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Narendra Modi to take oath of office of Prime Minister for the third time on June 9

Govt will not fail in fulfilling people's aspirations, says PM-designate Modi



Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi addresses the press outside the Rashtrapati Bhavan after meeting President Droupadi Murmu, in New Delhi on June 7, 2024.

JUNE 7, 2024

NEW DELHI (TIP): "President has appointed me as PM-designate and I have informed her that swearing-in ceremony may be held on Sunday," Mr. Modi told the media outside the Rashtrapati Bhavan after meeting Ms. Murmu on June 7. "I will hand over list of Ministers to President Murmu before swearing-in," he added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he would strive to ensure unanimity in all decisions of his next government and asserted that the NDA is an organic alliance committed to the principle of 'nation first'.

contd on page 52

Donald Trump's felony conviction entails inadmissibility to a host of countries including Canada and UK



Former President Donald Trump may not be allowed to enter nearly 40 countries now that he's a convicted felon

JUNE 6, 2024

NEW YORK (TIP): Now that Donald Trump is a convicted felon, his list of countries to visit has gotten much shorter.

Trump was found guilty of 34 counts

of falsifying records in an effort to keep adult film star Stormy Daniels quiet about an affair that occurred in the 2000s. That means certain freedoms Mr Trump once enjoyed may be out of his reach - and could have a serious effect on his ability to carry out his presidential duties, including travelling to foreign countries.

Nearly 40 nations - including Canada and the UK - have strict policies when it comes to allowing individuals with criminal records across their borders, and barring a special accommodation, Trump would be held to those same standards.

contd on page 52

Boeing's Starliner crew is back after encountering new issues en route



Butch Wilmore (left) and Sunita Williams enter the space station from Starliner.

Credit : NASA

JUNE 6, 2024

HOUSTON (TIP): Boeing's Starliner mission has safely docked with the International Space Station and the spacecraft's crew, NASA astronauts

Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams, have arrived aboard the station after overcoming new issues that cropped up overnight and Thursday, June 6,

contd on page 52

Judge Orders Bannon to Surrender for Prison Term by July 1

JUNE 6, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): A federal judge on Thursday, June 6, told Stephen K. Bannon, a longtime adviser to former President Donald J. Trump, to surrender by July 1 to start serving a four-month prison term for disobeying a congressional subpoena.

contd on page 52



Steve-Bannon leaves Federal Court, October 21, 2022

File photo



Andy Singh

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EVER TRUTHFUL**PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER:**

Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

Chitagam Saluja

**CHIEF EDITOR:**

Prof Indrajit S. Saluja

**ASSISTANT EDITOR:**

Bidisha Roy

**SPL. REPORTER UNO:**

H.S. Panaser

**GRAPHICS DIRECTOR:**

Om Parkash Malik

**DIRECTOR****ADMINISTRATION:**

Gauri Beri

**CONTRIBUTING****PHOTOGRAPHERS:**Baldev Singh / BJ Videos  
Gunjesh Desai / Masala Junction  
Jay Mandal,  
Mohammad Jaffer,  
SnapsIndia  
Mohammad Shahzad,  
Zia Khan,  
Nisha Rani  
Vaaho Photographers,  
Vijay Shah - Photo Journalist.**CORRESPONDENTS :****SACRAMENTO:**

Parminder S. Aujla

**NEW YORK :**

Chitagam

**FRESNO:**

Tarlochan Singh

**DALLAS:**

Harjit Dhesi, Amarjit Dhillon

**OVERSEAS CORRESPONDENTS****LONDON**

Nirpal Singh Shergill

**SPL CORRESPONDENT****DELHI BUREAU CHIEF:**

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Manjit Sidhu

**LUDHIANA:**A.S. Arora,  
R.P.Sharma**JAIPUR :**

Dr. Yashpaul Goyal

**DALLAS BUREAU CHIEF & VP**

Lovllien Kaurr

972-330-3139

editor@theindianpanorama.news

**The Indian Panorama**

P.O. Box No. 190067, South

Richmond Hill, NY 11419,

Tel: 646-247-9458

**Email:**

editor@theindianpanorama.news

## COMMENT

## Democracy Prevails: Reflections on India's 2024 General Elections

BY  
INDRAJIT SALUJA

In a resounding testament to the resilience of democracy, India's 2024 General Elections bore witness to a pivotal moment in the nation's political landscape. After a decade marked by soaring rhetoric, unfulfilled promises, and growing disillusionment, the electorate delivered a clear verdict, signaling a shift away from the status quo.

For ten years, the Modi government captivated the imagination of the Indian populace with grand visions and lofty assurances. However, as time unfolded, these promises remained largely unfulfilled, leaving the marginalized and impoverished masses stranded in a sea of dashed hopes. Instead of uplifting the downtrodden, the government seemed to prioritize the interests of the elite, fostering a growing chasm between the haves and the have-nots.

Buoyed by a meticulously cultivated image and an extensive propaganda machinery, the Modi government appeared convinced that electoral victory was a foregone conclusion. Slogans like "Modi hai to mumkin hai" (With Modi, anything is possible) and "Modi Ki Guarantee" failed to resonate with a populace weary of rhetoric devoid of tangible results. Even the once potent force of Hindutva, which had propelled

the BJP to victory in 2019, lost its grip on the collective consciousness of the electorate.

The BJP's overconfidence was palpable, exemplified by their audacious declaration of securing more than 400 seats in the parliament—a stark departure from reality. Prime Minister Modi's dismissive stance towards the opposition, particularly the Indian National Congress, further underscored the party's disconnect from ground realities.

However, the political landscape took an unexpected turn as a formidable coalition of opposition parties emerged, united in their resolve to challenge the hegemony of the ruling party. This coalition deftly leveraged the grievances of the common people, effectively shifting the narrative from personality politics to issues that truly mattered to the electorate.

At the heart of this electoral upheaval lay the fundamental principles of democracy and constitutional governance. Faced with the erosion of democratic norms and the casual disregard for constitutional institutions by the ruling dispensation, a sense of urgency permeated the political discourse. The opposition, recognizing the imminent threat to the very fabric of Indian democracy, rallied together with a singular purpose—to safeguard the principles enshrined in the constitution.

The significance of a robust opposition in a democratic framework cannot be overstated. It serves as a vital check on the excesses of those in power, ensuring

accountability and transparency in governance. In rallying behind the opposition coalition, the electorate reaffirmed their commitment to the ideals of democracy, signaling a collective desire for change and renewal.

The outcome of the 2024 General Elections represents a decisive moment in India's democratic journey. By thwarting the seemingly invincible juggernaut of the ruling party, the electorate has demonstrated their inherent power to shape the course of their nation's destiny. In halting the unchecked march of the Modi-led BJP, India has reaffirmed its status as a vibrant and pluralistic democracy, where the voice of the people reigns supreme.

As the dust settles on the electoral battlefield, a renewed sense of optimism pervades the nation. The prospect of a strengthened democracy, bolstered by a vigilant opposition, offers hope for a brighter future. While the challenges ahead are manifold, the resilience of India's democratic institutions and the unwavering spirit of its people serve as beacons of hope in an uncertain world.

The 2024 General Election stands as a testament to the enduring power of democracy—a triumph of the collective will over entrenched power dynamics. As the nation embarks on a new chapter in its political journey, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to upholding the principles of democracy, ensuring that the voice of every citizen is heard and respected.

## GUEST COMMENT

## T20 World Cup is seeking to energize cricket's newest format

Barely a week after the Indian Premier League final (IPL), most of the leading cricketers have already got down to the grind as the ICC Twenty20 World Cup commenced in the United States of America on Saturday (U.S. time). The willow game no longer has an off-season and the championship that would meander through the U.S. and the West Indies, features 20 teams split into four groups and the final will be held in Barbados on June 29. Right through the pedigreed units such as India and Australia to Papua New Guinea and Uganda, the tournament may display an evangelical zeal to promote cricket in a sporting universe that always favors football. Cricket, with its three versions of Tests, ODIs and T20Is, can at times lapse into an identity crisis with the game's purity and mettle vesting with the five-day format while the commercial muscle almost entirely

hinges on the shorter avatars. Even within these layers, the granular issues get complex as T20Is never have the same allure that domestic leagues such as the IPL flaunt. It is in this space that the T20 World Cup hopes to operate and energize the format, once every two years. The ninth edition should offer a cricket of the fast and furious variety while players quickly switch from club loyalties to nationalistic fervor.

Hope too floats as Papua New Guinea turned up despite grappling with a massive landslide and the resultant loss of life back home. For India, the long quest for an ICC trophy gets another episode. The last silverware was the Champions Trophy won in 2013, and since then it has often been a case of so close and yet so far. Rohit Sharma's men get another tilt and there is no mistaking the talent they collectively possess. There may be simmering issues such as

the leadership angle following the awkward transition from Rohit to Hardik Pandya as captain of Mumbai Indians. At the national level, Rohit continues to helm while Pandya becomes his deputy and coach Rahul Dravid, always clued into ego hassles right from his playing days, may have to steer the ship away from choppy waters. Placed in Group A, India will open its campaign against Ireland on Wednesday but the big game is the one involving Pakistan at New York, on Sunday. Geopolitics has meant that it is only in ICC events that the neighbors face off against each other. While batters such as Travis Head and Heinrich Klassen can set rollicking templates, bowlers such as Jasprit Bumrah too will have a role to play in a format that tends to mask nuance under a breathless pace.

(The Hindu)

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# Suozzi Applauds President Biden for Bringing "Order to the Border" and Cracking Down on Abused Asylum System

JUNE 6, 2024

NEW YORK / WASHINGTON, D.C.

(TIP): "I support this critical step to fix the asylum system and speed up deportations. Now it's time for the Republicans in congress to step up and pass right now laws to secure the border", Congressman Tom Suozzi (NY-Congressional District 3) said in a statement.

Congressman added: " Pres. Biden has taken action - now the GOP needs to stop acting out. No more excuses. To those Republicans who now say it's too little too late, the voters won't be fooled. The Republicans in Congress have failed to act on the bipartisan Senate bill proposed earlier this year - their failure to act now is a cynical act of harming the country for their own political gain.



The NY District 3 Congressman Tom Suozzi has urged President Biden to restore "Order at the Border" and provide Work Permits for Mixed Status Families

Stop the rhetoric and call a vote. Let's secure the border and modernize legal immigration."

Congressman Tom Suozzi is the Co-Chair of the Democrats for Border Security Task Force and a Member of the House Committee on Homeland Security. In May, Suozzi and Fitzpatrick wrote a letter to the President calling for him to restrict the abuse of the asylum process by cartels guiding migrants between ports of entry and expand the issuance of work permits for families with mixed immigration status.

Congressman Suozzi (D-NY) and Congressman Fitzpatrick (R-PA) to President: We Need "Order at the Border" and Work Permits for Mixed Status Families .

## NYC CONGESTION PRICING DELAYED INDEFINITELY, GOV. HOCHUL SAYS

Congestion pricing in New York City was expected to begin on June 30.



Traffic Congestion in New York City  
Photo credit : DOT

JUNE 5, 2024

NEW YORK CITY (TIP):

Congestion pricing in New York City will "indefinitely" be put on hold, according to Gov. Kathy Hochul. The announcement comes following reports from the New York Times and POLITICO that Hochul had been considering pausing the program, which was scheduled to start on June 30. In a video released Wednesday, June 5 afternoon, Hochul confirmed that she had directed the MTA to indefinitely pause the congestion pricing program, citing "circumstances have changed."

"My team worked in the final hours to find a way to implement [the program], but hardworking New Yorkers are getting hammered on costs," she said. Hochul added that she remains "committed" to investments in public transit, and she and her team are currently exploring other funding sources.

According to media reports, the decision to pause the program may have stemmed from pressure from Democratic candidates, who are expecting to be in tight races and view congestion pricing as a polarizing issue. Under the current plan, most drivers entering Manhattan at 60th Street or below will face a base toll of \$15 when congestion pricing commences. "Toll rates will vary by type of vehicle and time of day," the MTA's new congestion pricing website states. "Passenger vehicles and motorcycles will only be charged once per day."

Those tolls will be tallied by toll readers that have already been installed on Manhattan streets enclosing what the MTA calls the Congestion Relief Zone, aside from the FDR Drive and West Side Highway. The \$15 base toll will apply from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays, and from 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. on weekends. Nighttime toll rates will be \$3.75. "Trucks and buses will pay a toll of \$24 or \$36 during the day, depending on their size and function, and \$6 or \$9 at night," the MTA's congestion pricing site states. "The toll for motorcycles is proposed to be \$7.50 during the day and \$1.75 at night."

Only a few types of vehicles will be exempted: emergency vehicles, those that carry people with disabilities, school buses, commuter buses and certain government vehicles.

## Legislator Solages Thanks Green Acres Mall for Supporting Local Groups



Green Acres Mall officials presented a \$1,000 check in support of the Elmont Chamber of Commerce, and a \$3,000 check for Simon's Valley Stream Jazz Festival . -Credit: Office of Legislator Carrié Solages

JUNE 2, 2024

ELMONT / VALLEY STREAM, N.Y. (TIP): Nassau County

Legislator Carrié Solages (D - Valley Stream) thanked the Green Acres Mall for their contributions toward a pair of important Third District community initiatives.

On Friday, May 31, Green Acres Mall officials presented a \$1,000 check in support of the Elmont Chamber of Commerce, and a \$3,000 check for Simon's Valley Stream Jazz Festival - the 19th edition of which is set for Saturday, Aug. 10 at the Valley Stream Village Bandshell. The festival, which is being spearheaded through a partnership between Assemblywoman Michaëlle Solages, the Village, and the Jazz Festival, features family-friendly fun, an array of multicultural performances, food trucks, vendors and more for a night of music under the stars.

