kar mareng" type slogans endeared him into younger generation that saw him a real hero that would settle the score with a villain (Pakistan) that has been hurting them for years.

The result leaves the Congress literally into dog-house and raises serious question mark over the leadership of Rahul Gandhi. The fact that the Congress has not even got enough number of seats to claim the position of Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha is

something that Rahul cannot brush aside. The party may go into a huddle or introspect on what went wrong, but its faces serious existential dilemma now. Knowing the way Amit Shah functions, it is anybody's guess how long the Congress Government in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka will survive.

Rahul is going to face flak over going alone in Uttar Pradesh where the party only helped the BJP by cutting into the SP-BSP votes. There is belated realisation in the party that instead of focusing on UP where the Congress had nothing to gain, Rahul and Priyanka should have tried to focus their energy on Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Karnataka where the Congress could have done far better.

The poll outcome also shows that the country is changing and changing very fast. A change that wants to see India emerge as a 'muscular' power that also caters to the needs of its poor. If the BJP exploited the Balakot strike by displaying the muscular strength of the Modi Government, it also went to town counting the pro-poor schemes like Ujjwala, housing for poor, Jandhan Yojna, Ayushman and Mudra schemes, etc. The fact that Rahul's "chowkidar chor hai" attack on the PM failed miserably shows that the Modi has been able to convince the nation that he led a regime which is far different from the corruption-ridden regime of the past. Before Modi's glittering package of a 'muscular', pro-poor, pro-development and honest pro-Hindutva regime, the Opposition looked like hawking the same stale goodies of social justice and secularism. In changing India, voters clearly preferred the former.

### IT IS VICTORY...

He said Congress "ko karari haar mili hai" and pointed out that Congress has collected a big zero in 17 States including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Lakshadweep and Chandigarh. "The 50 per cent mandate today buried Congress and Opposition's caste, dynasty, appeasement politics", he said.

Shah said Opposition's defeat and a big win for the BJP underlines the victory of the

ideology of 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas' vis-à-vis "Tukde-tukde gang". BJP headquarters Deendayal Upadhyaya Marg were a festive look with constant beating of drums and sounds of fire crackers.

No sooner as the picture emerged about the astounding performance of the BJP, party workers started gathering at the headquarters atop which the saffron flag fluttered in the air.

### BJP STORMS...

The Congress polled 5 per cent votes shedding 5 per cent to BJP and TMC.

Among the notable winners were BJP State president Dilip Ghosh who defeated senior TMC leader Manas Bhunia, Union Minister Babul Supriyo who won the Asansol seat trouncing cine star Moon Sen by more than 1.75 lakh votes. Supriyo had won this seat in 2014 by about 70,000 votes. Sen a sitting TMC MP had been shifted by Mamata Banerjee from Bankura to take on the Bollywood singer-turned BJP MP from Asansol.

A three-time North Malda MP Mausam Benazir Noor who switched sides from the Congress to the TMC ahead of the elections was trounced by BJP Khagen candidate Khagen Murmu a former CPI(M) MLA. Another big loser from the TMC was State Minister Subroto Mukherjee who lost to BJP's Subhas Sarkar from Bankura. Senior TMC leader and former Railway Minister Dinesh Trivedi also lost from Barrackpore seat to Arjun Singh, a former TMC MLA and strongman who joined the BJP a month before the polls.

From Hooghly seat BJP candidate Locket Chatterjee defeated two-time TMC MP Ratna Dey Nag while from neighbouring Serampore seat TMC's Kalyan Banerjee defeated his nearest BJP rival.

Senior TMC leader and Mamata Banerjee's nephew Abhishek Banerjee won the Diamond Harbour seat by a massive margin of more than 3 lakh votes. Both the seats from Kolkata however went to the TMC as veteran party MP Sudip Banerjee defeated BJP heavyweight and national secretary Rahul Sinha.

Among the known faces from the CPI(M) losing the battle were outgoing Raiganj MP Md Salim and former Kolkata Mayor Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya who lost to TMC's Mimi Chakrabarty, a

Bengali cine star from Jadavpur seat. The BJP left quite an impression in the Assembly by-elections too winning four out of eight seats that went to polls. The TMC won three seats while the Congress managed to win only one seat. The CPI(M) drew a blank here too.

Even as a plume of gloom descended near the TMC supreme's Kalighat residence with no leader coming out to address the press, Mamata Banerjee came out with a brief tweet "congratulating" the "winners" and asserting that her party would assess the reason of the debacle saying this was a setback and not a defeat.

Offering the "excellent performance to the people, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and our workers" Dilip Ghosh said "this victory is the result of Modi's good works", adding the victory also "shows the amount of disgust and desperation against TMC's goonda raj that they had perpetrated in Bengal for the past several years. They would not only allow the people to vote but also they would throw hundreds of our workers in jail on false charges." This was backed by Babul Supriyo who said, "Despite our workers being beaten up and voters being threatened the people of Asansol came out in great numbers to vote for us. We thank them from deep of my heart." TMC's Saugato Roy who won from Dum Dum seat, however, blamed the Left Front for transferring their votes to the BJP. "Do you think that there is any BJP in Bengal. The people of this State can never accept that culture. Bengal is different. Still the BJP did well because the Left Front transferred their votes to them. The way the Left transferred its votes to the BJP only speaks volumes of the erosion in value-based politics."

When asked to comment on his victory, Adhir Chowdhury said, "Mamata Banerjee brought BJP to Bengal, allowed it flourish by creating a cloaked communal atmosphere which was used to the full by the BJP. This vote was not a proper vote but a result of complete polarisation. The results are also the outcome of TMC's repressive politics and goonda raj."

The CPI(M) also was as calm as the TMC with its senior party leaders privately wondering whether "there is a need to bring in new young leaders and relieve old ones."

### JD(U), LJP RIDE...

Majority of Yadav and Muslim areas also voted for BJP-JD (U) alliance in the State. Lalu's absentee from active politics impacted the prospects of the RJD. Lalu is currently in jail. BJP-JD (U) alliance got 53.35 per cent vote share while the Grand Alliance led by RJD and Congress managed to get only 27.1 per cent vote share. The BJP managed got 23.63 per cent votes while its alliance JD (U) got 21.36 per cent and LJP 8.28 per cent votes in the State. The RJD got 15.7 per cent vote share while its alliance Congress got 7.9 per cent vote share. Interestingly, RLSP led by Upendra Kushwaha got only 3.56 per cent vote share. Kushwaha has threatened of 'bloodshed' in the State if he could not win the seat.

All prominent leaders of the grand alliance - Shatrughan Sinha from Patna Sahib, Sharad Yadav from Madhepura, Upendra Kushwaha from Karakat, Mira Kumar from Sasaram, Tariq Anwar from Katihar and Kanhaiya Kumar from Begusarai lost their seats.

In Patna Sahib seat, BJP leader and Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad got over 62 per cent vote against former actor turned politician, Shatrughan Sinha (Congress), who managed only over 31 per cent votes. The seat was previously held by Sinha, who moved from the BJP to the Congress in April.

In Begusarai, BJP leader Giriraj Singh won the seat by a margin of over 4.16 lakh votes against CPI(ML) candidate Kanhaiya Kumar got only 2.67 lakh votes. Singh secured 56.48 per cent vote while Kumar 22.2 per cent vote. RJD candidate got only 16.20 per cent votes. Lalu Prasad's daughter Misha Bharti is trailing her seat against BJP Ram Kripal Yadav in Patliputra. Misha got 43.07 per cent vote while Yadav obtained 48.14 per cent vote. Sharad Yadav also trailing in Madhepura.

The ruling BJP-Janata Dal (United) alliance was in direct fight against RJD-Congress led Grand Alliance. Interestingly, the BJP had compromised and given more space to its allies, fielding candidates in just 17 JD (U) has contested on 17 seats each and the LJP on six seats. The Lok Sabha in Bihar was also electoral test for Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's decision to join NDA and declare Bihar a dry State. Lalu

factor was also missing in the polls.

The exit polls has predicted that the BJP-JD(U)-LJP alliance may win minimum 38 out of the 40 seats, while the RJD-Congress led 'Mahagathbandhan' may only bag maximum 2 seats. Interestingly, there are five Lok Sabha seats in Bihar, where NOTA got over 30,000 votes. Gopal Ganj with over 50,000 votes, followed by West Champaran of 45,000 votes. There are 15 seats where NOTA got over 20,000 votes in the State.

BJP's candidate from Saran Rajeev Pratap Rudi also leading against RJD candidate Chandrika Rai. Rudy got 52.94 per cent vote while Rai obtained only 38.4 per cent vote. Tej Pratap Yadav had opposed Rai candidature from the party while Tejaswi backed him. This has led to tussle in the RJD which was culminated during campaign as Tej Pratap had campaigned against Rai. Sharad Yadav from Madhepura is also trailing a margin of over 2.51 lakh votes from JD (U) candidate Dinesh Chandra Yadav. Congress candidate Meira Kumar also trailing in Sasaram from JD (U) candidate Chhedhi Paswan by a margin of over 1.63 lakh votes.

Union Minister Radha Mohan Singh also leading against RLSP candidate Akash Kumar Singh by a margin of over 2.66 lakh vote in Purvi Champaran. In Katihar, Congress candidate Tariq Anwar is trailing by a margin of over 5,50,000 votes to JD (U) candidate Dulal Chand Goswami. RLSP chief Upendra Kushwaha also trailing in Karakat where Mahabali Singh of JD (U) won the seat by a margin of 8,50,000 votes.

In Arrah, former bureaucrat and Union Minister RK Singh defeated CPI(ML) candidate Raju Yadav by a margin of over 1.38 lakh votes. RJD leader Raghuvansh Prasad Singh lost Vaishali seat by a margin of over 2.28 lakh vote to LJP leader Veena Devi.

During the 2014 Lok Sabha General Elections, the BJP and its allies Lok Jan Shakti Party (LJP) had won 31 Lok Sabha seats, RJD-Congress-NCP grabbed seven and Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (U) was restricted to two seats.

The caste factor has been a major factor in the selection of candidates by both the NDA and the Grand Alliance. While

NDA has focused on the political combination of upper castes (BJP), JDU (non-Yadav OBCs, particularly MBC votes) and LJP (Paswan votes) while RJD has hoped to expand its social base (political equation of MY) in the absence of Lalu, with the help of its smaller allies like former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi-headed HAM (Maha Dalits), former union minister Upendra Prasad-headed RLSP (Kushwaha) and VIP (Nishad). The Lok Sabha poll was also an opportunity for Lalu's son Tejaswi to establish himself as mass leader but he failed.

### SOUTHERN COMFORT...

The list also includes Sushil Kumar Shinde from Solapur, former Uttarakhand Chief Minister Harish Rawat from Nainital, former Meghalaya CM Mukul Sangma from Tura, former Haryana CM Bhupinder Hooda from Sonapat and Verrappa Moily from Chikkballur in Karnataka. The Congress poor show has once again exposed the structural weaknesses in the party organisation on the ground. The real cause of concern for the Congress is the reverses in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh where it had defeated the BJP in the Assembly elections just six months ago.

Even Karnataka, where the Congress is in alliance with the JD(S), has been a big disappointment. Congress failed to convince the voters about its promise of Nyay (Nyuntam Aay Yojana) through which the party promised a minimum income guarantee scheme of Rs 72,000 a year to the country's 20 per cent or five crore poorest of the poor families.

### BJP WINS DELHI...

BJP's incumbent MP from West Delhi Parvash Verma got over 8,48,555 votes against his nearest rival Mahabali Mishra of Congress. Verma had won this seat with margin of 2.68 lakh votes in 2014 Lok Sabha polls. Confident of retaining the seat, Verma has maintained an unassailable lead.

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari, who contested from the Northeast Delhi constituency against Congress veteran and former Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit and AAP's Dilip Pandey, was also leading with securing 7,85,262 votes.

Tiwari said they (BJP) were sure of victory but did not expect such a "huge" margin.

# BJP-SENA REPEATS 2014 SHOW

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a virtual repeat of its spectacular performance in the 2014 polls, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance on Thursday swept the Lok Sabha polls in Maharashtra, by either winning or establishing unassailable leads in 41 out of the total 48 seats in the State, decimating once again the Opposition Congress and limiting the tally of NCP to five.

On a day when senior Congress leaders Sushilkumar Shinde and Ashok Chavan bit electoral dust, the saffron alliance both humiliated the Congress further by reducing its embarrassing 2014 tally of two seats to one seat.

In a surprise outcome, All India Majlis-E-Itehadul Muslimen (AIMIM) legislator and former TV journalist Imtiaz Jaleel was poised to bag Aurangabad by defeating four-time MP Chandrakant Khaire of the Shiv Sena.

The ruling saffron alliance's superlative performance has come as a big boost to the BJP-Shiv Sena combine ahead of the State Assembly polls to be held in October this year. With its stunning performance achieved after bucking the severe anti-incumbency faced by the Devendra Fadnavis gov-

ernment, the ruling BJP-Shiv Sena alliance has dimmed the hopes of the Congress-NCP alliance returning to power in the State.