"These funds will go a long way toward enhancing programs that strengthen our local business communities and outstanding cultural events like the Valley Stream Jazz Festival, which has been entertaining our community for nearly two decades," Legislator Solages said. "I thank everyone at the Green Acres Mall for supporting these worthwhile endeavors and giving back to the residents of the Third Legislative District, and it is my hope that more corporate partners will follow the lead of the Green Acres Mall and contribute toward these outstanding organizations."

## Liu, Rozic commemorate 50th anniversary of the first BAPS Temple in North America



State Senator John Liu and Assembly Member Nily Rozic passed Resolutions J2225, K2400, commemorating the landmark 50th anniversary of the Flushing BAPS Shri Swaminarayan mandir

### State Legislature passes resolutions commemorating the landmark 50th anniversary of the Flushing BAPS Shri Swaminarayan mandir

JUNE 5, 2024

ALBANY, NY (TIP): State Senator John Liu and Assembly Member Nily Rozic passed Resolutions J2225, K2400, commemorating the landmark 50th anniversary of the Flushing BAPS Shri Swaminarayan mandir (temple) - the first BAPS temple in North America yesterday. In honor of the occasion, BAPS members from around New York traveled to the State Capitol to receive the resolution and to perform the invocation in the Senate and Assembly chambers.

Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) is a worldwide Hindu denomination dedicated to fostering faith, inspiring service and promoting better living. The first BAPS mandir in North America was built by the Pramukh Swami Maharaj on Flushing's historic Bowne Street in 1974. Since then, six traditional stone Hindu mandirs and 108 hari mandirs have been built in the United States and Canada.

State Senator John Liu stated, "This year marks the 50th anniversary of the BAPS mandir in Flushing, a historic milestone for the mandir and our community. The BAPS mandir has been a cornerstone of the Hindu community, serving the spiritual, social and community needs of so many, and we are proud to commemorate their tremendous commitments to serving the needs of others."

State Assembly Member Nily Rozic stated, "It's an honor to recognize the BAPS Mandir on their 50th anniversary. For 50 years, the Mandir has been a central center for worship, cultural heritage, and community service.

Read more at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)



# Indian-origin truck driver who caused bus crash in Canada ordered to be deported

**JASKIRAT SINGH SIDHU, A TRUCK DRIVER FROM CALGARY, BARRELED THROUGH A STOP SIGN AND INTO THE PATH OF THE HUMBOLDT BRONCOS JUNIOR HOCKEY TEAM'S BUS AT A RURAL INTERSECTION NEAR TISDALE, SASKATCHEWAN, IN 2018**



Jaskirat Singh Sidhu is from India and has permanent resident status in Canada

Photo: @CompleteHkyNews/X

MAY 24, 2024

**TORONTO (TIP):** An Indian-origin truck driver who caused a horrific bus crash in Canada involving a junior hockey team was on Friday ordered to be deported to India.

Jaskirat Singh Sidhu, a truck driver

from Calgary, barreled through a stop sign and into the path of the Humboldt Broncos junior hockey team's bus at a rural intersection near Tisdale, Saskatchewan, in 2018. Sixteen people on the bus were killed and 13 injured, CityNews Calgary reported.

The decision came on Friday at an Immigration and Refugee Board hearing in Calgary for Sidhu.

Sidhu's lawyer Michael Greene has said the decision was a foregone conclusion, as all that's required to deport Sidhu is proof that he's not a Canadian citizen and he committed a serious crime, CBC reported.

Sidhu is from India and has permanent resident status in Canada.

"It's pretty open and shut," Greene said in an interview with The Canadian Press.

"There's nothing to contest, so those

are as clear as day."

He was granted parole after being sentenced to eight years for dangerous driving in the 2018 bus crash in Saskatchewan.

Sidhu's lawyer has said there are still numerous other legal procedures to come, and the deportation process could take months or years.

In December, the Federal Court dismissed applications from Sidhu's lawyer, who had argued border officials did not consider Sidhu's previously clean criminal record and remorse. He wanted the court to order the border agency to conduct a second review.

"This is part of the sadness of the whole process. We're left with a situation where permanent residents have no rights whatsoever to have their personal circumstances considered," Greene said, before Friday's hearing.

"Our only mechanism is (that) after he's ordered deported, we're going to ask them to give back his (permanent resident) status (based) on humanitarian grounds.

"But in the meantime, he has no status."

Greene said Sidhu won't immediately be taken into custody after the hearing is over, the report said.

He said a pre-removal risk assessment has to be conducted and Sidhu can also ask for a deferral while his request for permanent resident status is considered.

The process, Greene said, could take months or years.

Several family members of those killed in the crash have said they want Sidhu deported.

(Source: PTI)

## Man sentenced to hospital order for killing of Indian student in London



Tejaswini Kontham Reddy was killed by Keven Antonio Lourenco de Moraes of Brazilian heritage in June 2023.

Photo: X/ @AshwiniSahaya

MAY 31, 2024

**LONDON (TIP):** A 24-year-old man of Brazilian heritage, who admitted to the manslaughter of Indian student Tejaswini Kontham and the attempted murder of her friend at a residential address here last year, has been sentenced to detention in a mental institution.

Keven Antonio Lourenco De Moraes appeared at Isleworth Crown Court on Thursday where he was sentenced under Section 37 of the Mental Health Act, 1983, and a restriction order under Section 41 for the stabbing attacks in June last year, London's Metropolitan Police said.

He had previously appeared at the same court on April 22 and pleaded guilty to manslaughter by diminished responsibility.

His plea was accepted by the court, having previously pleaded guilty to the attempted murder of the second unnamed victim in Wembley, north London.

"This entire incident has been devastating for all concerned. One young woman lost her life and another woman will likely never recover from the emotional scars, even when the physical ones have faded," said Detective Inspector Louise Caveen, from the Met Police's Specialist Crime Command.

"It is right that Lourenco De Moraes will now receive treatment, however, nothing will bring Tejaswini back to her family. Our thoughts remain with them," she said.

In court this week it emerged that the accused had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia three months before the stabbing incident.

The judge noted that De Moraes would have received a life sentence with a minimum nine-year term before being considered for parole, but considered the agreement among multiple doctors that a hospital order would best serve the public, given the medical attention needed to prevent further relapses. De Moraes will serve his time at a medium secure mental health unit in the south-east of London.

A murder investigation was launched after police were called to reports of a stabbing at Neeld Crescent in Wembley on the morning of June 13 last year. Officers attended along with the London Ambulance Service and found 27-year-old Tejaswini, who was from Hyderabad, and another woman, aged 28 at the time, suffering from knife injuries.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

## Indian immigration agent pleads guilty in international students fraud case in Canada; sentenced to three years in jail

MAY 30, 2024

**TORONTO (TIP):** An Indian immigration agent at the center of a scam to cheat students from India by issuing fake college admission to procure Canadian visas has been sentenced to three years in jail after he pleaded guilty before a court in Vancouver to immigration offences, according to a media report.

Brijesh Mishra, 37, was arrested after a Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) investigation tied him to dozens of fraudulent acceptance letters for Canadian colleges and universities that were provided to prospective international students from India between 2016 and 2020.

Dressed in a red jumpsuit, Mishra on Wednesday stood inside a Vancouver courtroom and apologized for a slew of Canadian immigration offences.

Mishra pleaded guilty to three charges related to Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, including misrepresentation and communicating false information, CBC News reported.

"I'm sorry," he told the courtroom. "I cannot change the past, but I can make sure I do not do it again in the future."

Mishra was arrested in Surrey, British Columbia, in June 2023. He entered Canada on a tourist visa, which had expired at the time of his arrest.

Crown and defense lawyers issued a joint sentencing submission asking for three years in prison, to which the judge



Brijesh Mishra was arrested after a Canadian Border Services Agency investigation tied him to dozens of fraudulent acceptance letters for Canadian colleges and universities

Photo for representational purposes only / iStock

agreed was sufficient.

Mishra's time in custody since his 2023 arrest counts as time served, meaning he will serve an additional 19 months.

"I would say he did show genuine remorse," CBC News quoted Gagan Nahal, Mishra's defense lawyer, as saying.

"The pleas that were entered today were clearly a demonstration of his remorse because he did have a right to run a trial in this," Nahal said 12 victims came forward during the CBSA's investigation. After serving his sentence in Canada, Mishra is expected to be deported to India where he faces further criminal charges, including a human smuggling offence. The maximum penalty for that offence is death.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))



# Indian-origin Major Radhika Sen honored with UN peacekeeping award

JUNE 3, 2024

**UNITED NATIONS (TIP):** Major Radhika Sen, a peacekeeper with the United Nations (UN) mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), has been honored for her outstanding efforts in empowering local communities, particularly women.

"Receiving this prestigious award on behalf of all the peacekeepers working in MONUSCO as well as my country, India, is just amazing. I cannot describe it in words," said Major Sen, who served with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres presented Sen with the 2023 Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award on Thursday, observed as the International Day of UN Peacekeepers.

The award recognizes the efforts of a military peacekeeper in promoting the principles of the 2000 Security Council resolution that calls for protecting women and girls from conflict-related sexual violence and sets gender-related responsibilities for the UN.

Congratulating her, Guterres called her "a true leader and role model. Her service is a true credit to the United Nations as a

whole".

Sen served with the Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), where she helped create the Community Alert Networks in North Kivu as a platform that brought in community leaders, young people, and women "to voice their security and humanitarian concerns," according to the UN.

With her MONUSCO colleagues, she worked to address those concerns.

Guterres said that "with humility, compassion, and dedication," she earned the trust of "conflict-affected communities, including women and girls" as her troops engaged with them "in an escalating conflict environment in North Kivu".

Earlier, Sen said, "Gender-sensitive peacekeeping is everybody's business - not just us, women. Peace begins with all of us in our beautiful diversity."

"This award is special to me as it recognizes the hard work put in by all the peacekeepers working in the challenging environment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and giving their best to bring a positive change in society," she added.

Hailing from Himachal Pradesh, Sen is

a biotech engineer who was studying for a master's degree at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay when she decided to join the Army.

She was assigned to MONUSCO in 2023 as the Engagement Platoon Commander with the Indian Rapid Deployment Battalion and completed her tenure in April 2024.

Sen is the second Indian peacekeeper to receive the honor after Major Suman Gawani, who served with the UN Mission in South Sudan and received the award in 2019.

Of the 6,063 Indian personnel in UN peacekeeping operations, 1,954 serve with MONUSCO, 32 of them women.

The UN said that Sen, who led mixed-gender engagement patrols and activities, became a role model for both men and women by fostering "a safe space for men and women to operate together under her command".

She also made sure that peacekeepers under her command operated with sensitivity to gender and sociocultural norms in the eastern DRC "to help build trust and thereby increase her team's chance of success", the UN said.

Among the activities she launched for women were English language classes for



Major Radhika Sen, a peacekeeper with the United Nations (UN) mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), has been honored for her outstanding efforts in empowering local communities, particularly women

children, and health, gender, and vocational training for adults.

"Her efforts directly inspired women's solidarity, providing safe spaces for meetings and open dialogue," the UN said.

She encouraged women in the village of Kashlira, near Rwindi town, to organize themselves to advocate for their rights, particularly in local security and peace discussions.

## INDIAN -ORIGIN STUDENT MISSING SINCE MAY 28 HAS BEEN FOUND IN CALIFORNIA



Nitheesha Kandula who has been reported missing, according to the Los Angeles Police Department, has been located and is safe

JUNE 3, 2024

**LOS ANGELES, CA (TIP):** Nitheesha Kandula, a 23-year-old student from Cal State San Bernardino, has been reported missing, according to the Los Angeles Police Department. Kandula was last seen in Los Angeles on May 28, 2024.

Authorities have provided possible vehicle information, noting that she may be driving a 2021 Toyota Corolla, though the color of the vehicle is unknown.

Nitheesha Kandula has been located and is safe, said the police. Police Chief John Gutierrez of California State University, Saint Bernardo Police Department posted on X, that Nitheesha Kandula has been located. No further details were provided.

## Indian-origin sepsis survivor hopes to make history in UK general election



Hajira Piranie, a sepsis survivor is busy campaigning to be elected as a first-time member of Parliament

JUNE 3, 2024

**LONDON (TIP):** An Indian-origin Labor Party candidate is drawing upon a very personal experience of surviving sepsis with the country's state-funded healthcare service in her campaign for the July 4 general election to be elected from her hometown in Leicestershire, East Midlands.

Hajira Piranie, whose mother hails from Maharashtra and her grandparents on her father's side from Gujarat, is busy campaigning to be elected as a first-time member of Parliament from the Harborough, Oadby & Wigston constituency in southern Leicestershire.

One of her campaign themes is to highlight that safeguarding the National Health Service (NHS) is more than just a slogan for her and that only a Labor Party-led government, which first created the NHS 76 years ago, can tackle the waiting lists faced by patients.

"In 2019, I survived sepsis, and it was a difficult time as my lungs had collapsed and I was on a ventilator fighting for my life," said Piranie.

"I have been campaigning for the UK Sepsis Trust as their Ambassador and raising awareness, specifically within our South Asian communities, on picking up on the symptoms of sepsis. It is a big reason why I'm a Labor candidate because it is the party that created the NHS and we are the only party that can save it and get people those appointments when they need it to save their lives," she said.

As a mother of a three-year-old, in her late 20s, Piranie has also been actively involved with the work of a charity in Maharashtra with links in the UK that supports victims of human trafficking.

"As a young mother, it's about creating a better future for my son and the next generation. This ties in with my Indian heritage because as Indians, we're proud to be the voice for those who don't feel like they have a voice," she said.