The BJP-Sena alliance performed well in all the regions in the state. While the saffron alliance won all the six seats (BJP-3 and Sena-3) in Mumbai, walked away with nine seats in western Maharashtra, six seats in north Maharashtra, six seats in Konkan region, eight seats in Marathwada and eight seats in Vidarbha region.

Though it increased the 2014 tally by one seat, the NCP had nothing to gloat about its electoral performance. For, NCP chief Sharad Pawar's daughter and two-time MP Supriya Sule managed to retain the home seat of Baramati, while his grand nephew and former deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar's son Parth Pawar suffered an embarrassing defeat at the hands of Shiv Sena's sitting MP Shrirang Appa Chandu Barne by a margin of 2,15,913 votes.

Incidentally, both the BJP and Shiv Sena retained their 2014's winning tally of 23 and 18 seats respectively. The only difference this time around was that the BJP contested 25 seats in the 2019 polls in against 26 seats it had contested in



2014 election, while the Shiv Sena contested 23 seats as against 22 seats it had contested in the previous polls.

Both the BJP and the Shiv Sena have been contesting the Lok Sabha polls as an alliance since 1989. In both the 2014 and 2019 polls, the BJP romped home with its best-ever winning tally of 23 seats as against 18 it had won in 1996, while the Sena improved its previous

tally of 15 seats, by winning as many as 18 seats.

However, with its winning tally having been reduced to mere one seat, the Congress' stock has hit its nadir in Maharashtra which was long-considered its bastion.

The only seat that the Congress won was Chandrapur, where its candidate Balubhau alias Suresh Narayan Dhanorkar trounced

Union Minister of State Hansraj Ahir by a margin of 50,288 votes.

The Congress' embarrassing electoral debacle can be gauged from the defeats of its two former chief ministers Ashok Chavan in Nanded and Sushilkumar Shinde fell by way side. While Chavan was trounced by Prataprao Patil Chikhlikar of the BJP, Shinde suffered a defeat hands of Sai Sideshwar Shivchary Mahaswami.

The annexing of Chavans' home turf of Nanded is of extreme political significance considering that barring four terms, Nanded was under the control of the Congress since 1952. While late S B Chavan represented the constituency twice (1980 and 1984), Ashok Chavan himself was elected to Lok Sabha once in a bye-election in 1987, following the resignation of his father. Late S B Chavan's son-in-law and Ashokrao's brother-in-law Bhaskarrao Khatgaonkar has represented the constituency thrice (1998, 1999 and 2009).

Chavan, who was incidentally is one of the two Congress candidates (out of its 26 candidates) had been elected to Lok Sabha in 2014 polls from Maharashtra in the face of a fierce Modi wave.

The other highlights of the polls were the victories of BJP's Union Minister Nitin Gadkari (Nagpur), state president Raosaheb Danve-Patil (Jalna), late senior party leader Gopinath Munde's daughter and sitting MP Pritam Munde (Beed), late party leader Pramod Mahajan's daughter Poonam Mahajan (Mumbai north-central).

Bollywood actress Urmila Matondkar, who contested the polls as a Congress candidate from Mumbai north constituency, suffered a massive defeat at the hands of BJP's sitting MP Gopal Shetty.

In the initial stages of counting in the morning, Matondkar had created a stir by lodging a complaint with the Election Commission of India alleging 'changed' EVM, here on Thursday.

"On the form of EVM 17C from Magathane, the signatures and the machine numbers are different. A complaint has been filed with the EC," Matondkar had tweeted.

However, later in the evening, Matondkar conceded the defeat through a tweet: "Congratulations to Prime Minister @narendramodiji and his team on a stupendous victory... one that can only be applauded with a mighty vigour".

## Modi 3<sup>rd</sup> PM to retain full majority

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Spearheading the NDA to a thumping victory, Narendra Modi is the third Prime Minister after Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi to retain power for a second term with full majority in the Lok Sabha.

As counting is on across the country on Thursday, trends indicate the Modi-led BJP will garner more than 302 seats on its own thereby easily going past the halfway mark of 272 seats in the 17th Lok Sabha elections. In 2014, the BJP had won 282 seats out of the total 543 in Lok Sabha.

Jawaharlal Nehru won around three-fourth of the Lok Sabha seats in the first elections in the country during 1951-52. Subsequently, he was able to win 1957 elections as well as 1962 elections with full majority. Since the elections were taking place for the first time in independent India in 1951, the polling had to be spread over a period of five months from October 1951 to February 1952.

While the Congress dominance was insurmountable in 1951, various other political strands such as Bhartiya Jana Sangh, Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party, Scheduled Caste Federation and Socialist Party had started to take shape by then. The Congress was able to win 364 out of 489 seats during 1951-52 elections. The party polled around 45 per cent of the total votes then.

In 1957, when Nehru was up for re-election, India was going through a difficult phase as the Prime Minister was battling the right wing inside and outside his party after passage of the Hindu Marriage Act in 1955.

The country was facing many language disputes. Consequently, after establishment of States Reorganisation Committee in 1953, many states were formed on the basis of language. The country was also feeling the heat due to food insecurity.

However, among all

this, Nehru was able to win a spectacular victory of 371 seats in 1957 elections. The Congress's vote share even increased from 45 per cent in 1951-52 to 47.78 per cent in 1957. In 1962 elections, Nehru won again bagging 361 seats out of total 494 seats in Lok Sabha. After 20 years of Independence, the Congress's hegemony in the country's politics finally started breaking down in 1967 when it lost six state assembly elections. Out of this six, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal was lost by the Congress for the very first time.

However, in 1967 elections, Nehru's daughter Indira Gandhi was able to get 283 seats out of total 520 seats. This was Indira's first electoral victory in general elections. In 1969, Indira expelled the old guard of the party, which were called as Congress (O). This section of Congress was led by Morarji Desai.

It was during this time that Indira coined the slogan "Garibi hatao", which found a wide emotive appeal among the Indian voters. As a result, she was able to increase her tally to 352 in 1971 elections for her second term.

In between 2010 and 2014, with UPA Government facing multiple allegations of massive corruption scandals, the BJP decided to appoint the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi as their Prime Minister candidate for 2014 general elections.

With a promise of development (vikas) across India, Narendra Modi won his first ever general elections with full majority in 2014 with 282 seats.



## 23 turncoats to retain power! ACCORDING TO EC'S DATA, 13 TURNCOATS ARE LEADING THEIR CONSTITUENCIES WHILE REST OF THEM ARE SET TO LOSE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 23 turncoat politicians of 76, who had switched over from one party to other ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, are in a position to win their seats as per the trends so far.

According to the Election Commission's data, 13 turncoats are leading their constituencies while the rest of them are set to lose.

Actor-politician Shatrughan Sinha, who joined Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha election, lost to rival Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad from Patna Sahib constituency in Bihar.

In nearby Madhepura, former JD(U) leader Sharad Yadav, who joined BJP over polls, was lagging by over 1.30 lakh votes from Dinesh Chandra Yadav of JD(U).

Tariq Anwar, who switched from Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) to Congress, is also trailing by over 40,000 votes from Katihar.

Cricketer-turned-politician Kirti Azad is trailing from Dhanbad by nearly 1.6 lakh votes. He had joined Congress from BJP.

Son of former Union Minister Jaswant Singh, Manvendra, who is contesting on a Congress ticket from Barmer is also trailing by about 3.12 lakh votes.

Meanwhile, Bhojpuri actor Ravi Kishan Shukla, who had contested on Congress ticket in the last general elections but joined the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, is leading by over 2.80 lakh from Gorakhpur constituency.

In Karnataka, three political leaders changed affiliations from Congress to BJP, with two of them leading in vote counts. While Umesh Yadav and Y

Actor-politician Shatrughan Sinha, who joined Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha election, lost to rival Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad from Patna Sahib constituency in Bihar.

Devendrappa are leading from Gulbarga and Bellary, respectively, BJP candidate from Hassan A Manju is behind by 1.42 lakh votes from Prajwal Revanna, grandson of former Prime Minister HD Devegowda.

Sujay Vikhe Patil, son of senior Congress leader Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil, had switched to BJP from Congress. He is ahead by over 2.30 lakh votes in Ahmednagar constituency of Maharashtra.

Suresh Dhanorkar, who joined Congress leaving Shiv Sena, is ahead of sitting BJP MP Hansraj Gangaram Ahir in the Chandrapur seat from the state. In Nanded, Pratap Chikhlikar, a turncoat from Shiv Sena to BJP, is leading against state Congress chief Ashok Chavan by about 37,000 votes.

Baijayant Panda who was expelled from the BJD and is contesting from Kendrapara on BJP ticket is lagging behind by 40,000 votes.

Former Union Minister Panabaka Lakshmi who changed sides from Congress

to TDP is trailing by 1.5 lakh votes in Tirupati constituency of Lok Sabha seats.

Among other major turncoats, AAP candidate Dharamvirra Gandhi from Patiala, Congress candidates Naseemuddin Siddiqui from Bijnore, Savitri Bai Phule from Bahraich and Babu Katara from Dahod, are also trailing.

In West Bengal's Alipurduar seat in north Bengal, Dasarth Tirkey the sitting TMC MP from Alipurduar, who was once a sitting RSP MLA, is staring at his defeat. Manas Bhunia, Apurba Sarkar, Kanialal Agarwal, all former Congress MLAs, who contested from Midnapore, Baharampur and Raiganj respectively on TMC tickets are trailing. Paresh Adhikary and Mafulja Khatun, former MLAs of Forward Bloc and CPI(M) who contested on TMC and BJP tickets respectively, are trailing in Coochbehar and Jangipur Lok Sabha seats.



## I don't blame EVMs, but accept defeat gracefully, says Pawar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Accepting the Lok Sabha poll outcome gracefully, NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Thursday chose not to blame the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for the party's poor performance in Maharashtra.

Talking to mediapersons after the poll outcome that saw his party win five seats in the State, Pawar said, "Yes. There were doubts about EVMs. There were some suspicions in the minds of people about EVMs. But, I don't want to blame the machines now, since the results are out. Once the verdict is out, we have to accept it gracefully... I am accepting it gracefully."

"We will definitely examine the reasons for our defeat in the polls. We will increase our contact with people in the run-up to State Assembly polls due in October. Verdict is out now... State is reeling under severe drought, we will have to reach assistance to drought-affected people. Whatever drought relief programme we have undertaken will continue," Pawar said.

Pawar's daughter and two-time MP Supriya Sule retained the Baramati seat, while his grand nephew Parth Pawar suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Shiv Sena's irang Appa Chandu Barne by a margin of 2,15,913 votes.

Alluding to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to a cave near Uttarakhand's Kedarnath temple for meditation during the last phase of the Lok Sabha polls, Pawar said: "In the last phase of polling, we saw a 'chamatkar' (miracle) of (prime minister Narendra Modi) sitting in a cave. This was something we had never seen before in this country. We did not expect such things. We will have to see how much it benefited (the BJP). We don't want to jump to the conclusion," he said.

## Social media erupts with memes!

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Social media was flooded with opinions, debates, jokes, memes especially aimed to the Opposition and the Congress. One of the most noticed developments was Prime Minister Narendra Modi removing Chowkidar from his twitter handle. He had prefixed it to counter Congress president Rahul Gandhi's attack against him saying 'Chowkidar Chor Hai'.

Ever since the vote count commenced, netizens began their day with a video clip showing television journalist Arnab Goswami mistakenly referring to Sunny Deol as Sunny Leone.

The clip was shared in such a huge number that it convinced actor Sunny Leone to post, "Leading by How many votes?????" on Twitter with mul-

tiiple emojis. Soon, the memes on Congress President Rahul Gandhi and other politicians began making the rounds.

BJP candidate Smriti Irani's win over Rahul Gandhi in Amethi further stirred the meme broth.

One trending meme showed Rahul Gandhi's face photoshopped on Deepika Padukone's body in the film, showed a picture of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan and Army Chief Qamar



A meme collage showed multiple images of Smriti Irani, saying: "Smriti Irani looking for some competition from Rahul Gandhi".

Citing a famous scene from the film "3 Idiots" a creative meme showed Prime Minister Narendra Modi telling Rahul Gandhi, "Neeche se check kar, neeche sel" A rendition of another scene from the same film, showed a picture of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan and Army Chief Qamar

Javed Bajwa along with the dialogue: "Hum dukhi the, par humse bhi zyada 2 log aur dukhi the".

An old picture of the Gandhi family — showing Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi sitting near a lotus-bud clad pond — resurfaced again with the caption: "Kamal khilne ke intezar mein". One picture showed Rahul Gandhi addressing a media campaign captioned, "Aare haarna jeetna chhoro, manoranjan mei toh koi kami nahi hui na?"

One viral meme on Smriti Irani's victory in Amethi read: "If 'Ghar mein ghus ke marna' has a face!"

Don't miss this hilarious one for the Opposition: "Bade dukh ke saath soochit karna pad raha hai ki ess desh ne ek saath 22 pradhan mantri kho diye hai".

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
E-TENDER NOTICE	
Sr.DCM/NR/LKO acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites following E-Tenders closing date 21.06.2019 upto 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.	
NIT No.	C/14307-FSLR-II/2019/KS dt.
Name of work	Tender for allotment of FSLR-II parcel space in Train no. 14307 originating from Prayag station of Lucknow Division having carrying capacity of 04/3.9 tonnes for a period of five (05) years.
Reserve Price (per day)	Rs. 2,027 (Rs. Two Thousand Twenty Seven Only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rs. One lacs only)
Completion Period	05 years
Tender Closing Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:00 hrs.
Tender Opening Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
Website	www.ireps.gov.in
Cost of Tender document form	Rs. 1,180/- (Rs. One Thousand One Hundred Eighty only) inclusive of GST @ 18%
Eligibility criteria	As detailed in Tender Document
Note: "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional documents shall be entertained after opening of offers. Even suo-moto post letters of the tenders shall be treated as NULL & Void." 1583/19	
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NIT No.	C/14307-RSLR-I/2019/KS dt.
Name of Work	Tender for allotment of RSLR-I parcel space in Train no. 14307 originating from Prayag station of Lucknow Division having carrying capacity of 04/3.9 tonnes for a period of five (05) years.
Reserve Price (per day)	Rs.2,027 (Rs. Two Thousand Twenty Seven only)
Earnest Money	Rs.1,00,000/- (Rs. One lacs only)
Completion Period	05 years
Tender Closing Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:00 hrs.
Tender Opening Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
Website	www.ireps.gov.in
Cost of Tender document form	Rs. 1,180/- (Rs. One Thousand One Hundred Eighty only) inclusive of GST @ 18%
Eligibility criteria	As detailed in Tender Document
Note: "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional documents shall be entertained after opening of offers. Even suo-moto post letters of the tenders shall be treated as NULL & Void." 1585/19	
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NIT No.	C/113-Cycle Stand/BSS (Main Side)/18/SS Dated : 22.05.2019
Name of Work	Cycle/Scooter Stand at Varanasi Station (Main side) of Lucknow Division for a period of three (03) years (A-I) category).
Reserve Price (for first year)	Rs.5535483/- (Rs. Fifty Five Lac Thirty Five Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Three only)
Earnest Money	Rs.332200/- (Rs. Three Lac Thirty Two Thousand Two Hundred only)
Completion Period	03 years
Bidding Start Date	22.05.2019
Tender Closing Date and Time	18.06.2019 at 15:00 hrs.
Tender Opening Date and Time	18.06.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
Website	www.ireps.gov.in
Cost of Tender document form	Rs. 5900/- (Rs. Five Thousand Nine Hundred only) inclusive of GST @ 18%
Eligibility criteria	As detailed in Tender Document
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N.I.T. No.	C/12540-FSLR-II/2019/KS dt.
Name of work	Tender for allotment of FSLR-II parcel space in Train no. 12540 originating from Lucknow station of Lucknow Division having carrying capacity of 04/3.9 tonnes for a period of five (05) years.
Reserve Price (per day)	Rs. 7,804 (Rs. Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Four only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rs. One lacs only)
Completion Period	05 years
Tender Closing Date and Time	21.06.19 at 15:00 hrs.
Tender Opening Date and Time	21.06.19 at 15:30 hrs.
Website	www.ireps.gov.in
Cost of Tender document form	Rs. 1,180/- (Rs. One Thousand One Hundred Eighty only) inclusive of GST @ 18%
Eligibility criteria	As detailed in Tender Document
Note - "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional documents shall be entertained after opening of offers. Even suo-moto post letters of the tenders shall be treated as NULL & Void." 1574/2019	
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NIT No.	C/14307-FSLR-II/2019/KS dt.
Name of work	Tender for allotment of FSLR-II parcel space in Train no. 14307 originating from Prayag station of Lucknow Division having carrying capacity of 04/3.9 tonnes for a period of five (05) years.
Reserve Price (per day)	Rs. 2,027/- (Rs. Two Thousand Twenty Seven only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rs. One lacs only)
Completion Period	05 years.
Tender Closing Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:00 hrs.
Tender Opening Date and Time	21.06.2019 at 15:30 hrs.
Website	www.ireps.gov.in
Cost of Tender document form	Rs. 1,180/- (Rs. One Thousand One Hundred Eighty only) inclusive of GST @ 18%
Eligibility criteria	As detailed in Tender Document.
Note: "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional documents shall be entertained after opening of offers. Even suo-moto post letters of the tenders shall be treated as NULL & Void." 1584/2019	
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# NAYA BHARAT

As traditional planks, issues and even grassroots politicians get blown away, Modi 2.0 has managed to change the idea of what India wants

This is undoubtedly a Pied Piper election, where Narendra Modi has emerged not just as an emboldened Prime Minister but a thought leader who has the nation's belief system wrapped up in a new cloak of nationalism and in a corporatised world, as a superbrand that has the trust, factory-manufactured or otherwise. Rather, he has overturned existing mindsets and their expression, freed up many boxes that so far held the characteristics of India and laid down a narrative sold on the promise of India reclaiming its place in the sun. Simply because civilisationally it was so once but the will to wake up to that truth was lost in our sub-consciousness and the burden of history. He seems to have stoked a sense of purposiveness, now that new-age aspirations have also reached saturation point, and has created a post-truth matrix. It is, therefore, the emergence of *Indusisation* rather than globalisation and a new idea of India. The reality of this may be unpalatable to existing liberal thought simply because it serves an alternative constituency, which has crept up from the fringes and whitewashed the mainstream. This new cultural awareness is based on the extreme polarity of all kinds of otherness. For some, it is religion, the most virulent kind, as evidenced by the landslide acceptability of a Sadhvi Pragya Thakur. For some it is majoritarianism, which sees minorityism as an encroachment that denies more rights due to itself and, therefore, feels it is losing relevance by its own complacency. For some it is about rewriting history and crossing out the invaders, the most contemporary manifestation being Pakistan-sponsored terror. For some, it is about anti-elitism, an assault of middle India into spatial templates set and appropriated by the Western-educated intelligentsia. For others, it is about inclusivity of opportunity, goals and crucially empowerment — be it village roads and electrification, the Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, toilets and LPGs for women, space age dreams for the young and a tough-as-nails leadership that won't succumb to any global Trump-card. And the most important, it is the willingness to self-correct despite the skids, the disbursal of ₹6,000 to farmers' accounts, blunting the face of farm distress and sending a message that it would be attended to, no matter what the *nyay* crusades of others might promise. Of course, beyond the man is the BJP's organisation which has not let up on its groundwork, treating both old and new territories as the same, and not allowing to slip itself into a comfort zone. In fact, the only question that surfaces is if Modi had under-read his own ability and, therefore, pushed his muscular nationalism a bit too far during the campaign, indulging in a dark, divisive propaganda. But that, too, was probably scripted cinematically to gloss over any talk of issues or his inadequate performance and set up a threat so real that even plurality was seen as an enemy of national identity. Or was it a ruse to simplify India's complexity into an easily readable unitary structure? That alone can explain why Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, for all his gentlemanly sincerity, lost his home seat of Amethi. For Modi didn't want to be an aspirational choice of 2014, he wanted to be an absolutist destiny's child in 2019. Almost hypnotically and spiritually ordained.

This nationwide chemistry has beaten arithmetic, even when it was crafted and test-piloted in the electoral laboratory called Uttar Pradesh. That's why the SP-BSP-RLD alliance has not been able to convince each other's voter bases that it would pay to invest in joint winnable candidates than bleed out. However, apart from Yadavs and Jatavs, it seems the larger arc of most backward castes and Dalits, some of whom have broken basic livelihood barriers, have migrated to a national party and are staking larger dreams on continuity than standing out with a limiting casteist tag. And Modi has made the right noises by announcing quotas for the poor than caste groups and emphasising on raising rural incomes by 2022. The second big takeaway is that of eastern India, which so far had stood out as a bloc like south India, beginning to give way to a pan-India narrative albeit with adaptations. So while Biju Janata Dal's Naveen Patnaik has been voted for the State level, the voter has told him he is good only for Odisha and doesn't qualify for a national role except being a symbiotic partner. The Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee had probably understood it a bit earlier and though she helmed the *mahagathbandhan* initially, took a step back when she realised her State was in trouble. Quick to sense that a nationalist surge could ultimately decimate even her regional relevance, she has just about held on. Of course, she has lost the battle of perception and has to rework strategies from this moment on. Assam and the Northeast, have, meanwhile shown that for all the anxieties about the Citizenship Amendment Bill, they do not want to be left out of mainstream development. Not that regional leaders have not stood tall. This election's biggest story has been scripted by YSR Congress' Jagannathan Reddy, who has overturned the charisma of Telugu Desam chief Chandrababu Naidu, silently and fervently. Much credit should also be given to DMK chief Stalin who has lived up to his father's legacy and occupied the vacuum in Tamil Nadu created by the deaths of his father and J Jayalalitha, both demi-gods of their time. Maratha strongman Sharad Pawar, however, failed, losing his turf and sugar belt to the saffron deluge. Does that have something to do with chasing prime ministerial ambitions like KC Rao of Telangana, who, too, has paid for overgrowing national ambitions?

That brings us to the Congress itself, thoroughly emaciated and beaten, where even a younger leadership, despite being Instagram pleasures, could not shake off the burden of dynastic entitlement. Even organisationally, the Gandhi scions, Rahul and Priyanka, haven't concentrated on strengthening structures and have relied on empty rhetoric. While Rahul gifted the BJP a slogan by calling the Prime Minister "*chowkidaar chor hai*", and rivals spun it on its head justifying why *chowkidaari* was needed, he failed to retain the gains he made. Who would have believed Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, where the Congress earned a hard-won fight in the Assembly elections last winter, would cave in completely? Was it arrogance, complacency or its most telling weakness — old school coterie *durbars* at the exclusion of well-meaning local leaders? Capt Amarinder Singh scripted the Punjab win despite a Balakot, simply because he acts on his own. Besides, the party played saboteur of the grand alliance, becoming a vote cutter, and could not convert a single issue-based rant into an alternative movement. Nor could it claim authorship of schemes that were implemented successfully by Modi. If the Congress wants to get back its axis, it has to nuke itself and rebuild or else be vapourised. As for Modi, he has had the advantage of being granted time beyond the incubation period of a regime change (yes five years may be theoretically too little). He has clearly the numbers and a seeming hold of the national imagination. He has already spoken of embarking on economic reforms. Question is does he want a legacy based on admiration or fear? For there is a huge sense of fear among the others akin to being second class citizens. Or will he discard the tools of political trade and really set an imaginative and progressive agenda? Will it be about order or disorder? Will it be Modi's India hereon? Or Kedarnath's? Only time will tell.



# Farmers back in the fold

BJP's resounding victory in UP signals a triumph of developmental politics over the casteist variant. The pre-election payment to sugarcane growers worked too



PARMANAND PANDEY

This Lok Sabha election has broken many myths not only at the national level but in Uttar Pradesh (UP), too. This is for the first time that a Government at the Centre has not only warded off the anti-incumbency factor but has, in fact, improved its position in many decades. It's an oft-repeated saying that the road to Delhi's seat of power passes through UP and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) proved that its pan-India weight could fill any trough, even the one in UP.

Most political pundits had predicted not more than 30 seats for the BJP in this State, particularly after the *gathbandhan* of the Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Rashtriya Lok Dal came into existence. These parties were heavily enthused by the bypoll results of Kairana, Gorakhpur and Phoolpur, where castes like Jats, Yadavs, Dalits and Muslims played a vital role to defeat the BJP. Parties thought that this time, too, the same formula would work and the BJP would be decimated.

UP comprises more than 25 per cent Dalits, nearly 18 per cent of Muslims and 15 per cent of Yadavas and Jats. Their alliance would have been lethal to finish the BJP but this formula did not work in 2019. Belying all expectation, the BJP romped home with 60 seats. Many journalists and analysts, who analysed the outcome of the Lok Sabha election, keeping in mind the caste angle, ignored something that clearly worked in this election — the politics of emotion, one which helped Prime Minister Narendra Modi project himself as the do-gooder who was being obstructed by greedy power players. And for all the polarisation, he seems to have cut across the masses in terms of appeal and acceptability as a worthy choice in a national bet.