"I'm deeply connected to my Indian roots. I visit India very often to visit my family there and I also work with organizations there like Kshamta, which is linked to a charity here called Kindled Spirit where I'm a trustee, helping survivors of human trafficking in Mumbai.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

## INDIAN AMERICAN SEVENTH-GRADE STUDENT WINS SPELLING BEE COMPETITION



Bruhat Soma holds aloft the trophy he won at the Scripps National Spelling Bee competition

MAY 31, 2024

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Bruhat Soma, a 12-year-old Indian American seventh-grade student from Florida, has won the Scripps National Spelling Bee after he spelt 29 words correctly in the tiebreaker, maintaining the dominance of the children from the small ethnic community in the prestigious competition.

His championship word was "abseil", which is defined as "descent in mountaineering by means of a rope looped over a projection above."



**GOPIO-CT CELEBRATES MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**



Speakers at the virtual seminar organized by GOPIO-CT to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month

Top row L to R: Mini Santosh, Japa Daptardar

Bottom row L to R: Dr. Mohini Ranganathan and Dr. Thomas Abraham

**JUNE 1, 2024**

**STAMFORD, CT (TIP):** The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin - Connecticut Chapter (GOPIO-CT) hosted a highly engaging virtual seminar to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month.

Dr Thomas Abraham, Chairman of GOPIO International and Trustee of GOPIO-CT started the seminar with introducing GOPIO and its chapter in Connecticut with all its activities and how one can participate. He then introduced GOPIO CT President Jaya Daptardar, who was the driving force behind organizing a wellness seminar and panel discussion on May 30th, 2024, via Zoom. The event was well received by the attendees.

The seminar focused on the theme of "Embracing Wellness and Cultivating Mental Health Awareness" and featured an impressive and diverse panel of speakers. The panelists included Dr. Mohini Ranganathan, an associate professor of Psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine and a practicing psychiatrist for 20 years, and Dr. Jaya Daptardar, an Ayurvedic Doctor with 25 years of experience who also serves as the Chief Compliance Officer for Bridges Healthcare in CT, and Mini Santosh, an Early Childhood Director with Community Action Agency of Western CT.

At the seminar, Dr. Mohini emphasized that no community is immune to mental health issues and stressed the importance of open conversations about mental health. She also highlighted the lack of adequate awareness and conversation about mental health in the South Asian American community, while also noting an eagerness to learn about it.

"It is important not to be shy about discussing behavioral health issues,"

Dr. Jaya Daptardar underlined that behavioral health challenges are not specific to any particular race, ethnicity, or gender. She emphasized the importance of identifying early signs of behavioral changes and challenges and starting conversations to seek help. She also discussed various therapies and treatments available, as well as simple prevention and wellness methods

**Morris County Indian American Association hosts Farewell and Thank you dinner for Consul - Community Affairs**

**JUNE 5, 2024**

**EDISON, NJ (TIP):** The Greater Morris County Indian American Association gave a farewell and Thank you dinner to Mr. Vijay Krishnan - Consul for Community Affairs (Indian Consulate in New York). The event was attended by the outgoing consul as well as the incoming consul for community Affairs Ms Pragya Singh.

Many prominent Indian American Community leaders attended the event to thank Mr. Vijay Krishnan for his good work during his tenure at the Indian Consulate, especially his services to the community during the pandemic. The Greater Morris County Indian American Association presented a plaque on behalf



Hosts with Mr. Vujaykrishnan and Ms Pragya Singh

of the community and a memento to the outgoing consul for community affairs. The event was organized by Rajendar

Dichpally, Santosh Peddi, Bhagwan Pingle, Balaji Jilla, Vijaya Nadella, Ravinder Thota and Manju Bhargava.

**Telangana State Formation Day celebrated in New Jersey**

**JUNE 4, 2024**



G. Madhusudhan Reddy, MLA Devarkadra Telangana addresses the gathering

**EDISON, NJ (TIP):** 10th Telangana State Formation Day was celebrated in Edison on June 2nd, 2024 by Indian Overseas Congress USA (Telangana Chapter)

Mr. G. Madhusudhan Reddy, MLA Devarkadra Telangana, was the Guest of Honor.

During Q&A session Mr. Reddy discussed issues relating to the development of the Telangana State. He took questions and also asked questions.

Local leaders Rajeshwar Gangasani, Ram Gadula and Pradeep



The visiting MLA G. Madhusudhan Reddy with Harvender Singh and organizers.

Photo / courtesy Hervender Singh

Samala organized the event.

For more info Contact Ram Gadula on 732-207-5481.

**Catskill Mountain Railroad Goes Green**

**JUNE 5, 2024**

**NEW YORK (TIP):** With global warming and climate change at the forefront of our news recently, the Catskill Mountain Railroad is helping to fight back. In an effort to reduce its carbon footprint and harmful emissions from the use of diesel fuel it is now running its locomotives on 100% Biodiesel. The Catskill Mountain Railroad is the first tourist railroad in the United States to convert to 100% biodiesel and shows the CMRR's commitment to Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger's leadership to create the boldest climate agenda in New York State..



According to the US Department of Energy, the use of 100% Biodiesel reduces Carbon Dioxide (Greenhouse Gas) emissions by 74% compared to regular diesel fuel. Additionally, it reduces carbon monoxide and particulate emissions by nearly 50%, and hydrocarbon emissions by nearly 70%. Notably, the composition of the remaining particulates is much less adverse than that from normal diesel as they are biodegradable.

The CMRR is being supplied the biodiesel by NetZero Biofuels, a Hudson Valley startup founded by local entrepreneur Dave Davenport and located near Newburgh. NetZero converts thousands of gallons of byproduct soybean oil from farms in Syracuse, New York, which are treated at their production facility in nearby Rock Tavern, New York. With the CMRR being NetZero's first major commercial customer, it is a win-win for both businesses by supporting a growing Hudson Valley supplier of green energy as well as making the Catskill Mountain Railroad a leader in sustainability in the US railroad tourism industry.

The Catskill Mountain Railroad, named Best Tourist Attraction of 2023 by the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce, is working hard to help achieve the green carbon neutral goals being encouraged by Ulster County in the environmentally safe operation of its tourist trains. More information on the CMRR and its Sustainability Program can be found on their website at <https://catskillmountainrailroad.com/sustainability>.



# Yoga Cruise Celebrates International Day of Yoga's 10th Anniversary with a Fusion of Culture and Wellness



Organizers with Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan

**NITIN VYAS**  
**JUNE 2, 2024**

**FLUSHING, NY (TIP):** World Vegan Vision, in partnership with the Consulate of India in New York, hosted a vibrant celebration of International Day of Yoga on June 2nd aboard the Skyline Cruise New York. The event showcased the harmonious connection between mind, body, and spirit through engaging yoga sessions, cultural performances, and community engagement.

#### A Day of Unity and Wellness

The event started with a warm welcome reception featuring traditional Dhol and Shankh performances. Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan and State Senator John Liu were honored guests.

#### Inaugural Address

- Welcoming remarks by President Rakesh Bhargav.  
- Introduction of the Founder: H.K. Shah shared the history and mission of World Vegan Vision while



Nitin Vyas introduces Vegan Vision founder HK Shah, Senator John Liu, Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Dr. Hari Shukla and other guests

welcoming the Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan and NY State Senator John Liu .

#### Praise and Progress

Chandra Mehta, Vice Chairwoman, commended the event and celebrated the organization's achievements.

#### Citations Presented

Senator John Liu presented citations to founder H.K. Shah, expressing best wishes for International Day of Yoga and the organization's future endeavors and Special Thanks to Dr Harish Shukla, New York.

#### Special Address by CG Binaya Srikanta Pradhan

The CG highlighted the significance of IDY 2024, the rich history of yoga, and its profound health benefits.

#### Yoga Demonstration

The event culminated in a dynamic yoga asanas demonstration led by renowned instructors: Poonam



Yoga exercises with Gurudev Deelip Ji

Gupta (Laughter Yoga), Anu Dronadula, Gurudev Deelip Ji, Juhi Mehta ( Myntra Yoga), Swami Brahmanishtananda Saraswati, Priti Dhariwal, Geeta Patel, Annetta Zaltzberg and Ms Tripra Bhatt. The demonstration included participation by CG Binaya Srikanta Pradhan and community leaders, embodying the unifying spirit of the occasion.

#### Cultural Enrichment and Community Spirit

Prayer Anand No GARBO by Rita Patel & her Teams from Sidhi VINAYAK TEMPLE LAWRENCEVILLE, New Jersey.

Captivating cultural performances enhanced the celebration. Renowned choreographer Sonalee Vyas Jani (sonalee.com) led an interactive Bollywood Yoga session, blending music and movement. Chetan Bhavsar mesmerized the audience with a captivating Dhol performance.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

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# Gone are days for single party majority; alliances are back



BY PRABHJOT SINGH

**INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING POLITICAL OUTFITS, ALWAYS STAY TALLER THAN INDIVIDUALS WHO COME AND GO. INSTITUTIONS STAY. OF COURSE, INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTE IMMENSELY TO BUILDING INSTITUTIONS, BUT THEY SELDOM BECOME INDISPENSABLE.**

**"The party that looked "unbeatable" till early this year, met its Waterloo in its own backyard of the Hindi heartland, including Uttar Pradesh which sends 80 of 545 Lok Sabha members. Known for its political acumen, some call this most populous state "Uttapulta Pradesh", it had earlier shown the longest ruling Congress door. After giving the Bharatiya Janata Party enough time in office, the State has now put its confidence in the Samajwadi Party giving it a record 37 seats, a performance that may have even surprised its leadership."**

Politics is a game of glorious uncertainties. India, the biggest and most vibrant democracy, has come a long way after it wriggled out of the regimen of mandatory alliances to a single-party majority rule in 2014. And after 10 years, coalitions have again become a political necessity. Though then the Bhartiya Janata Party had broken the hoodoo of coalitions at the center, it now desperately needs its

alliance partners in its endeavor to earn the right to govern the biggest democracy in the world for its third term.

More than 642 million people voted to give a fractured verdict while constituting the 18th Lok Sabha with no single party anywhere near the majority mark. In 2014, the BJP came out as the single largest party by winning the majority verdict. Though it stayed on with its alliance part., including the oldest regional party, Shiromani Akali Dal, for almost two terms, it parted company with some of its allies before testing deep troubled waters of the voter's pool this year. Overconfident of its prowess of swimming to safety, it almost drowned itself in the battle of the ballot nearly allowing its sworn opponents and traditional rivals to swim to the podium.

Elated at its earlier success starting in 2014, BJP went on improving its performance as it took its individual tally from 282 in 2014 to 303 in 2019 before setting for itself a gigantic task of 350 seats in the lower House of Parliament in the 2024 contest. The voters, however, did not think the way the party supremo and two-term Prime Minister Narendra Modi thinks. They sent a message loud and clear saying "We decide what we want".

The party that looked "unbeatable" till early this year, met its Waterloo in its own backyard of the Hindi heartland, including Uttar Pradesh which sends 80 of 545 Lok Sabha members. Known for its political acumen, some call this most populous state "Uttapulta Pradesh", it had earlier shown the longest ruling Congress door. After giving the Bharatiya Janata Party enough time in office, the State has now put its confidence in the Samajwadi Party giving it a record 37 seats, a performance that may have even surprised its leadership.

Institutions, including political outfits, always stay taller than individuals who



NDA alliance parties - partners in Modi 03

come and go. Institutions stay. Of course, individuals contribute immensely to building institutions, but they seldom become indispensable.

The poll results will now obviously force Narendra Modi to rely on allies to form the government after a bitter and divisive election that was projected as a referendum on his popularity. It also now dims light on the coterie that had the country's Home Minister and former party President as the confidant of the Prime Minister. The element of surprise is now with the I.N.D.I. Alliance provided browbeats NDA in the battle of "horse trading", a game that Narendra Modi and his coterie had set in motion just before the start of the 2024 battle of the ballot.

Interestingly, the BJP candidates, including those who won over from other parties, including Congress, contested in the name of Modi, hoping not only for a landslide but also the accomplish the slogan of their leader "iss baar 400 ke paar" saw success eluding them. They could win-win or were ahead only in 240 seats to emerge as the single largest party, a far cry from the 303 it had won last time in the 543-member Lok Sabha to mark the return of coalition politics.

BJP's key allies N. Chandrababu Naidu's TDP and Nitish Kumar's JD(U) had every reason to be pleased with the performance of their respective candidates as they won 16 and 12 seats in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, respectively. With the support of its other allies, the BJP-led NDA has been forced to a tight-rope walking on its course to reach the 272 majority mark. The TDP also swept the Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh dislodging Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSRCP.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge termed the poll outcome as the "victory of the people and that of democracy."

"We had been saying that this battle is between the public and Modi...This mandate is against Modi. This is his political and moral defeat. It is a big defeat for a person who sought votes in his name. He has suffered a moral setback," Kharge told reporters at the AICC headquarters flanked by Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi after the good showing by the Congress.

On the other hand, Narendra Modi with his 52-inch chest, has been on track to equal Jawaharlal Nehru's record as the PM for a third consecutive term. His accomplishment is, however, subject to acceptance by allies to be in the government.

In a post on X, Modi said, "I bow to the 'Janata Janardan' for this affection and assure them that we will continue the good work done in the last decade to keep fulfilling the aspirations of people." He retained the Varanasi seat but with a reduced victory margin of nearly 1.53 lakh votes in Varanasi. In 2019, the margin was 4,79,505.

It was not Modi alone. Others, including the Aam Aadmi Party, too, would love to put behind this debacle as quickly as it can. As a ruling party in Delhi, it drew a blank while in Punjab against its projected claim of 13-0, it ended with just three seats as four of its five Cabinet Ministers fell on the way to their run for Lok Sabha seats.

And Punjab did the trick. BJP drew a blank from this border State even after it had won over three sitting MPs from other parties in its list of contestants. Two Independents - Amritpal Singh (Khadoor Sahib) and Sarabjeet Singh Khalsa (Faridkot) - with their splendid triumphs had a message for the rest of the world "Do not take us for granted, we are different."