So while in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, there was a discernible Modi wave sweeping across the country, in 2019, there was a complete denial of this wave by most parties and political commentators as well. The SP and BSP are, without doubt, casteist parties. While SP depends heavily on the Yadavas and Muslims, BSP claims the monopoly over the Dalits votes plus some Muslim votes. It is an unspoken fact that by and large, Muslims have been against the BJP and in this election were expected to vote against the BJP. Muslims are considered to be politically very wise and vigilant and they vote in favour of the candidate who can defeat the BJP, irrespective of the party he/she belongs to. This was the reason why the *gathbandhan* was overconfident of pulverising the BJP this Lok Sabha election. It was considering itself to be invincible but all the planning proved to be day-dreaming. The reality is that in this complicated deal, vote transference didn't happen among partners across the State though it had worked at the bypoll level.

The Congress has almost no presence in UP. It has been non-existent for all practical purposes for nearly three decades. Yet for all the concentrated focus by Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi to wean the upper castes away with her temple run and boat



rides, the bottomlines are disastrous. Except for Rai Bareilly, the grand old party has not been able to retain even Amethi from where its national president Rahul Gandhi was contesting. These two seats have been the pocketborough of the Congress and except for 1977, both have always been held by the party. The so-called Congress *Brahmastra*, too, failed.

Now let us consider how the BJP was able to shatter the dreams of the *gathbandhan*. Results show that while the SP-BSP combine could not make any significant change in the political contours of Uttar Pradesh, the BSP has been quite lucky. In fact, it has ridden piggyback on the larger appeal of a front. In the last Lok Sabha elections of 2014, the BSP had drawn a blank. On the other hand, SP could secure five seats last time, mainly held by family members, including one by Mulayam Singh Yadav. This time, it has held just nine seats. However, the BSP under Mayawati has improved its tally from zero to 12. This shows that despite getting full support of Muslims and Yadavas, the SP has not been able to get the Dalit votes transferred in its favour. It is also alleged that Mayawati did not send her message to the Dalits in favour of the SP candidates because in her heart of hearts, she does not like the Yadavas. This was enough for Dalits to not transfer their votes in favour of the SP, which is dominated by the Yadavas and who are considered to be the musclemen. In the last Assembly election, Mayawati had coined the slogan "*Chadh Gundan ki Chhati Par, Mohar Lagao Haathi Par*." She used to say that Yadavas are the cruel oppressors of the Dalits and this slogan silently resonated in this election, too.

While the *gathbandhan* parties were mainly dependent on the votes of Jat, Yadavas and Muslims, the BJP, under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, was telling the people about their achievements. There is no denying the fact that the pace of development in Uttar Pradesh has been very

IT IS ALSO ALLEGED THAT MAYAWATI DID NOT SEND HER MESSAGE TO THE DALITS IN FAVOUR OF THE SP CANDIDATES BECAUSE IN HER HEART OF HEARTS, SHE DOES NOT LIKE THE YADAVAS

fast. Almost all villages in the State are now connected with motorable roads, every household has electricity, every family avails gas connection under the Ujjwala Yojana. There is hardly any house even in the remote countryside, which does not have a toilet facility. So much so that those, who did not have a house to live, are living in *pucca* houses today. There is hardly any member of any family who does not have a bank account under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana. Almost everyone has been ensured under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana.

These schemes have been implemented without any discrimination on the basis of caste, creed and religion. There was a constant crisis of urea but now it is available in plenty. Soil health cards have been distributed to all farmers, which have helped them. Hence, casteist factors could not cut any ice.

Another important factor that led to the BJP's win is that it was, perhaps, for the first time that the farmers got timely and proper payment for their produce, particularly sugarcane grow-

ers. This is something that was unthinkable at a time when the SP or BSP ruled the State. Further, the Yogi Government also banned illegal slaughterhouses, thus winning the support of the Hindus. To top it all, not even one communal riot has taken place in the State during the period of Modi and Yogi. There was no peace, no security during the SP/BSP era. Anti-social elements used to have a field day and the police was made pliant to the MLAs and MPs belonging to the castes of the Chief Ministers of their time.

Distribution of electricity has considerably improved in small villages. Thus, the slogan of 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas', has gone down well with the people of the State. Another factor which has worked in favour of the BJP is a direct transfer of the subsidy amount in the accounts of the beneficiaries. This successfully eliminated the army of middleman and contractors, who never allowed the farmers and poor to be benefited by the numerous welfare schemes. Going forward, Balakot and surgical strikes worked heavily in favour of the BJP too, particularly in rural areas. The BJP also sold it properly to the people.

On the other hand, the Opposition, mainly the leaders of the *gathbandhan*, failed to raise any issue before the electorate as they were heavily dependent on caste factors. Mayawati got so desperate that she showed the audacity of presenting Mulayam Singh Yadav as the genuine backward and Modi as the fake backward. People realised that only the family members of Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mayawati have reaped the fruits of power in amassing a huge amount of money. Corruption had become a byword during the tenures of Mayawati and Mulayam, which has been completely unheard of during the Modi and Yogi regime. This has been the reason why caste politics of *gathbandhan* has been buried deep and the politics of development has been preferred in Uttar Pradesh.

(The writer is Advocate on Record at the Supreme Court of India)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Failing the test

Sir — It is shocking that Gomathi Marimuthu, the athlete from Tamil Nadu, has failed the dope test twice and it is even worse that the Anti-Doping Agency did not report the fact that she tested positive a month ago. This amounts to cheating. Sports persons must realise that they let down fans and the country when they test positive for performance-enhancing drugs.

NR Ramachandran  
Chennai

### Respect Dutee's decision

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Love has no boundaries" (May 22). Indian sprinter Dutee Chand has shown tremendous amount of courage to make the admission of being in a same-sex relationship. It is unfortunate that the revelation has led to a storm, most importantly on the part of her family members. Dutee's elder sister Saraswati Chand, herself an athlete, did not approve of this relationship and said that Chand's partner had "pressurised and blackmailed" her for her wealth and property. It's strange that in today's times even after the Supreme Court's historic decision to decriminalise Section 377, which pro-

### The onus is now on Modi

The massive win registered by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the 17th Lok Sabha elections was unexpected. Before the polls, the general impression was that the country may be heading towards a hung Parliament. That the BJP has defied all predictions to win handsomely can be attributed to the gigantic factor: Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister's direct connect with the people of India has clicked big time. His tireless work, reasonable success story in the last five years, especially in rural India, his unmatched international repute, broad vision,

love for the country and its security and visible and tough measures against terror perpetrators have all worked in the BJP's favour. The Odisha election results have proved beyond doubt that people know their preferences well. Otherwise, results to the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka cannot be explained. The Modi-Amit Shah duo has had a keen eye on some regions considered anathema for the BJP, Northeast and West Bengal and worked hard to make deep inroads in these areas. Their efforts have paid off. Of course, the anti-Modi campaign by the Opposition



backfired. People did not seem to take some jibes like '*chowkidaar chor hai*' against Modi lightly.

The Opposition's unabashed, one-point and unwavering '*Modi-hatao*' mission has been shown the door. The country's people obvious-

ly want a strong, dominant and decisive leader at the Centre, who can hold his own against internal and external challenges and threats. The Opposition parties' tendency to take the voters for granted with regard to caste and religious equation has flopped badly as is evidenced in Uttar Pradesh where the *mahagathbandhan* was acting as if it had routed the BJP even before the elections. People may also have wanted to give Modi another five years to take a relook at his unfulfilled promises.

Ganapathi Bhat  
Akola

hibited same-sex relationships, many still live with an old orthodox mindset.

Dutee Chand's decision is purely personal and we should judge her as an athlete and how she performs on the track. This personal matter must not come in the way of her intense preparations for the Olympics.

Bal Govind  
Noida

### Water woes

Sir — Now that we are staring at a crisis, we are beginning to think of solutions to the water scarcity that is plaguing our cities when we should be implementing an action plan. Now we have to act in mission mode, recharging wells, setting up new ones and perhaps make rainwater harvesting a

mandatory practice. The judicious use of water must be encouraged and field awareness is crucial. The Government should consult and take the support of non-governmental organisations and domain experts.

Smita Pandey  
Via email

Send your feedback to:  
letterstopioneer@gmail.com



**FIRST COLUMN**

## Becoming agents of change

With more and more women taking up unconventional modules, they are making farming more productive and commercially viable



**SWAPNA MAJUMDAR**

Harshada Zanje always yearned for a house of her own. But with her husband being the lone bread-winner in a household of nine members, she knew it would be difficult to move out of the two-room mud house in which they all lived. The small paddy field in their Vadan Zanje village in Pune district of Maharashtra was their only source of income and production was not enough to yield profits. But she didn't give up on her dreams. One day, she saw a photo of a house in a nearby shop and liked it so much that she bought it. She kept the photo near her bedside, hoping against hope that one day she would have a similar house. When a chance meeting with voluntary organisations working in the area led her to plant marigolds, little did Zanje know that she was heading towards the seeds of her dream. Early this year, two years after she began growing marigolds, Zanje moved into a pucca five-room house of her dreams.

In an area where farm incomes are dependent on the vagaries of climate, Zanje has shown that problems like water scarcity and undulating terrain can be overcome with hard work and some hand-holding and guidance. So good has been her yield that Zanje is now able to employ labour at the time the flowers need to be picked. It is no wonder that many other farmers, both women and men, have followed her example and begun growing marigolds. "They have all begun to dream like me. If I could do it, they, too, can increase their incomes and fulfil their hopes and wishes," says Harshada.

But much of this would not have been possible had she not met members of CybageAsha, the Pune-based charitable trust and philanthropic arm of Cybage. The organisation, which was working to improve infrastructure in a few villages in Velhe cluster where Zanje lives, realised that in addition to the existing work, more needed to be done to address rural distress and that economic development and income security of the farming community could be accelerated through improved sources of livelihoods. "We also realised that one shoe would not fit all. It was important to tailor these livelihoods according to their needs while ensuring that empowerment of women remained an integral part of our intervention by giving equal economic opportunities," says Ritu Nathani, head, CybageAsha.

So in 2017, CybageAsha, in collaboration with BAIIF Institute for Sustainable Livelihoods and Development, conducted a study of the geographical conditions in 11 villages in Bhor and Velhe cluster in Pune district. An assessment of the climatic and soil conditions revealed that rainfall was unevenly distributed because of the angle of slope of the hilly topography in Velhe. This in turn affected the moisture content of the soil and rate of erosion. Since Velhe's high degree of topographical slope had led to high soil erosion, growing marigolds was found to be an ideal option to counter this as it can be grown in a wide range of soils. It was also found that although marigolds were being grown here, it was not yielding enough benefits. Therefore, they decided to introduce the Kolkata variety of marigold instead of the Kapri variety traditionally grown here. Being far superior to the Kapri variety, the new variety would not only promote climate-resilient farming and help in natural resource management but boost incomes as well, revealed Pankaj Katte of BAIIF.

When these benefits and the need to switch to a more productive variety were discussed in village meetings with farmers as a way to improve incomes during lean times, Zanje was among the first to volunteer to a trial plot in her field. She understood that in comparison to the Kolkata variety, the Kapri marigolds not only had lower productivity but were less attractive and, therefore, had less market value. Zanje's decision to take the risk of planting the new variety, despite initial opposition from her family, paid off when the first harvest of this trial plot showed that the size of the flower was five times bigger and its productivity was four times more. This led Zanje to plant marigolds in her entire field and her first harvest yielded 150 kg and a profit of ₹15,000.

Interestingly, 60-year-old Hirabai, the mother-in-law of Zanje's sister-in-law, who worked alongside Zanje during harvesting, has also been inspired by her success. Having learnt from Zanje that she could adopt a new technique to overcome water scarcity and the uneven topography in her village, Hirabai has taken to wadi or tree farming. This form of farming helps convert unproductive waste lands into productive mango and jamun-growing plots. Although CybageAsha and BAIIF don't work in her village, Hirabai has planted mango trees in her barren patch after hearing about wadi farming from Zanje. Clearly, women like Zanje are the cornerstone of the intervention. Not only has she fulfilled her dream but is helping others to do so. "Our aim is to help farmers, especially women, transform their lives. As partners in sustainable development, together we are bringing change," says Nathani.

*(The writer is a senior journalist)*

I AM STARTING A WEEKLY SERIES WHERE I WILL ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM AROUND FOUR MILLION NEPALESE FOLLOWING THESE SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES.  
 —US AMBASSADOR TO NEPAL  
**RANDY BERRY**



WE THINK SUCH KIND OF ENGAGEMENT IS NOT NEEDED. IF THE EMBASSY HAS ANYTHING TO SAY, IT CAN DIRECTLY TALK TO THE GOVERNMENT.  
 —NEPAL'S MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
**PRADEEP KUMAR GYAWALI**

# Living dangerously

In 2007, Pakistan spiralled downwards amid violence, political polarisation and economic recession. However, some normalcy was restored. Is it heading that way again?



**NADEEM PARACHA**

On September 30, 1965, the Communist Party of Indonesia — Parti Komunis Indonesia (PKI) — attempted a *coup d'état* through a clandestine organisation embedded within the Indonesian armed forces. The PKI was close to the Indonesian nationalist hero and first ruler President Sukarno. PKI's embedded organisation, the 13th of September Movement, believed that a large portion of the country's armed forces was anti-Communist and under the influence of the US, which was planning to topple Sukarno.

Sukarno was not a communist himself. In her book, *Maosism: A Global History*, Julia Lovell writes that he had kept the large PKI on his side to neutralise the influence of the military. Nevertheless, in the early 1960s, as tensions between the military and PKI mounted and the economy began to unravel, Sukarno made an alarming speech in August 1964. Alluding to the developing crisis, Sukarno stated that the country was "living dangerously".

The 1965 coup attempt was brutally thwarted by anti-communist military factions. The coup was crushed by Major-General Suharto. Adrian Wickers, in his 2013 book, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, writes that the military gave far-right Islamic and Catholic groups ample space and impunity to carry out some of the worst massacres of the 20th century. A 1977 Amnesty International report suggests that "about one million" Indonesians — believed to be PKI members or sympathisers — were mercilessly slaughtered and these included pregnant women and children.

The Australian novelist Christopher Koch dramatised the carnage in a 1978 novel. The title of the novel, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, was inspired by Sukarno's speech. Since the novel was turned into a film in 1982, the expression "year of living dangerously" is often used by writers and journalists to describe a tumultuous year in the life of a country and/or a particularly violent period in which a country spirals into anarchy and unprecedented bloodshed.

If one sets aside 1971's bloody civil war in former East Pakistan, then the year in which Pakistan lived dangerously (in the context of the mentioned expression) has to be 2007. It is remarkable that the country actually came out of it at all.

The year got off to a terrible start when, in January, an Al Qaeda suicide bomber killed 12 policemen in Peshawar. Then in February, military chief and president Pervez Musharraf suspended the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Iftikhar Chaudhry, accusing him of corruption.

The lawyers' community rejected the suspension and began a movement. It was soon joined by both big and small Opposition parties, whose rallies were often attacked by riot police. As the movement transformed into a populist anti-Musharraf drive and spread from Punjab to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, its leaders decided to take it to Sindh's capital city, Karachi. Karachi's then largest party, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), was a staunch ally of the Musharraf regime.

The MQM wasn't happy when the suspended judge and his supporters arrived in Karachi



on May 12, 2007. As the judge was waiting at the city's airport, riots and open gun battles between MQM activists and those belonging to the anti-Musharraf alliance such as the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) and Awami National Party (ANP), erupted on the roads and streets of the city. Government buildings, media outlets, cars and buses were fired upon and torched. Snipers took positions on overhead bridges and mowed down opponents with bullets.

The city came to a standstill as armed men roamed the streets amid dead bodies, abandoned cars and burning motorbikes and buses. According to a May 13, 2007 report by CNN, 33 people were killed and dozens were wounded. The MQM and the Musharraf regime accused the Opposition parties for the violence, whereas the former and most local and foreign news outlets put the blame on the latter and Musharraf.

Then in June, unprecedented monsoon rains in Karachi killed over 200 people. The very next month on July 3, militant clerics and their "students" fired at security forces posted outside Islamabad's Red Mosque. The mosque and its seminary had been taken over by radical clerics and their supporters, who for months had been harassing the people of the locality on the pretext of "vanquishing anti-Islamic activities." As tensions between the clerics and the state rose, security forces moved in after it was confirmed that the clerics and their "students" were heavily armed. The major siege took place on July 10 and 11 when Pakistan military commandos entered the building and eliminated the militants.

On July 13, newspapers reported that 102 people had been killed. These included 91 civilians (most of whom were militants holed up in

ON NOVEMBER 3, MUSHARRAF DECLARED A STATE OF EMERGENCY. THE SAME MONTH, SECTARIAN VIOLENCE IN KURRAM AGENCY KILLED 80 PEOPLE AND ISLAMIC MILITANTS BEGAN TO TAKE OVER BUILDINGS IN SWAT. ON NOVEMBER 22, PAKISTAN WAS SUSPENDED FROM THE COMMONWEALTH FOR REFUSING TO LIFT THE EMERGENCY. ON NOVEMBER 26, PML-N CHIEF NAWAZ SHARIF RETURNED FROM EXILE

the mosque), 10 soldiers and one ranger. As the political and economic situation continued to deteriorate, while terrorist attacks by Al Qaeda-affiliated outfits increased in number, the exiled chairperson of the PPP Benazir Bhutto, returned to Pakistan in October. A large rally in Karachi that was escorting her from the Jinnah International Airport was attacked by suicide bombers and 124 people were killed in the carnage. Al Qaeda-affiliated groups were suspected of carrying out the attack.

On November 3, Musharraf declared a state of emergency. The same month, sectarian violence in Kurram Agency killed 80 people and Islamic militants began to take over buildings in Swat. On November 22, Pakistan was suspended from the Commonwealth for refusing to lift the emergency. On November 26, PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif returned from exile.

On December, 13 Islamist militant groups formed the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which would go on to kill thousands of Pakistanis in the following years. On December 27, suicide bombers assassinated Benazir Bhutto. Dozens perished with her and dozens more were killed in the riots which spread across Pakistan for three days. Enraged mobs ran amok, setting fire to buildings and automobiles, especially in Punjab and Sindh.

Things almost completely fell apart in 2007. However, the country managed to limp back to some "normalcy" but the economy continued to plummet and terrorist attacks became endemic. Things in this respect began to somewhat improve from 2015 onwards. But an economic downturn, the recent spike in terror attacks and intense political polarisation, are once again threatening the country. Are we once again moving towards a year of living dangerously?

*(Courtesy: The Dawn)*

## Guard against an apocalypse

Human influences on climate change have heralded a new epoch — anthropocene — that is a clear threat to the Himalayas. There's a strong need to establish synergies between climate change mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development goals



**SANDEEP KUMAR DUBEY**

The human influence on the planet and its environment, leading to global warming, are no more hidden. However, there can also be several natural factors that cause climate change and variations in global temperatures. In fact, increased volcanic eruptions and periods of few sunspots may lead to a drop-off in the temperature as it happened over the Northern Hemisphere for about a thousand years, known as Little Ice Age, which lasted roughly till the mid-18th Century. Climate variations are, therefore, generally induced by a mix of natural and human factors. Precisely because of this, climate scientists find it difficult to define the phrase "2°C above pre-industrial levels" as referred

to in the sub-clause 1 (a) of Article 2 of the Paris Agreement, 2015, and fix a numerical baseline for the average global temperature.

The challenge is to separate and quantify human influences on climate change from that of nature. This will help convince and stimulate decision-makers throughout the world for taking up the much-needed climate change mitigation actions as stated in Article 2 of the Paris Agreement, 2015, "to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels...to significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change."

The geological era dominated by human influences on climate is considered as anthropocene. A recent special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) titled, "Global Warming of 1.5°C" attempts to trace the temporal extent of anthropocene. The report says that anthropocene has geological merit to be regarded as a formal epoch in the geological time scale and that it begins from the mid-20th century and continues. Scientists, artists and documentary makers are all trying to capture and

map the trajectory of Anthropocene and associated global greenhouse gas emission pathways.

In the face of huge human influence on the earth system, pursuing the efforts to limit the temperature increase above 1.5°C is an ambitious task. Unchecked, the temperature rise above 1.5°C may have significant, long-lasting and irreversible impacts on human and natural systems. Among the many impacts and the cascading risks that changing climate and increase in global temperature will lead to, one is on the Himalayas (to be specific, Hindu Kush-Himalaya region) and the natural resources thereof.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) described the Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) region the "Third Pole" as it "stores more snow and ice than anywhere else in the world outside the polar regions." The HKH ecosystem is already showing signs of human influences. Changes in cryosphere are an important indicator of climate change. In February 2019, the ICIMOD came out with a landmark study titled, "The Hindu Kush Himalaya

Assessment", delineating the impacts of climate change and increasing global temperature on HKH and its resources. According to the report, glaciers have been shrinking since the mid-18th century, the exception being from 1920 to 1940. The ICIMOD warned of dire consequences if the global climate response fails to contain the rising temperature and said that "current emissions would lead to five degrees in warming and a loss of two-thirds of the region's glaciers by 2100."

Though commonly described as "Water Tower of Asia", water crisis is looming large over countries in the HKH region. The unfolding water crisis is likely to get worse in the coming years, aided by human drivers such as climate change. The per capita water availability has drastically gone down, thus compromising on the developmental needs, especially of the poverty-stricken population.

Rapid rate of urbanisation (often unplanned), ever-growing population and fast-paced industrialisation in the HKH region stress upon the already depleting natural resources, including water. In the face of competitive sectoral

demands for water, administering equitable distribution of water resources for different sectors and needs can be even more challenging for the existing water governance structures in the region.

Hydro-politics played out as a subset of regional geopolitics often ferments competition among countries which undercuts the prospects of cooperation. In the geopolitical tug of war, it is no denying that countries may be inclined to use water as a geo-strategic weapon. Establishment of effective transboundary water governance structures and constant dialogues to achieve trade-offs between upstream and downstream water uses may preclude such a scenario. It is important for nations to understand that cooperation on water issues leads to a win-win situation. Efforts must be on to promote regional dialogue and multi-stakeholders partnership on water issues for effective water resources management and conflict mitigation in the region.

About two billion people living in the basins of the 10 major rivers, which originate from HKH, benefit directly or indirectly from its resources, espe-

cially water. To ensure water security for the region, understanding localised variations will be the key. For example, in the hilly areas of the region, the main source of water is the springs. Thus, in this case, relevant geographical units for effective water resources management will be the springsheds and not the river basins. Augmenting water resources, rejuvenating water bodies and strengthening water governance institutions will be vital for the development of the region, human security and achieving sustainable development goals, especially Goal 6.

It is also important to develop institutional capacities at multi-level governance structures for adaptive and effective governance, build cross-scalar interfaces among the various knowledge-based systems and strengthen the resilience of the communities. As the IPCC special report on "Global Warming of 1.5°C" suggests, there is a strong need to establish synergies between climate change mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development goals.

*(The writer is a freelance commentator)*



**FOREIGN EYE**



### NOWHERE LEFT TO FAIL

May lacked the courage and vision to articulate compelling answers to the many questions, still less to persuade the public and Parliament to trust her judgment. That profound and protracted failure is in large part the reason why the whole Brexit process has broken down, why British voters will participate in European parliamentary elections on Thursday, and why that poll is certain to administer a brutal verdict on the prime minister and her party.  
*(The Guardian Editorial)*







# MASTERING THE PERFECT BLEND

BAAR BAAR's amalgamation of north Indian food with a modern twist has some hits as well misses, says CHAHAK MITTAL

The posh lanes of Khan Market are somewhat akin to a food lover's paradise. And it is here that I headed to Baar Baar, a dine-in restaurant, as a writer and food lover could indulge in her love for fusion dishes as the place offers Indian food with a modern twist. And was I in for a surprise and a change of view towards the way an authentic Indian dish could taste.

The ambience, replete with colours like magenta and teal, peppered with brass and wooden decor, sets the tone for experimentation. It makes you reconsider how Indian dishes could be prepared with a new outlook.

The first I bit into the papad-like sweet potato, yam and banana *kadakh naan* and *chaat corn roti*, served with sweet corn mousse and tomato sea buckthorn *chutney*. The taste was such that it would remind one of hummus and pita bread but at the same time, forget it as this has a distinct flavour. The chopped cashews, sprinkled on the top, added flavour to the 'perfectly bland' yet the most tasteful mousse.

My confidence about the curations by New York chef Sujan Sarkar went up a notch further with the potato *tikki* which was served next. It was nothing like the ones found at the street side *chaat thela* (vendor). The crispiest *tikki*, in the centre was surrounded by battered and deep-fried *kale* and spinach tempura and had a sweet and sour yoghurt mousse poured over its top. The taste could make one wish that every *thela* should prepare the *tikki* that way. But uniqueness was presumably the drill, here. The next ensemble made it very apparent.

Served with an *ulta tawa parantha* at its bottom, the cylindrical duck *seekh kebab* was topped with mixed berry chutney and housemade pickles. The *kebab* didn't have the overtly non-vegetarian taste yet was perfectly meaty. A special alert for vegetarians. This one might just



not executed to perfection as these appeared and tasted more like potato wedges. The dried cheese didn't make too much of an impact.

With two disappointments in a row, I looked up to the next dish, which was *Malai broccoli* and pumpkin, crispy lentil cake and parmesan mousse mixed in a salad bowl. A vegetable lover like me would absolutely drool even at the very names of its ingredients, but the dish failed to meet my gastronomic expectations.

Next up was the chicken *malai tikka*, topped with cheese fondue and walnut crumbs. Ideally, a perfect example of fusion.

As I neared a saturation, the last dish in line was the yoghurt apricot *kofta* served in *dum* gravy and with sea buckthorn *papad*-like breads and pickled apple. The *kofta*, soft as cotton, could be an appropriate replacement for *paneer* (cottage cheese) or usual *koftas* — finally, a perfect fusion.