(The author is a senior journalist. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

## INDIA VOTES

PARTY	2014	2019	2024
BJP	282	303	240
CONGRESS	44	52	99
TRINAMOOL CONGRESS	34	22	22
SAMAJWADI PARTY	5	5	37
TDP	16	3	16
YSR	9	22	4
DMK	*	24	22
SAD	4	2	1



# India's Election Humbles Narendra Modi



BY SADANAND DHUME

**He expected a blowout, but his party lost more than one-fifth of its seats and its outright majority**

**"For the BJP, disappointment stems from inflated expectations. On the campaign trail Mr. Modi boasted that the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance aimed to win more than 400 seats this year. He also claimed that he had been sent by God to serve India. A flurry of exit polls released a few days before vote counting predicted that the BJP and its allies would win 350 to 400 seats. Most predicted that the opposition alliance would win fewer than 170 seats....."**

**That Mr. Modi barely scraped through with the help of allies marks a serious blow to the aura of invincibility he has cultivated since becoming prime minister in 2014. In the temple town of Varanasi in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh-Mr. Modi's constituency-his victory margin over his closest Congress rival in this election shrank by more than two-thirds compared with the 2019 election. The BJP lost 29 seats in Uttar Pradesh, and another 14 in the state of Maharashtra."**

**Y**ou might think that an almost-certain return to power for a third successive term after winning more than twice as many parliamentary seats as your nearest rival would be cause for celebration for any politician. Not if you're Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. True, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and its allies are on track to form the next government. But by severely underperforming exit-poll predictions and his own hype, Mr. Modi appears diminished rather than



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with BJP President JP Nadda in tow celebrates victory at the Bharatiya Janata Party headquarters in New Delhi

CNBC Screen shot

exalted by this victory.

After counting 642 million votes, election officials reported that the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance had won 293 seats in the 543-seat lower house of Parliament. The BJP alone had won 240, a loss of 63 seats compared with the outgoing Parliament and well below the 272 seats needed for a single-party majority. The opposition Congress Party, which many pundits and pollsters had written off for months as a spent force, turned out its best performance in 15 years by winning 99 seats on its own. The Congress-led INDIA Alliance, a coalition of about two dozen parties, won 234 seats, by far the opposition's best performance since Mr. Modi first rose to power in 2014.

For the BJP, disappointment stems from inflated expectations. On the campaign trail Mr. Modi boasted that the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance aimed to win more than 400 seats this year. He also claimed that he had been sent by God to serve India. A flurry of exit polls released a few days before vote counting predicted that the BJP and its allies would win 350 to 400 seats. Most predicted that the opposition alliance would win fewer than 170 seats.

On paper the election seemed to favor a landslide for the ruling party. Mr. Modi's high approval rating-74% in May, according to Morning Consult-makes him one of the world's most popular democratically elected leaders. High-profile temple inaugurations, including one to the Hindu deity Ram in the temple town of Ayodhya in January, were

supposed to cement the prime minister's support among the roughly 80% of Indians who are Hindu.

The BJP has many advantages over its rivals. After a decade as the ruling party, it enjoys a massive fundraising edge. Much of the media, especially Hindi news channels, have a strong pro-BJP tilt. Before the elections, the Modi government jailed some prominent opposition leaders, including Delhi's Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, for alleged corruption. A slew of defections from the opposition to the ruling party were expected to further strengthen the BJP. And the personality cult around the prime minister ensured that voters were continually reminded of his presence. At one point, Covid-19 vaccination certificates in India bore his image, and the ruling party last year portrayed a routine Group of 20 Summit as a global tribute to Mr. Modi's leadership.

That Mr. Modi barely scraped through with the help of allies marks a serious blow to the aura of invincibility he has cultivated since becoming prime minister in 2014. In the temple town of Varanasi in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh-Mr. Modi's constituency-his victory margin over his closest Congress rival in this election shrank by more than two-thirds compared with the 2019 election. The BJP lost 29 seats in Uttar Pradesh, and another 14 in the state of Maharashtra.

In a speech to party workers Tuesday night, Mr. Modi attempted to put a positive spin on a disappointing performance. He pointed out that his is

the first Indian government to win three successive terms since Jawaharlal Nehru's in 1962. More silver linings for the BJP: In state-level elections, the party won power for the first time in the eastern state of Odisha, and a BJP ally, the Telugu Desam party, won a substantial majority in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. The BJP also significantly improved its vote share in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, and for the first time won a seat in neighboring Kerala.

How might a third Modi term differ from the first two? U.S.-India relations, driven by shared concerns about China's ambitions, are unlikely to change.

The prime minister's domestic agenda will depend on what lessons he draws from his humbling. If India is lucky, Mr. Modi will take a less heavy-handed approach toward his critics in the opposition and the media, and strike a more conciliatory tone toward Muslims, Christians and Sikhs who feel threatened by the excesses of Hindu nationalism. On the economic front, Indians should hope the prime minister continues to build infrastructure and rejects the Congress Party's push to increase caste-based quotas in education and employment.

It's uncertain which direction Mr. Modi will take. But one thing is clear: Indian voters aren't as enamored with his strongman style and brassy overconfidence as he and his supporters assumed.

(Source: Bloomberg)



# India's Elections 2024: A slight sigh of Relief; Will it last?



BY GEORGE ABRAHAM

**"THE PEOPLE OF INDIA HAVE UNEQUIVOCALLY REJECTED THE BJP'S AGENDA, WHICH SOUGHT TO UNDERMINE THE CONSTITUTION AND TRANSFORM THE COUNTRY. THIS ELECTION OUTCOME IS A RESOUNDING ENDORSEMENT OF THE CURRENT CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ENVISIONED AND IMPLEMENTED BY JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AND B.R. AMBEDKAR. THE VOTERS APPEARED TO HAVE ARRESTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION'S SLIDE TOWARDS DICTATORSHIP AND FASCISM FOR NOW. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE BJP HAS NOT GOTTEN A MAJORITY OF ITS OWN. NARENDRA MODI HIMSELF HAS LOST SUBSTANTIAL VOTE SHARE IN HIS QUEST FOR REELECTION. EVEN THE BJP CANDIDATE IN AYODHYA, WHERE THE TEMPLE HAS BEEN CONSECRATED, HAD TO CONCEDE DEFEAT."**

After the announcement of the election results, I heard nothing but a sigh of relief all around, especially from members of the Diaspora. It is almost as if they have



Opposition leaders in Mumbai -File photo: PTI

been delivered from some precarious situation or a trap that had a debilitating impact on their thinking and actions. People were virtually living in fear of expressing their opinions and even stating the slightest criticism of the Modi government's policies. Indeed, at least for now, they appear to feel liberated.

If that is true, what would it have been if the Modi government had come down? Of course, the country would have truly restored its soul while recapturing the dynamism and freedom that was a hallmark of Indian democracy. The public has been struggling for a breath of air for freedom and liberty in the last decade, which was taken for granted mainly under the Congress party rule for six decades.

Even the Diaspora was under the guns where there were allegations of conspiracies of assassinations of overseas Indian citizens who had disagreed with the Modi administration. The recent filing by the United States Justice Department accusing an 'Indian government agent' plotting to kill an American citizen of Indian origin and a Khalistani activist, regardless of our disapproval of issues he has been advocating, sent chills across the overseas community everywhere.

Many members of the Diaspora were afraid to speak out because of the fear that any dissenting voice may result in the cancellation of the OCI cards. It happened to Aatish Taseer, who wrote a critical piece on Modi in Time magazine and was punished by denying his wish to visit his aging grandmother. Nitasha Kaul, a professor from Westminster University, was deported directly from the Bengaluru airport back to the U.K. because of her past statements critical of the Modi government on constitutional matters. It should be noted that the Modi government changed the rules to make these arbitrary decisions unchallengeable in the judicial system. The Modi regime has deported many more Christian leaders from the West directly from the airport just because

they happened to be Christians.

Modi Administration's attacks on civil society have been ferocious, where many of the NGOs were forced to shutter their doors, and the foreign-related ones were either expelled or their FCRAs canceled. Minority-related institutions suffered the most at the hands of this regime, where 20000 or more FCRAs belonging to Christian Educational and Charitable organizations were suspended or frozen, thereby effectively putting them out of business. In contrast, Sangh Parivar organizations were allowed to receive money from abroad without any hindrance.

In the United States, where people are supposed to have freedom of expression, the Godi media, controlled mainly by Gujaratis, may have stifled voices of dissent by striking any criticism of Modi from either printed pages or visual media. Moderators who tried to play even-handedly on some of those networks started distancing themselves from genuine debates or being banished from the scene altogether. Even the Asianet outfit in the U.S., a popular channel in Kerala, allegedly has been under the influence of Sangh Parivar, their principal correspondent in the USA, who was a no-show at the Javits Center, where Rahul Gandhi addressed a large crowd.

Considering the above, it is understandable why the Diaspora is somewhat relieved by the changing dynamics with a new coalition government under Modi. However, there is a genuine fear that, given the opportunity, the BJP may poach M.Ps from other parties and craft a new majority of their own as they have plenty of resources to accomplish their set goals. Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar are crafty politicians who have been victims of Modi's odious agenda, and the world will be restlessly watching how they navigate through opportunities that come their way.

Nevertheless, the people of India have unequivocally rejected the BJP's agenda, which sought to undermine the

constitution and transform the country. This election outcome is a resounding endorsement of the current constitutional framework envisioned and implemented by Jawaharlal Nehru and B.R. Ambedkar. The voters appeared to have arrested the development of the nation's slide towards dictatorship and fascism for now. It is also important to note that the BJP has not gotten a majority of its own. Narendra Modi himself has lost substantial vote share in his quest for reelection. Even the BJP candidate in Ayodhya, where the temple has been consecrated, had to concede defeat.

If Narendra Modi and Amit Shah persist in governing India through their makeshift coalition, it is imperative for them to uphold the constitution. They must cease divisive and unscrupulous politics, halt the weaponization of investigating agencies, stop the destruction of worship places belonging to minority citizens, and govern the country by the law and its constitution. It is also high time for people to exercise their inherent right to express their opinions without fear of arrest or the cancellation of their OCI cards. The Fourth Estate should be allowed to function freely, promoting objective journalism that reaches people without bias or prejudice. We are again reminded that democracy is not a majoritarian rule but respects diversity and facilitates equal justice regardless of caste, creed, language, religion, or region.

We at the Overseas Congress salute the INDIA coalition and its leaders, especially AICC President Kharge Ji Rahul Ji and Pitroda ji, for their tireless efforts in getting the message to the people, which elicited the current response through the ballot boxes. We express our special gratitude to all those IOC volunteers from across the globe who participated in the electoral process to save democracy in their motherland.

(The author is a former Chief Technology Officer of the United Nations. He is Vice Chair of IOC USA. He can be reached at GTA777@gmail.com)





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Dr. RENEE MEHRA



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## VERDICT 2024

# How Congress scripted a revival from the lows of 2014 and 2019

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Forty-four seats and 19.3% of the vote in 2014; 52 seats and 19.49% of the vote in 2019; and 99 seats and 21.26% of the vote in 2024. One of the stories of these elections has been the turnaround of the Indian National Congress, one made all the more remarkable by its improved overall strike rate (defined as seats won to seats contested expressed in percentage) of 30% compared to 8.3 in 2019 and 9.4% in 2014, and improved strike rate of 29% in head-to-head contests against the BJP, compared to 8% in 2019 and 12.2% in 2014.

The performance of the Congress and the INDIA bloc meant that the BJP was restricted to 240 seats, short of the majority, although the larger NDA grouping which it heads won 293 seats.

“The election result that has come today is the result of the people. This is the victory of the people and democracy. We humbly accept the public opinion in the elections of the 18th Lok Sabha. This time the public has not given a clear majority to any one party (especially the ruling party),” Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Tuesday.

He also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

“BJP has sought votes on one person and one face, but now it is clear that the mandate has gone against Narendra Modi. This is a huge defeat for them morally and politically. They have suffered a huge loss from a moral point of view.”

The Congress’s turnaround was built on three pillars.

## The first was alliances

The INDIA bloc of opposition parties got off to a rocky start with many partners going public in late 2022 and early 2023 about the Congress delaying seat sharing talks. But eventually, the Congress-led bloc of 30 parties did manage to do this to a significant extent. The bloc fielded candidates across 543 seats, with the most serious of the intragroup contests in 75 seats across West Bengal, Kerala, and Punjab. And in around 350 seats, the alliance managed to field a single candidate against the BJP.

Much of that came from the Congress’s willingness to let go. It fielded only 328 candidates this time, the lowest it ever has. Interestingly, the party was willing to go even lower.

In an internal meeting of Congress leaders on January 6 at the party headquarters, Kharge hinted that the Congress would fight fewer seats: “We should focus on 255 seats,” he said to a surprised audience.

“We respected INDIA partners. We accommodated their wishes and fought together,” Rahul Gandhi said at a press conference on Tuesday.



Senior leaders of India's main opposition Congress Party Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, along with Mallikarjun Kharge, President of the Congress Party, display the party's manifesto for the general election in New Delhi, India, April 5, 2024. REUTERS

But the Congress was also careful about picking its candidates. “During the discussions with Samajwadi Party, they repeatedly advised us not to field Imran Masood from Saharanpur as he had lost in previous polls. But we stuck with Masood and now he is winning the seat with more than 77,000 votes,” said a leader who asked not to be named.

And where it felt a seat adjustment would hurt the alliance, it avoided one, like it did in Punjab, although it entered a pact with the Aam Aadmi Party, which rules that state in two others and in Delhi. “If a ruling party and the principal Opposition party joined hands, our votes would have gone to the BJP and Akali Dal,” said a senior Congress leader from Punjab. Of the 13 seats in Punjab, the Congress won seven and the AAP three.

Similarly, it avoided a pact with the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal.