The speed of the service was not uniform. But I was lucky to get my desserts a bit late as after all the food that I had, it took time for me to make some space. But desserts were worth the wait. The first one was the *Thandai cassata*, served with bits of nutty-fruit pistachios and black pepper meringue. The crispy waffles on top melted in my mouth like cream. The cassata had my heart.

The second dessert was the Cashew cake, served with milk ice cream and apricot gel. Even as the ice cream was a perfect replacement to the vanilla, the cake could have had balanced its sweetness, which was a tad bit too much.

make you want to reconsider your food orientation.

While I was still gorging on the duck *kebabs*, sous chef Hitesh Lohat was keen on serving the best under his domain. The beet-root and peanut chops were served with garlic, apricot and chili *chutney*, greens and pickles. It reminded me of a crazy ball-sized coconut, brown, hard and

# It's all about love

The authentic food, the French bistro ambience and the endearing service at PAUL make for a perfect meal, says SHAMBHAVI SURI

Cooking in the 21st century is often equated with new methods like molecular gastronomy. However, at PAUL, they believe that there is nothing better than spending time with family and friends over a delicious meal. Located in the busy Ambience Mall, Gurugram, this restaurant will make you fall in love with the French cuisine. "We received a set of rules and guideline from PAUL International for everything. From the décor to the machines, which we are supposed to use and the recipes," say chef Vipin (head pastry chef) and chef Lokesh (executive chef).

Before I talk about the food, I wanted to elaborate on something that the place exuded which made the visit more memorable. Here, they believe that "there is no sincerer love than that of food," and they show it. There is love in the food they bring to the table and it is evident in the way they treat their guests and probably that's the reason why you don't want to leave.

The ambience really seems to take you to one of the cafés along the walkway in France. Sitting inside, you can smell the breads baking, the coffee brewing and the aroma of decadent food. The décor is simple yet elegant and the smell of bakery in the air is comforting.

While I was just about sinking in the experience, the first of the courses was brought to the table. This were the smoked salmon bites, traditionally referred as a tartine in French or simply put, sliced and toasted baguettes, topped with ingredients. This *tartine* was bite size, toasted baguettes, topped with a refreshing dill sour cream, smoked salmon and sprinkled with capers and mustard grains. The crunchiness from the fresh baguette added a bite to the dish while the creaminess of the sour cream and silkiness of the salmon, melted in the mouth. The capers and the mustard grains further, enhanced and elevated the bites by adding a little pungency and saltiness. This dish was sophisticated and a perfect appetite builder.

I was still savouring the flavour of the salmon bites when a whiff of onions, freshly baked bread and cheese wafted through the air. The next thing I knew, a French onion soup was placed before me. Campaigne bread served as a bowl for the soup, where as soon as the lid was removed, I could smell the caramelised onions and the baked cheese. The soup was essentially, a thick brown broth in which onions were slow cooked. A sip revealed that it contained the richness of onions, cheese and butter. This is what heaven is made of. The onions made the broth sweeter, however, it was balanced with the saltiness that was provided by the cheese and butter. The soup was rich, wholesome and left a heavy coat on the palate. Rest assured, the dish is bound to take you to your happy place.

In order to freshen things up, their



signature salad was served. Made up of iceberg lettuce, grilled chicken, finely-cut green apple, carrots and topped with walnuts and emmental cheese, this salad burst with goodness. It was sweet, salty, smoky and crunchy. There was nothing to complain about here. Its simplicity marked its perfection.

Making the French experience even better, the *croque-monsieur* made its way to the table. It is the French version of a ham and cheese sandwich. There was extra cheese with fresh ham, served along-side crispy, golden-brown served browns. One would realise why it's a French classic as it makes you fall in love with food, all over again.

Next up was a Margherita pizza and a Pepperoni pizza. Pizzas at PAULs are hand-tossed and thin crust. The Margherita one was topped with fresh tomato sauce, mozzarella, parmesan and garnished with basil leaves. As for the Pepperoni pizza, it consisted of tomato sauce topped with pork pepperoni and mozzarella. What was commendable about both the pizzas, was the freshness of ingredients that one could taste. Another thing that made them stand out was the tomato sauce that was not entirely brought down to a liquid consistency. The tomatoes still have a bite to them which gives out a tanginess, that will make you ask for more.

The seafood mains were up next.

First, one on the table was the seafood fettuccini. The fish and whole prawns were lightly tossed in tomato sauce that gave the dish a vibrant orange colour. Taking a bite, the first flavour that coated the palate was the tanginess of the sauce which gradually made way for thyme and buttery-ness. The seafood adds an earthy and salty flavour to the pasta, balancing out the dish altogether. The second seafood dish was PAUL's signature, the grilled tiger prawns. The slightly charred prawns presented on a bed of nutty romesco sauce (made with sweet red pepper), served with buttered veggies, is bound to sweep you off your feet. A little sweet-heat from the romesco sauce with the tiger prawns, cooked to perfection, sings in harmony on your palate.

Last but definitely not the least of the mains, was the roasted baby chicken. This dish is to die for. Sous-vide chicken, cooked off in the pan, served with some veggies and a salad topped with a pepper jus. The sous-vide cooking process helps the chicken retain all its juices while cooking. While cutting the chicken on the plate, I realised that there was crispy skin which crackles as the knife slices through it. Taking a bite, the skin was crunchy while the chicken underneath it was tender and released all its juices as you bite in. The pepper added a layer over the chicken and binds the dish together. To cut through the richness of the dish, the salad on the side helped.

To end the evening on a sweet note, desserts were served — Tiramisu and a Strawberry cheesecake. The tiramisu was as authentic as it could get. However, to take the traditional creation one step further, Kahlua was added to the batter. The flavour of the coffee was stronger and more rustic, pertaining to the premium Lavazza espresso shots used in the making. Tiramisu is definitely a choice for the ones who don't have much of a sweet tooth and love coffee. For the ones who like their desserts sweet, the strawberry cheesecake is your choice. The buttery cracker base topped with vanilla cheesecake and finished with strawberry crush, was beautiful, airy and light. Just the perfect way to end the evening!

## gorge us

Opera Salon presents French Rendezvous, where you can pair a cup of aromatic tea with soft and buttery freshly baked Almond croissants, Chicken and mushroom Vol-au-vent, Raisin brioche, Roast tomato basil and goat cheese Tarte, Croque Monsieur and more. **Price:** (for two) ₹800 plus taxes **Date:** Till June **Time:** 8 am to 12 am **Venue:** M-37, M block market, GK-2.



The Marketplace, Kirti Nagar, presents Mexican food festival featuring delicacies like Nachos with trio salsa pineapple, mango and tomato. There is Mushroom olive pate, Corn on the cob, Chicken enchilada sliders, Mexican rice meal bowls and many more. **Time:** 12 pm to 12 am **Price:** Starting from ₹649 plus taxes **Date:** Till June



Gorge on the sweetness of Khoya's mango *mithai* as it brings the true essence of Indian summer for its patrons with the launch of two new exclusive *mithais* inspired by the Mango season — the Alphonso coconut *laddoo* and Mango *barfi*. The *mithai* could also be gifted in boxes of three, 10, 16 or 36. **Venue:** The Chanakya, The Oberoi.

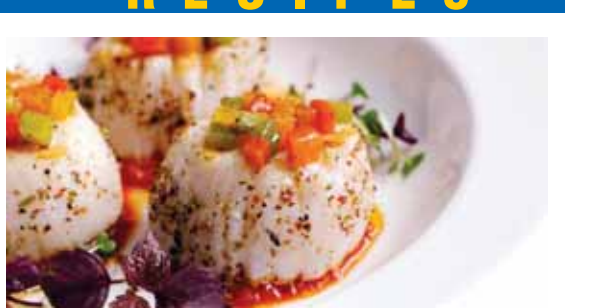
Farzi Cafe presents an expressive lunch affair for non-vegetarians, offering special curations with delicacies like Prawn and ginger *rasam* with *Applam crisp* or a Farzi *caesar* salad with Chicken *tikka*, and many more. **Time:** 12 pm to 11.45 pm **Price:** (for two) ₹1,500 plus taxes **Date:** Till May **Venue:** Farzi Cafe (outlets in Cyber Hub and Connaught Place)

Nueva presents a lavish spree of crafty cocktails like green apple, cinnamon and lime and Asian watermelon, berries and basil. There are tacos like litchi with cucumber and ginger, *Crero*-style pork belly, Quinoa vegetable saltado, Scrambled tofu with truffle and Sea scallops. **Time:** 11.30 am to 12 am **Price:** (for two) ₹3,000 plus taxes **Date:** Till June 30 **Venue:** Ground floor, Sangam Courtyard, RK Puram.

Inferno presents a gastronomical fare of flavours, offering delicacies like Smoked *chole kulche*, Assorted dimsum platter, Old Monk mushroom, Bomb pizza, Choco chips Pranked puppy dessert and more. **Time:** 12 pm to 12 am **Price:** (meal for two) ₹1,600 plus taxes **Date:** Till June 15 **Venue:** Plot 6 and 7, Sector 29 Gurugram.



## RECIPES



### GRILLED SCALLOPS WITH TOMATO CHUTNEY AND ROASTED PEPPERS

- WHAT YOU NEED**
- Scallops, shelled and roe removed: 12
  - Black peppercorns, cracked: 1 tsp
  - Fennel seeds: 1/4 tsp
  - Star anise: 1/4
  - Olive oil: 2 tbsp
  - Micro cress: 1 handful
  - Olive oil: 1 tbsp
  - Nigella seeds: 1/2 tsp
  - Canned plum tomatoes, chopped: 200 gm
  - Tomato paste: 1 tsp
  - Chilli powder: 1/4 tsp
  - Caster sugar: 1/2 tsp
  - White wine vinegar: 1 tbsp
  - Green pepper: 1/2
  - Red pepper: 1/2
  - Yellow pepper: 1/2
  - *Kasoori methi*: 1/4 tsp
  - Olive oil: 1/2 tbsp
  - Salt
- METHOD**
- Crust:**
- For the tomato *chutney*, heat the olive oil in a pan, then add the nigella seeds and sauté for 20 seconds.
  - Add the chopped plum tomatoes, tomato paste, chilli powder, some salt, the sugar and white vinegar. Slow-cook for 15 minutes or until almost dry. Remove from the heat,
- check the seasoning and cool.
- For the peppers, roast the skin over an open flame or under a grill until it begins to bubble. Wrap the peppers in cling-film and chill immediately.
  - When cold, peel off the skin and scrape off any remaining bits with a knife. Cut the flesh into 5 mm x 5 mm dice. Add crushed *Kasoori methi* and olive oil and set aside.
  - Wash and drain the scallops, then pat dry with kitchen paper. Crush the peppercorns, fennel seeds and star anise in a pestle and mortar, then transfer to a bowl, add some salt and ½ tablespoon of olive oil
  - Marinate the scallops in the spiced oil mixture and grill on a hot non-stick pan until gently browned on both sides. This should take a minute for each side.
  - To plate, serve three scallops to a portion on top of a droplet of tomato chutney. Top with the roasted mixed peppers and a sprinkling of micro cress.
- Courtesy: Chef Alfred Prasad, Sumeru Gourmet Range.



**CORNITOS TEA TIME CRUNCHY**

**WHAT YOU NEED**

- Cornitos barbeque flavour Nachos crisps: 1 bag
- Sliced green olives: 1/4 cup
- Sliced jalapeno peppers: 1/4 cup
- Chopped green onion: 1
- Seeded green and red chilli: 1
- Diced yellow bell pepper: 1
- Jalapeno cheese dip: 1 jar

**METHOD**

- Arrange Nachos crisps on a platter.
- Top it with all chopped ingredients.
- Serve it with jalapeno cheese dip.

Courtesy: Cornitos.

## THE CHEESE AND BROCCOLI FRITTERS



the broccoli. If you want to add any extra seasonings (salt and pepper), do it at this point.

- Add two eggs and mix well until everything is incorporated.

Courtesy: Chef Kamaljeet at Masala Grill.

- WHAT YOU NEED**
- Almond flour: 3/4 cup
  - Flaxseed meal: 7 tbsp
  - Fresh broccoli: 4 ounces
  - Mozzarella cheese: 4 ounces
  - Large eggs: 2
  - Baking powder: 2 tbsp
  - Salt and pepper to taste
- For the sauce:**
- Mayonnaise: ¼ cup
  - Fresh chopped dill: ¼ cup
  - Lemon juice: ½ tsp
  - Salt and pepper to taste
- METHOD**
- Add broccoli to a food processor and pulse until it breaks down into small pieces and is well-processed.
  - Mix together the cheese, almond flour, ¼ cup flaxseed meal and baking powder with

Trend Blazer

SRK begins shoot for TED Talks 2

Actor SHAH RUKH KHAN has started shooting for the second season of TED Talks.