In Kerala, it did not partner with the Left. It may have won only one seat in West Bengal, but the UDF alliance headed by it won 18 in Kerala (one less than last time), indicating that the approach worked for the party.

“We had to revive our organisation. And now we hope to reclaim the principal Opposition’s role,” said a second Congress leader. In 2014 and 2019, with less than 10% of the seats in the Lok Sabha, the Congress was not eligible to have its house leader designated leader of the opposition. That will change now.

## The second was the campaign itself

The Congress focused sharply on the caste census, unemployment and price rise, emphasising the 25 guarantees in its manifesto and aggressively rebutting the BJP’s attempts to claim that Congress would redistribute wealth or hand over resources to Muslims, if it came to power.

An A4-size card with 25 concrete guarantees scribbled on it was perhaps the most important piece of document for the Congress in Lok Sabha 2024 campaign. It contained five guarantees each for women, young people, farmers, workers, and for social justice. These included major sops — Rs 1 lakh for women heads of every poor family, 10kg of free food grain, and the right to apprenticeship.

“We gave a new vision to India. We gave a pro-poor vision for India. The country has clearly said that we do not want Narendra Modi and Amit Shah running the affairs of this country,” Gandhi said.

“We realised that our focus has to be the aam admi. The rural and urban poor and the middle class. And we curated our manifesto in that way,” said a third Congress leader who asked not to be named.

The issue of caste-based reservation was a key issue. The Congress and the other INDIA bloc parties alleged that the BJP wanted to win over 400 of the 543 Lok Sabha seats so that it could change the Constitution and do away with caste-based quotas for the SC and ST communities.

While this wasn’t factual, the BJP struggled to counter it. And Gandhi also pitched for a caste census, promising proportionate benefits, and also said it would raise the 50% ceiling on reservation for SC, ST, OBCs.

Clad in a white polo T-shirt and trousers, his uniform during the Bharat Jodo Yatras, Rahul Gandhi carried a special pocket-edition of the Constitution, waving it around at almost every meeting.

“For the first time in recent history, the Constitution became a key plank in the Lok Sabha election. And it possibly had its effect especially in the poor belts,” said economist Abhirup Sarkar.

“Why do they need 400 seats?” asked a number of Congress candidates as well as INDIA bloc leaders during the campaign. They offered the answer too: to change the Constitution drafted by BR Ambedkar to do away with reservation.

## The third was the party organisation

Between 2019 and 2024 elections, Rahul Gandhi travelled more than 10,000km, mostly on foot in his two yatras, reaching out to people and seeking to revive the Congress organisation at the grassroots level. His sister, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, opted for campaigning across India, and especially in Uttar Pradesh, instead of fighting in Amethi.

The Congress organisation under Kharge emerged united. More importantly, it was responsive and flexible enough to react to the BJP, often using social media to good effect, an area where the party had lagged in 2014 and 2019.

For instance, sitting in front of a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi, on May 8, Rahul Gandhi recorded a short video to debunk Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s claim that the Congress was sent a “tempo-load” of money by Adani and Ambani. “You spoke about tempo. Are you talking from your personal experience?” Gandhi asked Modi.

Congress leaders close to Gandhi said the party was sharp and quick in its rebuttal to what they termed “Modi’s lies”.

So, when the BJP alleged that the Congress wanted to redistribute wealth, the party machinery went full throttle to argue that its entire manifesto didn’t say a word on redistribution.

To be sure, with 99 seats in the Lok Sabha, the Congress is still far behind the BJP, but experts said the improvement is stark. “I think it was a major turnaround for the Congress given the adversities it has faced in the run up to the poll. It will form a bigger and better pressure group inside and outside Parliament but the Congress also has the larger responsibility to take the allies together for the upcoming elections,” said political analyst Suman Chattopadhyay.

Source: HT



# Lok Sabha Election Results 2024: Decoding the Verdict

NEW DELHI (TIP)

How will the third Narendra Modi government differ from the two previous ones that came to power in 2014 and 2019? The answer will lie in the composition of the Eighteenth Lok Sabha. Here are a few things that will change.

## After a decade, back to days of coalitions at the Centre

For the better part of the last 34 years, India has been governed by a coalition of political parties. It is only in the last 10 years that a single political party — the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) — led a majority government at the Centre, crossing the halfway mark in the Lok Sabha elections of 2014 and 2019. Be that as it may be, the biggest structural reforms and rights-based programmes happened during the last 30-plus years, the seeds of most of which were sown during the coalition era.

The BJP had won or was leading in 240 seats at midnight on Tuesday, short of the majority mark of 272 by a long way. It will have to depend on its pre-poll allies, the top four being the Telugu Desam Party led by Chandrababu Naidu, the Janata Dal (United) led by Nitish Kumar, Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde, and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) led by Chirag Paswan.

The TDP had won or was leading at 16 seats, the JD(U) had won 12, the Shiv Sena had won 7, and the LJP (Ram Vilas) had won 5 seats. Together, these parties will bring 40 seats to the NDA. The BJP will need all these seats to comfortably go past the half-way mark of 272.

The (undivided) Sena and JD(U) were BJP allies earlier too, but with a crucial difference. Their withdrawal of support would not jeopardise the NDA government, given that the BJP on its own had 282 seats in 2014, and an even higher tally of 303 seats in 2019.

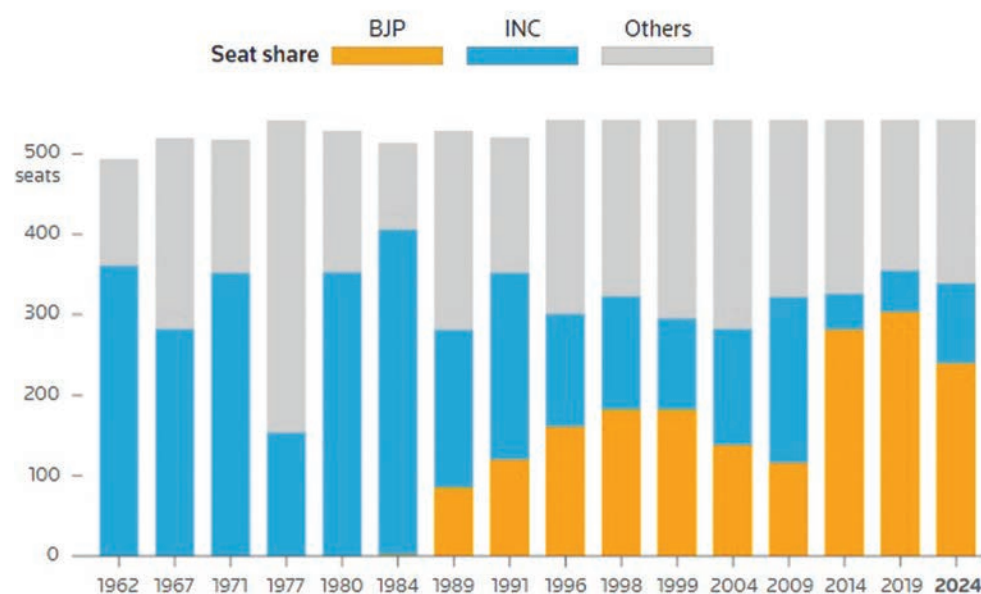
So, when Uddhav Thackeray, whose Sena had been a BJP ally with a similar ideology since 1989, and had won 18 seats in the Lok Sabha election of 2019, pulled out of the alliance after the 2019 Assembly polls in Maharashtra, the BJP-led government at the Centre was not affected.

Similarly, the Akali Dal, another long-term BJP ally since 1996, pulling out of the alliance during the farm protests in September 2020 did not matter.

Not anymore. Now, BJP will have to listen to its allies, because they will be key to the stability of the government at the Centre.

Not just that. Given the smaller difference in seat tallies in the new Lok Sabha, the rival INDIA bloc will have a better chance at putting the government under pressure should some NDA allies break ranks and cross

**THE 2024 ELECTION HAS BROUGHT THE BJP TO POWER FOR A THIRD STRAIGHT TERM BUT HAS DIMINISHED THE PARTY. THE IMPACT WILL BE FELT IN RELATIONSHIPS IN THE NDA, AS WELL AS WITHIN THE BJP AND BETWEEN THE BJP AND RSS**



over.

Both Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge did not rule out the possibility of approaching the BJP's pre-poll allies for a shot at forming the government.

The new and old allies will seek Cabinet berths — maybe important ones, that could impinge on the BJP-led government's flexibility in policy-making.

And the BJP may be required to revisit its coalition dharma. It will have to call periodic meetings of its allies for temperature checks; it will need to get them on board before deciding on hot button issues such as Uniform Civil Code, delimitation of constituencies, judicial reforms, and 'one-nation, one-election'.

In short, the party will have to reset the framework of running a genuine coalition government, and devise mechanisms to accommodate the sensitivities of other parties with their own ethos and ideologies.

## Rise of regional leaders

From the North to the South, East to West, regional leaders have re-emerged to exert influence in the national polity. Chandrababu Naidu will get to wield clout as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, and as a key partner in the BJP-led government at the Centre. Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav will now be heard loud and clear in not just the Uttar Pradesh Assembly, where his party with 108 seats out of total 403 has a significant presence, but also in Parliament.

The Samajwadi Party (SP) has trumped the BJP in Uttar Pradesh, the state that contributed 72 seats to the party's tally of 282 in 2014. The SP had won or was leading in 37 seats in the state that contributes the largest

number of MPs — 80 — to Lok Sabha.

The BJP had won only 33 seats, its strength almost halved from the 62 of 2019. In fact, the SP will be the third largest party in Parliament after the BJP (240) and the Congress (99).

Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (29 seats), M K Stalin's Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (22), the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) with its 9 seats, and the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) with 7 will lend their voice to regional aspirations, and mount pressure on the Central government by speaking up in Parliament.

The Trinamool's performance in the election, winning 7 seats more than in 2019, could mean that Mamata has managed to stall the BJP's juggernaut in West Bengal, at least for now. And the DMK-led alliance has retained all 39 seats in Tamil Nadu.

The verdict in Maharashtra suggests that the people have stood by Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray, who suffered BJP-supported splits in their parties. The state goes to Assembly polls later this year in October, and the Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance of the Congress, Sharad Pawar's NCP, and the Uddhav Sena is well placed to make a strong bid for power.

## Recalibration of power balance, among BJP-RSS and within BJP

Given that the Lok Sabha elections in 2024 too were centred around Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with a high-decibel 'Modi ki guarantee' campaign, the burden of a lower tally will inevitably fall on him. Leaders will not speak openly against the Prime Minister, and will continue to rally around him, but it is bound to reflect in the party's power structure.

What has not gone unnoticed is the

performance of Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who delivered a clear majority for the BJP in the Assembly elections just six months ago, and has now ensured a clean sweep in Madhya Pradesh with all 29 Lok Sabha seats falling into the BJP basket. Chouhan has won his own seat, Vidisha, by a staggering margin of 8.21 lakh votes.

Modi may not only have to accommodate but also actively deploy moderate voices to expand his acceptability in the coalition government and in Parliament, which will represent a wider political spectrum than before.

When the new Cabinet is constituted, Modi may not have the kind of free hand he had in 2014 and 2019. RSS, the ideological parent of the BJP, which works quietly on the ground for the party, may put forward its own suggestions.

The BJP, which has grown in strength over the past decade, did not necessarily consult the RSS on government affairs. BJP-RSS relations during the NDA government under Atal Bihari Vajpayee had been starkly different. The RSS claims that it does not seek power, but it has always influenced the political agenda of the party.

## Federalism will matter more, expect greater accountability

The oft-repeated slogan of "double-engine sarkar" to garner votes during Assembly elections in states has been seen by the opposition as an affront to federalism, a basic tenet of the Constitution.

For effective and optimal functioning of a state, the same party need not be in power at the Centre as well as in the state. The DMK in Tamil Nadu has a distinct Dravidian ideology or the SP in Uttar Pradesh may seek to actively improve the lives of minorities or backward classes, but the shrill politics of "double-engine sarkar" often ended up pitting the Centre against the states, particularly those ruled by the Opposition. In India's immense diversity and federal polity, the imposition of a unitary vision or formula is often unsuitable.

Accountability is likely to increase in all institutions from the judiciary to the auditor, from financial regulators to the election watchdog, and even the investigative agencies. A coalition lends itself to better checks and balances, infuses oxygen into the ecosystem, and gives institutions space to innovate and push back against top-down policies of the political executive.

Source: *The Indian Express*



# Southern India remains BJP's weak point

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Ahead of the election results, all talk was about the Bharatiya Janata Party significantly expanding its presence in the southern part of the country, improving its seat and vote share.

To some extent, the party achieved this — it won eight seats in Telangana, up from four in 2019, with its vote share increasing from 19.5% to 35.2%; it won three seats in Andhra Pradesh, thanks to its alliance with the Telugu Desam Party and the Jana Sena, with its vote share increasing from 0.96% to 11.3%; and it won one in Kerala, with its vote share increasing from 12.9% to 16.7%, and comparing well with the LDF's 33.3%.

But in the state where it expected to take over the mantle of main opposition from its erstwhile ally, the AIADMK, and where it is led by the vocal and articulate K Annamalai, considered by many to be a next-gen leader of the BJP, the party managed to increase its vote share only to 11.3% from 3.6%, and won no seats. Even Tamilisai Soundararajan, the former governor of Telangana who resigned her post to contest from Chennai South lost to her DMK rival, Thamizhachi Thangapandian.

And in Karnataka, where it won 25 of the 28 seats on offer in 2019 (and supported an independent who won the 26th), the BJP won 17 seats (19 with its ally JDS), with a 46.1% share of the vote, down from 51.4% in 2019.

Taken together, that isn't all-that-bad a performance, but it is definitely not as good as the party would have wanted — and not good enough to offset losses in UP, West Bengal, and Maharashtra. It is also not commensurate with the effort put in by the party, and its campaigner-in-chief, Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The BJP's southern focus began soon after its triumph in 2019, when it won the Lok Sabha elections with a massive mandate but failed to secure any seats in three states, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

Three years earlier, the BJP had drawn up a plan to transcend the barriers in the southern and eastern states that made up the coromandel belt. But, while it won 18 of the 42 seats in West Bengal and 8 of the 21 in Odisha, the southern states barring Karnataka proved to be insurmountable fortress.

"This did not sit well with the party bosses. Both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah were emphatic that for the BJP to grow as a formidable political entity it will have to shatter the impression that it is a north Indian party or that it is no match to the regional parties," said a senior party leader familiar.

State units were instructed to work out details of restructuring the party units, mobilising cadre, identifying leaders with mass appeal, aligning with parties that had a hold over influential vote banks and propagate Brand Modi.

"After 2014, Modi became a household name and was popular across castes and classes. While this showed in results in nearly all of North India and large parts of the west, there was a gap in the South. We had to then focus on the power of the brand and build a bridge between Modi and south," said the leader quoted above.

In each of the five states the outreach was designed keeping in mind cultural sensitivities, local traditions, demography and floating voters who were not opposed to BJP and its brand of Hindutva.

It wasn't enough. The INDIA bloc, led by the DMK in



Supporters hold up a sign in Tamil at a campaign rally with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu on April 10. Bloomberg

Tamil Nadu, won all 39 seats. In Karnataka, the Congress managed to win nine seats, eight more than in 2019. And in Kerala, the UDF won 18 seats and the LDF, one.

But local leaders pointed to the vote share "One should not only look at the seats, but also, at the vote share. Between 1967 and 2024 the combined vote share of the AIADMK and the DMK has been between 67 to 74%. This time it is below 50%... the BJP's has risen to 10% from 3.6% in 2019. From now on politics in the state, will be tripolar. The BJP's march towards winning the assembly polls begins now," said R Srinivasan, general secretary of the BJP's Tamil Nadu unit and its candidate from Madurai.

In Kerala, where its decision to raise the Sabarimala issue ended up benefiting the Congress in 2019, the BJP opted for development over Hindutva, but could not convert the rise in vote share into more than a single seat, with efforts to build bridges with both Christians and the powerful Ezhava community which accounts for 23% of the electorate coming a cropper. It will also not escape the BJP's attention that some of its success in the south has come on the back of alliances.

## The power of alliances

In Karnataka, the JDS, a family-run party that had been in the BJP's crosshairs for perpetrating dynasty politics, was inducted into the NDA to shore up the numbers after losing the state polls in 2023. The JDS's hold over the Vokalliga vote bank was considered a key reason for the alliance. The public outrage over allegations of sexual harassment and rape against JDS scion and Hassan lawmaker Prajwal Revanna may have hurt the BJP, but the alliance has helped it in the state. The JD(S) itself has won two seats.

In Andhra Pradesh, where the party's organisational capacity has come in for censure from the central leadership on more than one occasion, the tie up with Chandrababu Naidu's TDP and Pawan

Kalyan's Jana Sena paid off. The TDP broke its ties with the BJP in 2018 over the issue of delay in granting special status to the state but has emerged as a dependable ally adding to NDA's overall tally. The BJP won 3 seats in the state, and the alliance 21, of a total of 25.

## Driving the narrative

The party attempted to drive the narrative in each of the states. Whether it was attacking the Pinnarayi Vijayan government in Kerala for corruption and irregularities or the Karnataka government for mooting reservation for Muslims under the OBC quota, the BJP kept stoking the fire. In Telangana it went all out against the BRS, accusing the party of irregularities. And with the help of governors, it also targeted state governments, most notably in Tamil Nadu.

None of this seems to have worked.

"There were many deficiencies. For instance we could not counter the fears that the new delimitation exercise to be carried out after 2026 will result in the southern states losing out on seats...or the BJP wants to withdraw quotas" said a second BJP leader who asked not to be named.

## The leadership issue

Although PM Modi was the central figure of the BJP's outreach in the south, the party groomed new faces to emerge as leaders on the ground. Consequently, a bunch of new leaders dominated the headlines, in Tamil Nadu, the BJP hustled its way into the political arena, led by a young and belligerent K Annamalai.

In Telangana, while Bandi Sanjay led the campaign against the BRS with a state-wide Yatra, he was abruptly replaced by union minister G Kishen Reddy as the state president and in Andhra, D Purandeswari became the first woman state president.

Yet, none of them managed to take on the regional satraps.

Source: HT



# UP, Bengal, Maharashtra

## The three states that dealt the biggest blow to BJP

NEW DELHI (TIP)

They are the three biggest states in the Union that together send 170 parliamentarians to the 543-member Lok Sabha, roughly making up a third of the strength of the Lower House. Stretching from the north of the country to its western and eastern extremities, they're a microcosm of the country's political dynamics, representing its diversity of regions and religions, a complex web of caste and class politics, and a mind-boggling cornucopia of political personalities.

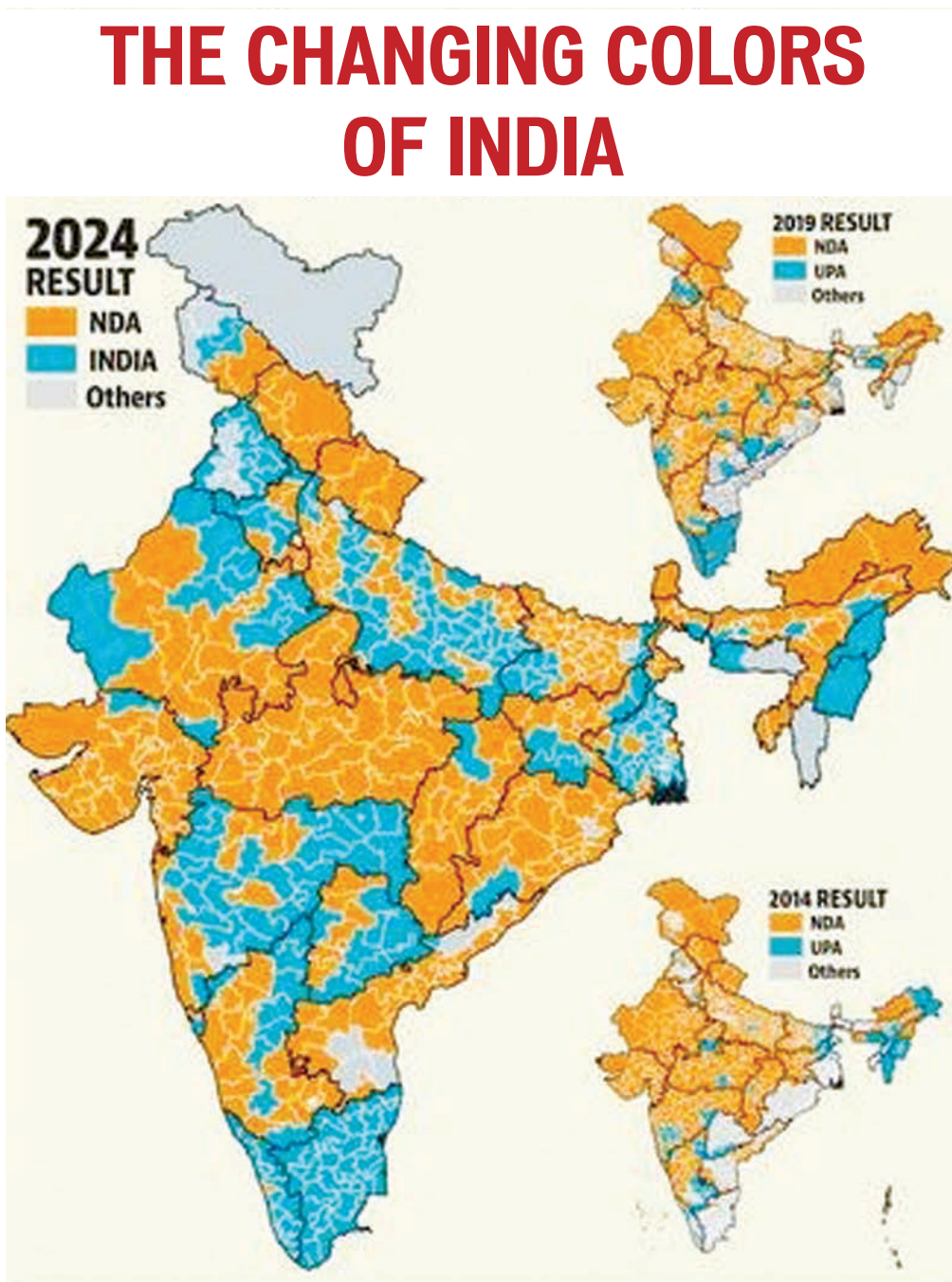
When the results streamed in on Tuesday, it was these three provinces — Uttar Pradesh (UP), Maharashtra and West Bengal — that dealt the biggest blow to the Bharatiya Janata Party and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). In UP, the BJP dropped from 62 to 35, its worst showing since 2009; in Maharashtra, the party slipped from 23 to 12; and in Bengal, it declined from 18 to 10.

In total, the BJP won only 57 of the 170 seats on offer, almost half of its 2019 tally of 103. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance won 36 in UP, 19 in Maharashtra and 10 in Bengal — a total of 65, again roughly half of the 123 seats the alliance won in 2019.

In contrast, the Opposition's Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) posted superlative results in each of these three provinces as it got caste arithmetic and ticket selection right (UP), cashed in on the ground connect of its leaders and their welfare and organisational network (Bengal) and successfully pinned down the BJP on key local issues and questions of regional pride (Maharashtra).

INDIA's tally ballooned from 42 in 2019 to 100 in 2024 in these states as each constituent of the bloc held its own against a BJP onslaught, skillfully countering the incumbent's pitch on welfarism, communalism and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity with its own unique campaign focussed on local issues and charisma.

In UP, India's most-populous state, the SP-Congress alliance stunned NDA by posting its best results in 15 years. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav focussed on expanding the caste base of his party beyond its traditional Yadav and Muslim communities as he nominated a large chunk of leaders from smaller groups of both other backward classes



and scheduled castes — two demographics the BJP co-opted in its two victories in assembly elections in 2017 and 2022, and two Lok Sabha wins in 2014 and 2019. The SP's approach to widen its caste coalition played huge dividends as it smashed through the BJP citadel in the old Mandal playground of eastern UP and picked up critical seats in central and western regions. The party, along with its ally Congress, spoke about unemployment among young people and raised fears of the BJP amending the Constitution if it came back with a two-thirds majority — drawing a sharp contrast from the BJP's campaign rife with pitched communal rhetoric with Modi alleging that the Opposition would give reservations away to Muslims.

In Maharashtra, which saw two regional powerhouses split vertically in the past three years, the elections were

uniquely complex with six major parties in the fray. Since no polls were conducted since the 2019 assembly elections, the 2024 Lok Sabha exercise was also a referendum on which faction of the Shiv Sena or the Nationalist Congress Party would inherit the legacy of the parent.

Uddhav Thackeray and Sharad Pawar went into the elections battling significant odds. Their Maha Vikas Aghadi government was toppled and the Election Commission awarded their rivals — Eknath Shinde's faction and Ajit Pawar's faction — the poll symbols and party names mere months before polls were called.

But the results clearly showed that the people had decisively backed the original leaders over their rivals. Out of 12 seats where the two Sena factions were pitted against each other, Thackeray won eight and Shinde won four. Sharad Pawar won both seats where his faction faced Ajit

Pawar, including the prestige battle of pocket borough Baramati, where his daughter Supriya Sule defeated Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar.

The Congress, too, posted superlative results, winning back its old bastion of Vidarbha on the back of discontent among cultivators and anger in the hinterland over incomes. Especially in seats such as Nanded, where senior leader Ashok Chavan switched to the BJP ahead of the polls, the victory will give heart to a party that ruled Maharashtra in coalition with the NCP for 15 years.

"The results have changed the national scenario and Maharashtra has played a big role in this," Sharad Pawar said. "The results in Uttar Pradesh had given a new direction to the INDIA alliance."

And in West Bengal, where a fierce campaign unfolded with the BJP making a huge push to maximise seat count in a state where it has slowly but surely built a base, chief minister Mamata Banerjee held her own. Despite being hamstrung by two adverse high court orders — one that cancelled the appointment of 26,000 teachers and another cancelling OBC certificates awarded to 77 Muslim groups — Banerjee crafted a campaign that focussed on her unique connect with the state's electorate, especially rural women and her expansive welfare net, including direct cash transfer schemes such as Lokkhir Bhandar. The BJP attempted to attack her directly and fanned communal rhetoric, hoping to cash in on anti-incumbency to break the TMC's

hold over south Bengal.

The results, however, showed that the TMC not only held its bastion of south Bengal but also damaged the BJP in the western regions of Jangalmahal and north Bengal. The BJP was locked in close fights even in seats such as Balurghat, held by its state chief Sukanta Majumder and lost Coochbehar, held by Union minister of state Nisith Pramanik. Banerjee's charisma and local pitch helped her replicate her 2021 assembly triumph and better her 2019 showing.

Addressing a press conference, Banerjee said, "PM Modi has lost all credibility, he should immediately resign. India has won, Modi has lost."

The story of the BJP's inability to cross the 250 mark in terms of seats, is really the story of its failure in the three electorally most important states in the country.

Source: HT



# Modi claims victory in Indian election, vows to continue with his agenda despite drop in support

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared victory Tuesday for his alliance in India's general election, claiming a mandate to push forward with his agenda, even though his party lost seats to a stronger than expected opposition, which pushed back against his mixed economic record and polarizing politics.