As for the new season of the Star Plus show, Shah Rukh shot its first episode earlier this week.

Some of the names likely to feature in the second season are acid attack survivor Laxmi Agarwal, whose life inspires Deepika Padukone's next *Chhapaak*, and actress Tanushree Dutta, who opened the floodgates of India's #MeToo movement, said a source.

TED Talks 2 may go on air in the second half of 2019. *The Hundred-Foot Journey* producer Juliet Blake, head of TV for TED Talks, is in India to curate the themes.



'I saw his (Tiger Shroff) hard work, his discipline and passion and I knew he is going to blow people's minds away. He will always have this super soft corner in my heart. He was my first co-star. Tigy, I feel so happy seeing you fly higher and higher (literally too). And now time for Heropanti 2.'

—Kriti Sanon



Actress JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ says she is a sensitive person, and negative comments on social media do affect her.

She said, "We have really supportive, good fans and I love my people on Instagram. But it could be one comment, one person saying something negative, and I'll be like, 'Why would you say that?'"

The actor said that it does affect her. "I am a sensitive person, so yes it does. And I actually want to get to that point where I'd be like, you know what, 'who are you to say that.' you know? But yes, it does."



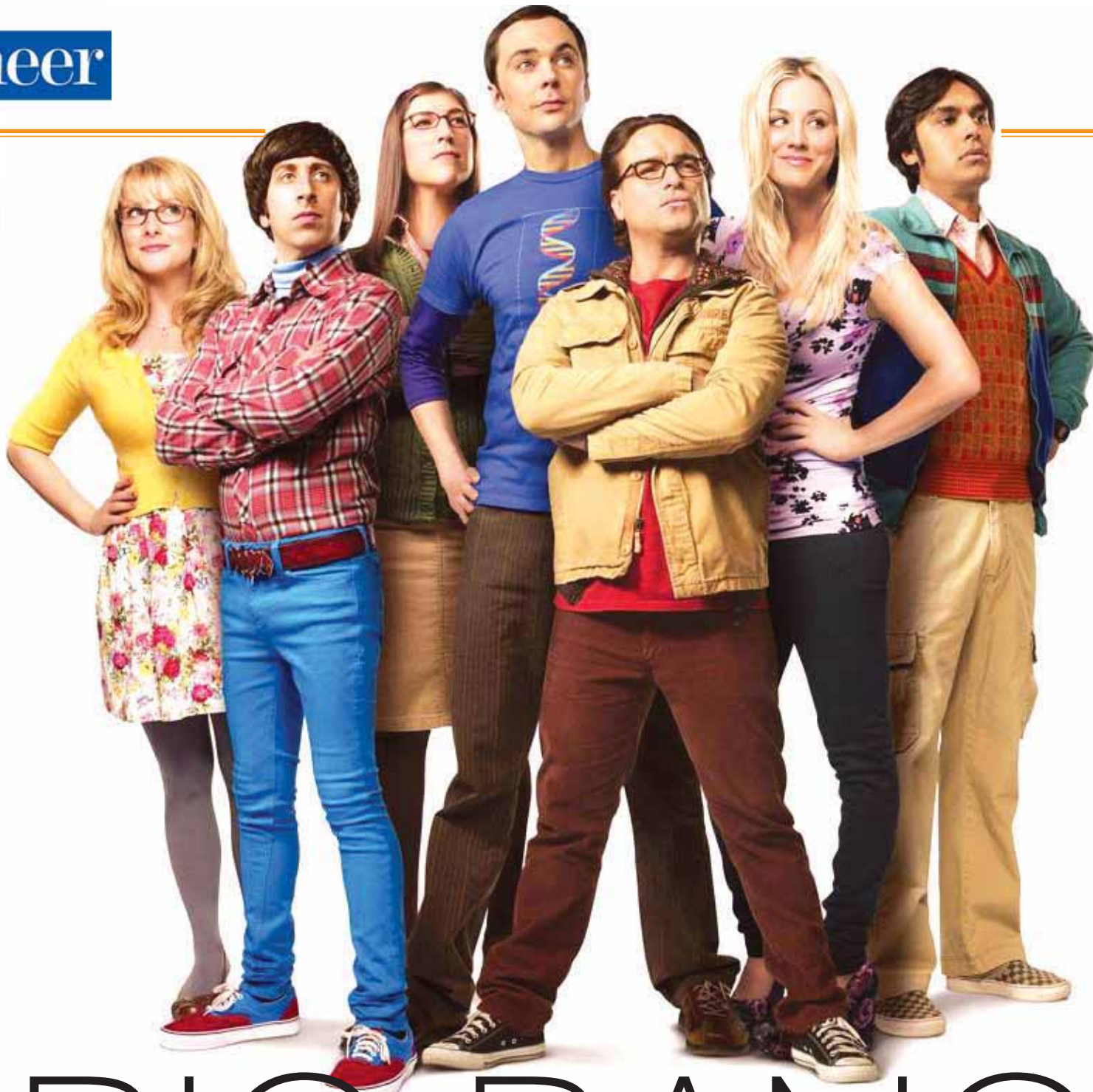
'Work culture after #MeToo changed'

Actress MICHELLE WILLIAMS has noticed a difference in the workplace culture after the #MeToo movement.

She said, "I feel like the dynamic on sets has changed. They don't hug you anymore. You don't get a morning grope, you get a morning handshake."

"I feel like more space has opened up in the room, in the actual creative process. The space has opened up for me to be able to be heard," she added.

Williams has four career Oscar nominations for her work in *Manchester by the Sea*, *My Week With Marilyn*, *Blue Valentine* and *Brokeback Mountain*.



BIG BANG AT THE MUSEUM

The costumes worn by the cast in the popular TV show will be displayed

Costumes worn by the seven main cast members of the 12-season TV show *The Big Bang Theory*, which closed in a big finale, would be donated to a museum here.

As per the creator Warner Bros, the costume donation to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History here includes those worn by characters Sheldon Cooper (Jim Parsons), Leonard Hofstadter (Johnny Galecki), Penny (Kaley Cuoco), Howard Wolowitz (Simon Helberg), Raj Koothrappali (Kunal Nayyar), Amy Farrah Fowler (Mayim Bialik) and Bernadette Rostenkowski-Wolowitz (Melissa Rauch).

The items will join thousands of artefacts in the museum's popular entertainment collections and help tell the story of ground-breaking work in American television.

The donations are full costumes worn by the seven primary characters from the series costume designer Mary Quigley.

Among the costume pieces are Sheldon's iconic "Flash" t-shirt, Leonard's "recycle" t-shirt and hooded cargo jacket, Penny's pink tank top and Ugg boots.

Also included are Howard's plaid shirt and red turtleneck, Raj's sweater vest and jacket, Bernadette's yellow cardigan and floral dress and Amy's brown wool sweater and green, knee-length skirt.

However, the museum said there are no current plans for its display.

The series about scientists drew to a close after 12 seasons, with an emotional finale that revealed some new, tied up loose ends and even featured a celebrity cameo.

In the first of two back-to-back episodes, scientists Sheldon Cooper (Jim Parsons) and his wife Amy (Mayim Bialik) got the news that they are receiving the Nobel Prize in physics for their theory of super asymmetry.

At the Nobel ceremony in Sweden, Amy encourages little girls "who dream about science to go for it." In a cameo appearance, Sarah Michelle Gellar sits next to Raj (Kunal Nayyar) in the audience, but assures him it's "not a date."

Cooper gives a heartfelt acceptance speech that, to fans who have been tuning in since the show's beginning, shows how much the character has grown out of his egotistical and selfish personality over the

course of 12 seasons.

"I was under a misapprehension that my accomplishments were mine alone. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have been encouraged, sustained, inspired and tolerated, not only by my wife, but by the greatest group of friends anyone ever had," he said.

*The Big Bang Theory* was launched in 2007. The show has received 52 Emmy Award nominations and 10 wins, seven Golden Globe nominations, and the spinoff prequel *Young Sheldon*.

Actor Jim Parsons has opened up about his decision to leave *The Big Bang Theory*, saying he could not bring himself to do another season of the hit show.

The Golden Globe winner has featured as the beloved Sheldon Cooper on the hit comedy series for 12 seasons. Late last year he revealed he was stepping away from the show.

"It was the first time in my life of doing this show that it occurred to me that I might want to not do another contract after (season) 12 was up," a website quoted Parsons as saying.

"I don't know if it's because I'm an Aries or just because maybe I'm in touch with myself. Whatever it is,

once I had that thought, I was like, 'Well, that's your answer,' he added.

Parsons will, however, remain in *The Big Bang Theory* orbit as he continues to narrate and executive-produce its prequel *Young Sheldon*.

"There was no factor; there was no situation that I was like, 'Well, I've had enough of that.' No. There was nothing like that. It was just...when you know, you know. And you're susceptible and thrown around by the whims of your own existence and getting to a certain age and your life changes and suddenly you just think different," Parsons said.

He added, "It has been fascinating to think about who I was 12 years ago. And sometimes when I have trouble learning a line or saying a line of Sheldon's right now, it's hard to know why specifically. But it's like, you're not the same person you were. There is a possibility that this actually became more difficult for you in a way. And I don't know what that means but it's like you just change."

The show revolved around the lives of four socially awkward friends, Leonard, Sheldon, Howard and Raj.

The show is aired in India on Zee Cafe and can be streamed on HOOQ in India.

—Agencies



Dimple joins Tenet

The actress has been cast in CHRIS NOLAN's next alongside ROBERT PATTINSON and MICHAEL CAINE

Veteran actress Dimple Kapadia has been cast in Christopher Nolan's action epic *Tenet*, which will also feature Robert Pattinson and Michael Caine, and will be shot across seven countries, including India.

While Dimple, 61, is yet to comment on it, celebrities from Bollywood have cheered her on.

Actor Anil Kapoor called her casting "phenomenal," while filmmaker Anurag Kashyap tweeted, "So cool... Dimple Kapadia in a Chris Nolan Film. Wow!"

Film producer Guneet Monga sent in congratulations.

Dimple, who made her screen debut with 1973's Bollywood film *Bobby*, is a National Award winner. She has proved her mettle in Indian cinema with an eclectic mix of parallel and commercial films like *Rudaali*, *Krantiveer*, *Dil Chahta Hai* and *Finding Fanny* among others.

Mumbai-based talent manager Purvi Lavingia Vats, who was instrumental in getting Ali Fazal a role in *Fast and Furious 7*, says she pitched Dimple for the role to Nolan's casting team in Los Angeles.

"Dimple is a great and a wonderful person. She is the only Indian actor to be a part of this project as of now. They will be shooting the film in different countries, and India is one of them," Vats said.

"It took me a few months of convincing. But Dimple was up for it. It is something different for her, and it was an interesting process to make it all a reality," added Vats, who is focussed about getting more international exposure for Indian talent.

*Tenet* was so far being described as a "massive, innovative, action blockbuster," but plot specifics are under wraps.

Pattinson, John David Washington and Lea Seydoux are previously announced cast members. Apart from Dimple, the new joiners in the film, to be distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures in theatres worldwide on July 17, 2020, include Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Kenneth Branagh, Clemence Poesy and Caine.

Pattinson said, "I've been a little wary of doing big films for years and years, but there's just something about Chris Nolan's stuff. He seems like the only director now who can do what is essentially a very personal, independent movie that has huge scale. I read the script and it's unreal."

Nolan's last film was *Dunkirk*.

—IANS

Remembering Niki Lauda

The Austrian racer is best known for displaying his doggedness on and off the race track



KUSHAN MITRA



Austrian Formula 1 racing legend Andreas Niklaus Lauda passed away earlier this week. He was more than a legend. His comeback from his fiery accident at the old Nurburgring is one of the most remarkable stories in sports, to race just six weeks after almost losing your life is a great subject for a movie and it was made into one. *Rush* documented the 1976 Formula 1 World Championship. Lauda was not a flamboyant playboy in the mould of many of the British racers of that era, but he was good. So good that he made another comeback in the 1980s when he drove a McLaren to his third World title after winning two with Ferrari. We can always wonder how many world championships Lauda would have won had he not had his devastating accident or retired from the sport for the first time, but his impact on the world of motorsport is possibly much greater than his three titles and his later role as the Chairman of Mercedes-AMG F1 Racing, the dominant team of the contemporary Formula 1 era.

WHEN NIKI WAS RACING AT HIS PRIME, AT LEAST THREE TO FOUR FORMULA 1 DRIVERS DIED EVERY YEAR AND THEY TOOK THAT TO BE A FACT OF LIFE. OF COURSE, THE MOVE TOWARDS SAFETY HAD BEGUN IN THE 1960s



ultimately claimed him. Its after-effects played a role in his death as the flames and even the fire extinguisher fumes seared the inside of his lungs, causing permanent damage. Ironically, it happened despite the fact that the Austrian had led other drivers in protesting the unsafe conditions of the race. Jules Bianchi's death

a couple of years ago was an aberration. When Niki Lauda was racing at his prime, at least three-four Formula 1 drivers died every year and drivers, fan and even administrators took that to be a fact of life. Of course, the move towards safety had begun in the 1960s with drivers like Jackie Stewart, but Lauda supercharged

that movement. And while it was finally the dramatic events of the San Marino Grand Prix in 1994 when Ayrton Senna died that finally pushed the safety agenda for race cars and even road cars to the central agenda, the near-death of Niki Lauda is what really pushed the safety agenda out of the fringes.

However, more than just being a great driver, Lauda's doggedness came out more dramatically to the rest of the world when he personally went to the crash site of Lauda Air 004 in Thailand.

Niki Lauda came from a wealthy Austrian family and once he retired from the sport finally, he got into his other love, aviation. He began Lauda Air as an airline catering to tourists but it suffered a horrible accident when 196 people died at that aforementioned crash. Lauda himself went to the site in order to give answers to those who died. And like the Boeing 737 MAX today, it emerged that there was a technical fault that caused the crash. It was Lauda's remarkable determination and engineering skill that got Boeing to admit that they made a mistake which caused the thrust reversers to open mid-flight causing the crash.

Lauda's determination and skills will be missed from the Formula 1 circuit and as the grid collects at the annual signature race in Monaco this year, I hope the race car series sends him off in style to race in the heavens!

# MARY RULES

Six-time World Champion Kom defeats Nikhat in 51 kg semis to enter Indian Open summit clash

PTI ■ GUWAHATI



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 an all-Indian Gold-medal clash in seven categories in the India Open here 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, who was 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 regained her composure and dealt a few telling blows on the Strandja Memorial Gold winner Nikhat 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 Sivach registered an upset win 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 Rogan Ladon in a well-calculated bout, the 20-year-old from Haryana had his task cut out against his sparring partner but he again emerged victorious.

Panghal, who had clinched a Gold in his new weight category in 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

## Kom tells Nikhat to prove herself in ring

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Alvid Mary Kom on Thursday asked her vanquished opponent Nikhat Zareen to prove herself in the ring instead of making irritating comments.

Mary was reacting to former world junior champion Nikhat's comments in the media that she was excited to take on her 'idol' and she would "put up a strong fight by using her brain" in the India Open 51kg semifinals which the celebrated Manipuri boxer won on Thursday.

"Every bout is a new experience for me. Even I don't know who this girl is. I've been fighting since many years now. I clearly

want to say I don't want all this. It has come out in the newspapers that she's challenging me," Mary Kom said after beating Nikhat to enter the 51kg final.

Mary Kom beat 22-year-old Nikhat 4-1 in a split decision.

"First you prove inside the ring and then speak out (against me). She has won just one medal at the international level and such is her ego and attitude! They feel proud and satisfied. This is a very bad habit," the 36-year-old Mary Kom said.

"How many years I've competed for the country? And how many times I've proved? It's better to say in a mild way. They are so lucky fighting with me. They

will get more experience," the London Olympics Bronze medalist continued.

Mary Kom, however, said Nikhat's comments made her more determined.

"I was so surprised to read her comments in the newspaper. It's so irritating. How can they say all this. Yes, everyone has the right to say and anyone can challenge. But I'm also a human being. It causes a lot of disturbance. Never mind, it made me more determined to do well."

Told that Nikhat considered her as her idol, Mary Kom said: "Why they challenge me then? Idol means you have to show respect, talk with respect."

### The 36-year-old Mary Kom, who was 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

but this is my big chance to show my prowess at a major competition. I hope to give my best and return winner," Sivach, who won a Bronze at the GeeBee Boxing tournament in Finland in March, said.

Shiva Thapa also remained on course to clinching a Gold at the same venue where he was crowned national champion three years ago as he fended off a strong challenge from his Polish opponent D Krystian Szczepanski to emerge 5-0 winner.

Szczepanski was at his aggressive best and kept hurling punches but Shiva cleverly 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 it so that he loses his control and confidence," Shiva said.

He will face Manish Kaushik in the 60kg final on Friday.

There was also a setback in store for India in the men's 75kg category, when Manjeet Panghal twisted his knee in the first round to be knocked out by his Filipino opponent Emir Felix Delos Santos.

Santosh will face Ashish Kumar in the final.

Former Asian champion Chatchai Decha Butdee of Thailand also created an upset in the men's 56kg by ousting former World Championship Bronze medalist Gaurav Bidhuri in a unanimous decision. The Thai will take on Kavinder Singh Bisht in the final.

The 64kg category will also see a non-Indian in the final with Rohit Tokas taking on Colin Louis Richarno of Mauritius.

## FIFA drop plans for 48-team 2022 WC

AFP ■ LAUSANNE

FIFA shelved a proposed expansion of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar to 48 teams, dealing a blow to the world football body's president Gianni Infantino.

The 2022 tournament in the Gulf state will now be played with 32 nations taking part.

FIFA said it had abandoned the expansion plans "following a thorough and comprehensive consultation process" which led to the conclusion that "under the current circumstances such a proposal could not be made now".

"(The tournament) will therefore remain as originally planned with 32 teams and no proposal will be submitted at the next FIFA Congress on 5 June," FIFA said in a statement.

The expansion was a pet project of Infantino, who pushed the idea despite the likely need for Qatar's neighbours to put aside a two-year blockade and help to host an expanded tournament.

"The involvement of these countries in the organisation of the tournament jointly with Qatar implies the lifting of this blockade, in particular the lifting of restrictions on the movement of people and goods," said a feasibility study submitted to March's FIFA Congress in Miami.

The study also claimed that a Qatar World Cup with 48 teams would generate "between \$300-\$400



million (265-354 million euros) of additional income".

Specifically FIFA was counting on an additional \$120 million in TV rights, \$150 million in marketing rights and \$90 million from ticket sales.

The news comes after Europe's top football clubs said in March they would boycott an expanded 24-team Club World Cup — also backed by Infantino — which is planned to take place in June and July 2021, replacing the Confederations Cup tournament.

An announcement of the final decision had not been expected until next month's FIFA Congress to be held in Paris ahead of the women's World Cup that takes place in France between June 7 and July 7.

## WC exile Hales will still cheer on England

AFP ■ LONDON

Alex Hales insists he will still support England at the upcoming World Cup despite his shock exile from international cricket.

The Nottinghamshire batsman was on course to feature for World Cup hosts England until a report in the Guardian newspaper last month revealed he was serving a 21-day ban following a second positive test for recreational drug use.

The England and Wales Cricket Board responded to the report by announcing that Hales, a member of the provisional World Cup squad, had been withdrawn from international duty.

Hales, 30, is now turning his attention instead to a stint with the

Barbados Tridents in the seventh season of the Caribbean Premier League.

The hard-hitting batsman, speaking after being selected as the first pick in the draft for the Twenty20 franchise competition staged in London on Wednesday, said he still wanted England to win the World Cup in his absence.

"I'm still a fan and wish all the boys all the best. What we have done over the last few years has been unbelievable," Hales said in an interview broadcast by Sky Sports.

"I will be (keeping an eye on the World Cup). The guys deserve to win it and I'll be sat there watching and cheering."

As for his feelings about his World Cup exile, confirmed when Hales was left out of England's 15-man tourna-



## Archer is England's 'X factor': Kohli

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Jofra Archer, the England pacer, has come in for high praise from India captain Virat Kohli, who said he would be the "X factor" for England at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2019.

Kohli was speaking during the Captain's Day in London, alongside the skippers of the other 10 teams, when it was put to him that Archer, after being confirmed in England's final 15-man squad, had said he was eyeing the Indian captain's wicket. "I'd quite like to get Virat Kohli out because I wasn't able to in the IPL," he told Sky Sports.

Kohli wasn't aware of that, but the Indian captain made it a point to laud the all-rounder, who was fast-tracked into the England squad for the tournament, having not played an ODI prior to the naming of their preliminary squad.

"Twitter Ads info and privacy Did he say that? I had no idea - that's news to me. It's news to Morgs as well," Kohli said with a smile. "We don't really focus on these things. We don't really focus on whether an individual wants to get you out or whether you're spoken of more or things like that."

"Our focus is on contributing to the team. I take a lot of pride in performing for the team, and making impact performances in every game. If Jofra said that, it's a big compliment. Because he himself is a world-class bowler."

Kohli went on to describe his obser-



vations of Archer during their clashes in the Indian Premier League. "The way he's come about in the IPL the last couple of years I've seen him, there's good reason why he was fast-tracked into playing for England in a tournament like the World Cup," said Kohli.

"I think he's probably going to be their X factor, because he holds a skillset that's very different from anyone else. He can generate a lot of pace, which can be intimidating. You don't really expect that because of his run-up."

"And the way he's built, he's a great athlete. He's going to be a delight to watch in the World Cup. I personally would be watching his bowling as well - whatever I've seen of him, he's been very, very impressive."

Eoin Morgan, the England captain, who was sat right next to Kohli, concurred and added that it was a huge opportunity for Archer. "Nothing surprised me about him. He's come in and performed exactly how he has been around the world," said Morgan. "He's impressive in all three parts of a 50-over game, he gives you an option in different areas, and obviously has that extra bit of pace."

"It is a huge opportunity. The guy is very young, very ambitious, very confident, wants to play international cricket for England. That's extremely exciting. He's at the very start of his international career, and it so happens that it's at the start of the World Cup and Ashes year, and he could potentially have lots of time playing. It's extremely exciting."

## Favourites tag won't win India or Eng the WC: Shakib

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Hosts England and Team India have been touted as favourites to go the distance in the 2019 edition of the World Cup. But Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is keen to remind all that cricket is a game that is played on the field and not on paper.

Shakib said that while there is no doubt that Eoin Morgan and Virat Kohli's men are ruling world cricket at the moment in the 50-over format, the favourites tag alone doesn't win any team the coveted title in the 50-over World Cup.

"India and England are obviously favourites, but that doesn't get you the crown. You need to do the hard yards to win a tournament like the World Cup. Australia have been doing well recently and West Indies have peaked at the right time. To be honest, all the teams look like they are ready for a fight. Depends who on that day does well," he pointed.

Personally, Shakib got the perfect boost going into the showpiece event as he overtook Afghanistan star Rashid Khan as the No 1 all-rounder in ODIs. But for the star Bangladesh player, he wants the

trophy that ultimately decides who the boss is.

"This time I think we have a genuine chance of winning the tournament, but keeping the format of the tournament in mind, we must look to play well consistently. If we can do that, we can definitely look at qualifying for the knockouts and take it forward from there. I am confident that we will do well this time."

"Personally, obviously I wish that Bangladesh win the trophy this time. But a lot of factors need to click together for that dream to be realised. While I didn't play much in the IPL, I had been working hard on my game and was looking to prepare for the World Cup. Gave it my all in the practice sessions and tried to maximise the output in every training session," he explained.

While Bangladesh have in the last few years made a name for themselves in the big league by putting in far more consistent performances than before, but Shakib is still a bit worried with the team's bowling attack. The all-rounder though feels that the experience in the side will come to the rescue in crunch games.

"I think we have a very

good side, I am a little worried about the bowling, both new ball and the death. But I am very much optimistic that we can go the whole length. We have experience, have guys who have played 3 or 4 World Cups. It is a good thing as we know what we need to do. Need to get the momentum early on. I am confident. Anyone can beat anyone on their day. Consistency is an important factor to go all the way," he revealed.

With the advent of the various T20 leagues, Bangladesh players are now getting an opportunity to rub shoulders with some of the best players in the world. In fact, they also have their own T20 league and Shakib feels this has helped in getting quality players to play for the country as talent can be identified better now thanks to so many platforms.

"I feel playing in the T20 leagues around the world has really helped our boys in recent times as you gain in experience. Apart from building your own game, you also get to see other stars closely and try and learn from them as well. It has helped us become more competitive as a unit," he smiled.

## Cristiano Ronaldo included in Portugal squad CR7 will lead Euro champions in UEFA Nations League semi final against Switzerland

LISBON: Captain Cristiano Ronaldo was included in Portugal's squad for next month's Nations League semi-final against Switzerland, head coach Fernando Santos announced on Thursday.

Ronaldo, 34, a five-time Ballon d'Or winner missed the group stages preferring to try and adapt to life in Juventus since moving from Real Madrid.

The Euro 2016 champions

welcome the Swiss on June 5 in Porto and the Netherlands play England in Guimaraes a day later before a third place play-off and a final on June 9.

He lifted the Serie A title with his Italian club this season but failed to clinch a third straight Champions League after losing to Ajax in the quarter-finals.

Head coach Fernando Santos has chosen not to call



up veterans Adrien Silva, Nani and Ricardo Quaresma and Sevilla forward Andre Silva misses out with a knee injury.

Highly-tipped Benfica uncapped youngster Joao Felix is also included alongside three other club teammates who won the Portuguese league champions this season.

Portugal squad to face Switzerland on June 5 in the Nations League semis. AFP