"Today's victory is the victory of the world's largest democracy," Modi told the crowd at his party's headquarters, saying Indian voters had "shown immense faith" both in his party and his National Democratic Alliance coalition.

Official results from India's Election Commission showed the NDA won 286 seats, more than the 272 seats needed to secure a majority but far fewer than had been expected.

Modi's win was only the second time an Indian leader has retained power for a third term after Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first prime minister. But also, for the first time since his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party swept to power in 2014, it did not secure a majority on its own, winning 240 seats — far fewer than the record 303 it won in the 2019 election.

That means Modi will need the support of other parties in his coalition — a stunning blow for the 73-year-old, who had hoped for a landslide victory.

The party may now be "heavily dependent on the goodwill of its allies, which makes them critical players who we can expect will extract their pound of flesh, both in terms of policymaking as well as government formation," said Milan Vaishnav, director of the South Asia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

More than 640 million votes were cast in the marathon election held over a span of six weeks in the world's largest democratic exercise.

In the face of the surprising drop in the BJP's support, challengers claimed they had also won a victory of sorts, with the main opposition Congress party saying the election had been a "moral and political loss" for Modi.

"This is public's victory and a win for democracy," Congress party President Mallikarjun Kharge told reporters.

Despite the setback, Modi pledged to make good on his election promise to turn India's economy into the world's third biggest, from its current fifth place, and not shirk with pushing forward with his agenda.

He said he would advance India's defense production, boost jobs for youth, raise exports and help farmers,



among other things.

"This country will see a new chapter of big decisions. This is Modi's guarantee," he said, speaking in the third person.

Many of the Hindu nationalist policies he's instituted over the last 10 years will also remain locked in place.

Before Modi came to power, India had coalition governments for 30 years.

The opposition INDIA coalition won 225 seats and was leading in five others yet to be called early Wednesday morning.

Congratulations for Modi from leaders of regional countries including neighboring Nepal and Bhutan flowed in, while the White House commended India for its "vibrant democratic process."

In his 10 years in power, Modi has transformed India's political landscape, bringing Hindu nationalism, once a fringe ideology in India, into the mainstream while leaving the country deeply divided.

His supporters see him as a self-made, strong leader who has improved India's standing in the world. His critics and opponents say his Hindu-first politics have bred intolerance while the economy, one of the world's fastest-growing, has become more unequal.

For Payal, a resident of the northern city of Lucknow who uses only one name, the election was about the economy and India's vast number of people living in poverty.

"People are suffering, there are no jobs, people are in such a state that their kids are compelled to make and sell tea on the roadside," Payal said. "This is a big deal for us. If we don't wake up now, when will we?"

Rahul Gandhi, the main face of the opposition Congress party, said he saw the election numbers as a message from the people.

"The poorest of this country have defended the constitution of India," he told a news conference.

Modi's popularity has outstripped that of his party's during his first two terms in office, and he turned the parliamentary election into one that more resembled a presidential-style campaign, with the BJP relying on the leader's brand.

"Modi was not just the prime campaigner, but the sole campaigner of this election," said Yamini Aiyar, a public policy scholar.

Under Modi's government, critics say India's democracy has come under increasing strain with strong-arm tactics used to subdue political

opponents, squeeze independent media and quash dissent. The government has rejected such accusations and says democracy is flourishing.

Economic discontent has also simmered under Modi. While stock markets have reached record-highs, youth unemployment has soared, with only a small portion of Indians benefitting from the boom.

As polls opened in mid-April, a confident BJP initially focused its campaign on "Modi's guarantees," highlighting the economic and welfare achievements that his party says have reduced poverty. With Modi at the helm, "India will become a developed nation by 2047," he repeated in rally after rally.

But the campaign turned increasingly shrill, as Modi ramped up polarizing rhetoric that targeted Muslims, who make up 14% of the population, a tactic seen to energize his core Hindu majority voters.

The opposition INDIA alliance attacked Modi over his Hindu nationalist politics, and campaigned on issues of joblessness, inflation and inequality.

"These issues have resonated and made a dent," added Aiyar, the public policy scholar. *Source: AP*



# 5 biggest winners and losers

The Results of the Lok Sabha Election 2024 were declared by the Election Commission of India on Tuesday June 4. The BJP emerged as the single largest party winning 240 seats but failed to get majority of its own, It would need support of NDA allies to form the government for a third successive time. Here are the five biggest winners and losers.

## BIGGEST WINNERS

### PM Narendra Modi (Varanasi)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has won the Varanasi seat for a third consecutive time as per the results for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections against Congress's Ajay Rai. Modi won the seat with 6,12,970 votes (54.24%) while Rai got 4,60,457 votes (40.74%). However, this success came along with a little bitterness as Modi's share dropped by around 9 percentage vis-a-vis 2019.

Varanasi is one of the most high-profile constituencies among the 543 Lok Sabha seats in India as it is represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The constituency has been a saffron party's stronghold since 1991 and PM Modi has represented the seat since 2014. PM Modi won the seat by a massive margin of 479,505 votes in the Lok Sabha elections 2019, defeating Shalini Yadav of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Ajai Rai - who came third. In 2014, the Prime Minister defeated Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by 371,784 votes.

### Home Minister Amit Shah (Gandhinagar)



Union Home Minister Amit Shah has secured a landslide victory in the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha seat in Gujarat after he gained an unassailable lead of over seven lakh votes against his nearest Congress rival Sonal Ramanbhai Patel. As per latest Election Commission data, Shah got 10,10,972 votes in total, while Patel received 2,66,256 votes. In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Amit Shah won this seat by more than 5.57 lakh votes, defeating Congress's Chatursinh Javanji Chavda.

The BJP won the Gandhinagar seat for the first time in 1989 and has been ruling the seat since then. It has been represented by prominent political figures such as former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee

and former Deputy PM LK Advani.

### Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (Lucknow)



Defense Minister Rajnath Singh won from the Lucknow constituency in Uttar Pradesh by over 1.35 lakh votes defeating his nearest rival Ravidas Mehrotra of the Samajwadi Party. Singh polled 612709 votes, while Mehrotra got 477550 votes. The margin stood at 135159 votes. In the 2019 elections, Singh defeated SP candidate Poonam Sinha, the wife of Shatrughan Sinha, by a margin of almost 3.5 lakh votes. Back in 2014 elections, Singh won with a huge margin of 2,72,749 votes by defeating Congress's Rita Bahuguna.

However, Bahuguna left Congress in October 2016 and joined BJP. In 2019, NDA won 64 Lok Sabha seats in UP with BJP's tally alone being 62 and the BJP-led alliance winning 39 in Bihar. This Lok

Sabha seat has been a BJP bastion since 1991, having been represented by Atal Bihari Vajpayee five times.

### Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi (Wayanad and Rae Bareli)



Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi won the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat in Kerala with a margin of over 3.5 lakh votes against CPI's Annie Raja who is a part of INDIA alliance. Gandhi got 6,47,445 votes which was lower than the 7,06,367 votes he got in 2019 from the same constituency.

This time he won by a margin of 3,64,422 votes against his nearest rival, CPI's Annie Raja who got 2,83,023 votes. In 2019, Rahul bagged 7,06,367 votes while his main rival PP Suneer of the CPI managed to get 2,74,597 votes. Similarly, in the traditional Congress bastion of Rae Bareli, Rahul Gandhi beat the BJP's Dinesh Pratap Singh, again

### Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav (Kannauj)



Samajwadi Party under the leadership of Akhilesh Yadav emerged as the dominant force in Uttar Pradesh, which is likely to haunt the saffron party for the times ahead. SP has secured a total of 37 seats out of a total of 80 seats. Akhilesh Yadav himself achieved a notable victory in Kannauj against Subrat Pathak of the BJP with a decisive margin of 1,70,922 votes. Kannauj Lok Sabha constituency has been a traditional SP seat for decades. In the year 1967, Ram Manohar Lohia won the election as a Samyukta Socialist Party candidate, following which Janata Party held the seat twice.

## BIGGEST LOSERS

### BJP's Smriti Irani (Amethi)



Smriti Irani, Union Minister for Women and Child Development, who defeated Rahul Gandhi in 2019, has lost in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi constituency against Congress' Kishori Lal by a margin of 1,67,196 votes. According to the Election Commission data, Congress's Sharma won by a margin of over 1,67,000 votes while Irani received 3,72,032 votes. Amethi, established as a constituency in 1967, had long been a stronghold of the Congress, represented by key figures of the Nehru-

Gandhi family, including Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi. The Gandhi family legacy in Amethi was broken by Irani after she defeated Rahul Gandhi, marking a significant shift in the constituency's political landscape back in 2019. She had won with a margin of 55,120 votes in the 2019 election, with a vote share of 49.69%. In 2014, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had won his third term as Member of Parliament with a total of 6,44,822 votes and a vote share of 46.72%.

### Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah (Baramulla)



Former Jammu Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah lost the battle against jailed Independent Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid from the Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency. Engineer Rashid defeated junior Abdullah by a margin of 2,04,142 votes. While Rashid garnered 4,72,481 votes, Abdullah was polled 2,68,339 votes.

Sajjad Gani Lone ended up as second runner up with 1,73,239 total votes polled. In the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections, Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) leader Mohammad Akbar Lone defeated Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference Raja Aijaz Ali by a margin of 30,233 votes. Lone was polled 133,426 votes with a vote share of 29.00 per cent, while Ali got 103,193 votes with 22.63 per cent vote share.

### PDP Supremo Mehbooba Mufti (Anantnag-Rajouri)



Former Chief Minister of Jammu Kashmir Mehbooba Mufti conceded defeat in the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency against National Conference's Mian Altaf Ahmad. Mian Altaf polled 521836 votes while Mufti got 240042 votes.

### BJP candidate Madhavi Latha (Hyderabad)



Asaduddin Owaisi retained the Hyderabad Lok Sabha Seat with a margin of over 3.3 lakh votes against his nearest rival, BJP's controversial new entrant Madhavi Latha, who stood second, in the constituency dominated by AIMIM since decades. Owaisi secured 6,61,981 votes against Madhavi Latha's 3,23,894.

### NCP candidate Sunetra Pawar (Baramati)



Sunetra Pawar, wife of NCP's Ajit Pawar who broke the party last year, lost to Sharad Pawar's daughter Supriya Sule by a margin of over 1.5 lakhs. Pawar received 5.73 lakhs votes while Sule got 7.3 lakhs. In 2019, Sule defeated Bharatiya Janata Party's Kanchan Rahul Kul with a vote margin of 11.94%. She secured 52.63% of the vote share, while Kul received 40.69%.



# Highest victory margin was 10.1 lakh votes, lowest was just 48: Meet the record-setters of Lok Sabha polls

## BIGGEST MARGINS



**Rakibul Hussain, Assam**

Rakibul Hussain, the Congress candidate from Assam's Dhubri, secured a historic victory by a vote margin of **10,12,476 votes**. Hussain bagged 14,71,885 votes while All India United Democratic Front's Mohammed Badruddin Ajmal secured 4,59,409 votes.



**Shankar Lalwani, Madhya Pradesh**

Incumbent BJP MP Shankar Lalwani secured victory by a massive margin of **10,08,077 votes** in Madhya Pradesh's Indore. Notably, the constituency also saw a record-breaking 2.18 lakh voters choosing the 'None of the Above' (NOTA) option, signaling widespread dissatisfaction with the available candidates.



**Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Madhya Pradesh**

In Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha, former chief minister and BJP candidate Shivraj Singh Chouhan won with a margin of **8,21,408 votes**. While Chouhan got a total of 11,16,460 votes, Congress' Pratapbhanu Sharma secured 2,95,052 votes.



**CR Patil, Gujarat**

BJP Lok Sabha candidate from Navsari won by a vote margin of **7,73,551**. Patil, the president of BJP's state unit in Gujarat, got 10,31,065 votes while Congress' Naishadhbhai Desai bagged 2,57,514 votes.



**Amit Shah, Gujarat**

BJP sitting MP from Gandhinagar Amit Shah won by a huge margin of **7,44,716 votes**. While Shah secured a total of 10,10,972 votes, Sonal Patel of Congress won 2,66,256 votes.

## SMALLEST MARGINS



**Ravindra Dattaram Waikar, Maharashtra**

Ravindra Dattaram Waikar, the Eknath Shinde Shiv Sena candidate won by the lowest margin in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. He defeated Shiv Sena UBT candidate Amol Gajanan Kirtikar by just 48 votes in Mumbai North West constituency. Waikar secured 4,52,644 votes, while Kirtikar got 4,52,596 votes.



**Adoor Prakash, Kerala**

Congress candidate Adoor Prakash secured the Attingal constituency by a vote margin of **684**. Prakash bagged 3,28,051 votes, while Communist Party of India (Marxist) candidate V Joy won 3,27,367 votes.



**Ajendra Lodhi, Uttar Pradesh**

Samajwadi Party (SP) candidate Ajendra Lodhi won Uttar Pradesh's Hamirpur seat by a margin of **2,629 votes**. Lodhi bagged 4,90,683 votes, while BJP candidate Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel won 4,88,054 votes.



**Ramashankar Rajbhar, Uttar Pradesh**

SP candidate Ramashankar Rajbhar won the Salempur seat in Uttar Pradesh by a margin of **3,573 votes**. Rajbhar bagged 4,05,472 votes, while BJP's Ravindra Kushawaha secured 4,01,899 votes.



**Bajrang Manohar Sonwane, Maharashtra**

Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) candidate Bajrang Manohar Sonwane secured Maharashtra's Beed constituency by a vote margin of **6,553**. Sonwane won 6,83,950 votes, while BJP candidate Pankaja Gopinathrao Munde bagged 6,77,397 votes.

## BJP's Ayodhya defeat: When caste trumps Ram

NEW DELHI (TIP)

During the BJP's election campaign, a song frequently played from megaphones: "Jo Ram ko laaye hain, hum unko laayenge," which loosely translates to "We will vote for the party that built the Ram Temple."

The election results, however, delivered a surprising blow. BJP lost in Faizabad-Ayodhya to INDIA bloc candidate Awadhesh Prasad. The Opposition countered with the slogan: "Na Ayodhya, na Kashi, ab ki baar Awadhesh Pasi," emphasizing the Dalit identity of the SP candidate.

BJP faced defeat not only in Ayodhya but also in other Lok Sabha constituencies within the Ayodhya division, which includes Faizabad, Amethi, Ambedkar Nagar, Sultanpur, and Barabanki districts. BJP's two-time sitting MP Lallu Singh was defeated by Samajwadi Party's Awadhesh Prasad in the Faizabad constituency. This loss has left BJP's policymakers puzzled, especially given the recent inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya after 500 years of struggle—a milestone the party had hoped would secure their victory. The temple movement has been a central part of BJP's strategy, significantly aiding their rise to power in Uttar Pradesh and nationally.

"The BJP not only lost in Ayodhya but was also defeated across all seats in the Ayodhya division, suggesting broader implications for the party's future in state politics. Akhilesh Yadav used caste to beat the



euphoria created around the consecration of the Ram Temple. This defeat is a big lesson for BJP that Lord Ram will not protect them from their inefficiency," said Dr. Ajit Kumar Singh, Former Director of the Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow.

Another reason was BJP's candidate Laloo Singh's statement where he claimed that "to change Constitution, BJP needs 400 seats in Lok Sabha". This message was properly broadcasted among the voters by INDIA Bloc leaders with a twist that if Constitution is changed, people will lose reservation. This led to OBCs, and Dalits voting against BJP.

### Issues

- Discontent Among Local Voters:** Despite being the center of the Ram Temple movement, voter turnout in the Ayodhya assembly constituency was nine percent lower than in the last Lok Sabha elections. Local BJP cadres, displeased with the government, refrained from voting. Ongoing development projects, such as road widening, led to personal losses for many residents, including the demolition of homes and shops. Inadequate compensation further fueled resentment.
- Candidate Selection:** BJP's choice of Lallu Singh, a long-time MP, failed to excite voters who desired a high-profile candidate. Singh, despite his tenure, had not established a strong personal connection with the electorate. In contrast, the India Alliance fielded Awadhesh Prasad, a strong SP leader and nine-time MLA, who effectively mobilized his supporters and appealed to the general public.
- Limited Local Benefits from Development:** While projects like airports boosted the city's national profile, local residents saw little benefit. Basic needs such as healthcare and education remained unmet, with the local medical college lacking doctors and resources. The dissatisfaction among voters who felt neglected by these grand projects contributed to BJP's defeat.



# BJP's vote share shrinks in most states with low growth rates in per capita income

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP's) vote share in the 2024 general election contracted in most of the states and union territories (UTs) that had relatively low rates of growth in per capita income since the previous Lok Sabha polls in 2019, shows an analysis of Election Commission of India (ECI) data and per capita net state domestic product (NSDP) data from states. NSDP per capita is taken as the per capita income of a state and is counted among states' key economic indicators.

Of the 12 states and UTs where per capita NSDP grew by a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of up to 2 per cent, and where the BJP contested in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections, the party's vote share shrunk in nine. These nine states and UTs include Bihar, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur, and Chandigarh. Kerala, Sikkim, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands were the outliers to the trend.

For the purpose of this analysis, the CAGR of per capita NSDP was divided in three segments: low (up to 2 per cent), medium (2.1-4.0 per cent), and high (over 4 per cent). Among all states and UTs, the overall range of per capita NSDP CAGR ranged up to 6.1 per cent. CAGR was considered over absolute growth as per capita NSDP data for some states was not updated for 2023-24 (FY24) and was available either till FY23 or FY22. The base year for the comparison was taken as FY19. A few UTs that do not maintain per capita NSDP data were not considered.

While the data does suggest a correlation between per capita state income and the BJP's vote share among most of the low-growth states, the trend is not as stark when it comes to states and UTs in the middle- and high-growth segments.

It is worth noting that like most economic indicators, per capita incomes and their growth rates vary across states and are contingent upon a number of factors and conditions. Also, election outcomes depend on a host of factors — many of which are not directly linked to the economy — and their various permutations and combinations.

Among the nine states with a per capita NSDP growth rate of over 4 per cent, the BJP registered an expansion in vote share from 2019 levels in five — Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu. Four states — Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Arunachal Pradesh, saw a contraction in the BJP's vote share

despite a relatively high rate of growth in their per capita incomes.

Similarly, the BJP's vote share expanded in five of the nine states and UTs with per capita NSDP growth rate of 2.1 per cent to 4 per cent. These five states included Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Telangana, Tripura, and Mizoram. The four where the BJP saw a decline in vote share were Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir.

41 parties to have MPs in

18th Lok Sabha; 339 members from BJP, Congress alone

As many as 41 political parties will have representation in the upcoming 18th Lok Sabha, with this number rising from 36 in the 17th Lok Sabha that was dissolved on Wednesday, post-poll data shows.

The two largest outfits — the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the opposition Congress — will have 339 MPs in the 543-member House (BJP: 240, Congress: 99). The BJP, which fell 32 seats short of what would have been its third consecutive single-party majority (282 seats in 2014, and 303 in 2019), the Congress increased its tally from 44 seats in 2014 and 52 five years later.

The BJP, however, is set to form its third successive government at the Centre with help of its National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners — Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to take oath on June 8 for what will be his third consecutive term in office. The NDA parties won 293 seats in the Lok Sabha.

The Congress-led INDIA bloc, on the other hand, will have 233 MPs, with Samajwadi Party (SP), the grand old party's Uttar Pradesh-based ally, winning 37 seats

in the country's most populous state, making the Akhilesh Yadav-led party the largest after the BJP and Congress. The SP is followed by fellow INDIA members: West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress (29 seats) and the DMK (22 seats), which governs Tamil Nadu.

belong to either bloc; seven of them contested and won as independents.

Who are these seven independents?

They are Amritpal Singh, Sarabjeet Singh Khalsa, Patel Umeshbhai Babubhai, Mohamad Haneefa, Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav, Vishal Patil, and Sheikh Abdul Rashid alias Rashid Engineer. Two are currently in jail: Amritpal Singh and Rashid Engineer.

Profile

**Amritpal Singh:** Amritpal, who heads pro-Khalistan outfit Waris Punjab De, is currently lodged in Assam's Dibrugarh jail under the National Security Act (NSA). He returned to India in September 2022 from Dubai, where he moved in 2012 to join his family's transport business.

**Sarabjeet Singh Khalsa:** He is the son of Beant Singh, one of the two bodyguards who assassinated then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984. Singh's grandfather, Baba Sucha Singh, also served as a Lok Sabha member, representing Bathinda.

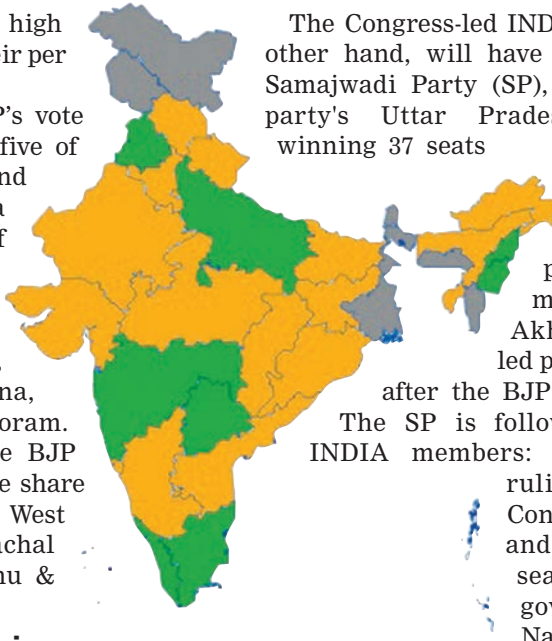
**Patel Umeshbhai Babubhai:** Babubhai is a social worker, according to ADR. His victory is significant as he defeated sitting BJP MP Lalubhau Babubhai Patel, who was seeking a fourth successive term from the Daman and Diu seat.

**Mohamad Haneefa:** A former district president of the National Conference, Haneefa is the fourth independent to win the Ladakh seat, which came into existence in 1967. Independents won here in the 1984, 2004, and 2009 national election as well.

**Rajesh Ranjan:** Also known as Pappu Yadav, Ranjan merged his Jan Aadhikar Party (JAP) with the Congress in March. Ranjan, who has served multiple terms as a Lok Sabha member, contested independently after the Congress gave Purnia to the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) under their seat-sharing agreement.

**Vishal Patil:** The grandson of former Maharashtra chief minister Vasantrao Patil rebelled against the Congress after the grand old party's ally, Shiv Sena (UBT), fielded its own candidate.

**Sheikh Abdul Rashid:** Engineer Rashid is currently lodged in Delhi's Tihar Jail in a terror-funding case. The former two-time legislator was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in 2019 on charges of terror-funding activities, becoming the first mainstream leader to be held under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.



TOTAL SEATS - 543

2024 VS 2019 VS 2014			
PARTY	2024	2019	2014
BJP+	292	351	336
INC+	200	95	58
OTHERS	51	96	149

National parties to have 64% seats

According to an analysis by the think-tank PRS, political outfits recognised as "national parties" secured 346 or 64% seats, while regional parties won 197 (33%) seats.

Candidates from non-NDA/INDIA parties clinched 17 seats, including seven by independents.

As per Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), a poll rights body, the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections were contested by 751 parties, up 104% from 2009, when nominees from 368 parties were in the fray.

The number of parties that contested in 2014 and 2019 was 464 and 677, respectively, ADR said.

In the upcoming 18th Lok Sabha, as many as 526 candidates will be from the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), which won 292 seats in the recently-held general elections, and the Congress-led INDIA bloc, which bagged 234 seats. The remaining 17 to-be Members of Parliament (MPs) do not



## President Biden congratulates PM Modi on electoral victory



State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said that the US congratulates Prime Minister Modi and the National Democratic Alliance on their victory in the 2024 Lok Sabha general elections.

Credit: State Department

JUNE 05, 2024

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** President Joe Biden on Wednesday, June 5, congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his electoral victory, with his administration saying that it was looking forward to continuing to further its partnership with India to promote prosperity and innovation, address the climate crisis and ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

"Congratulations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the National Democratic Alliance on their victory, and the nearly 650 million voters in this historic election. The friendship between our nations is only growing as we unlock a shared future of unlimited potential," President Joe Biden said in his congratulatory message.

State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said that the US congratulates Prime Minister Modi and the National Democratic Alliance on their victory in the 2024 Lok Sabha general elections.

"With approximately 650 million voters casting their ballots over the past six weeks, these elections represent the largest exercise in democracy in human history. We commend Indian voters, poll workers, civil society, and journalists for their commitment and vital contributions to India's democratic processes and institutions," Miller said.

"We look forward to continuing to further our partnership with the Indian government to promote prosperity and innovation, address the climate crisis, and ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region," he said.

# Indians Together plan a Celebration of India's Democracy in Washington, D.C. on June 29

JUNE 6, 2024

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** Indians Together is a grass-root movement of Indians committed to building a cohesive India, where they feel secure about their faith, language, economic status, physical status, ethnicity, race, or other uniqueness.

We thank the people of India for doing the right thing in the world's largest election. They gave enough votes to the Bharatiya Janata Party to form the government, but most importantly they gave plenty of seats to the opposition party.

**WHAT:** Celebration of India's Democracy

**WHEN:** Saturday, June 29, 2024 - 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

**WHERE:** Steps of Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC



Indians Together will organize a celebration of India's Democracy on June 29 at Steps of Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC

## NSA Sullivan to visit New Delhi to engage new govt on shared India-US priorities: White House



President Joe Biden's National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan will visit India to engage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led new government on shared priorities

JUNE 06, 2024

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** US President Joe Biden's National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan will visit India to engage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led new government on shared priorities, including the trusted, strategic technology partnership, the White House said, as the two top leaders seek to deepen the bilateral partnership.

Sullivan's visit was discussed during the phone call President Biden made to Prime Minister Modi on Wednesday to congratulate him on his re-election for a historic third term.

"President Joseph R Biden, Jr spoke today with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India to congratulate him and the National Democratic Alliance on their historic victory in India's general election," the White House said in a readout of the call. Biden also commended the people of India for participating in the elections, with nearly 650 million going to the polls to vote, the readout said. The two leaders emphasized their commitment to deepening the US-India Comprehensive and Global Strategic Partnership and to advancing their shared vision of a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, it said.

Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

## Paul Chhabra Awarded for contributing to Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI)



Paul Chhabra is a restauranter and a social and political activist

MAY 31, 2024

**VIRGINIA (TIP):** A restauranter and a social and political activist Paul Chhabra was Awarded by Asian American Alliance for contributing to Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) on the occasion of Asian American Pacific Heritage Month May 2024. It is observed throughout May to pay tribute to the achievements of generations who have contributed to American Life, which originated with Congress in 1977.

## US commends Indian govt, people on successful elections



JUNE 05, 2024

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** The US has commended the Indian government and the people for successfully participating and completing the Lok Sabha elections. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is poised to form the government for a third consecutive term with the BJP-led NDA getting a majority in the Lok Sabha, notwithstanding crushing losses in three Hindi heartland states after a bitterly fought election that was projected as a referendum on his popularity. The Election Commission of India has declared results for 542 of the 543 Lok Sabha constituencies, with the BJP winning 240 seats and the Congress 99.

"On behalf of the United States, we want to commend the government of India and voters there for successfully completing and participating in such a massive electoral undertaking, and we look forward to seeing the final results," State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters at his daily news conference on Tuesday.

He was responding to a question on the Lok Sabha elections in India, in which the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) crossed the halfway mark of 272 seats, paving the way for a third consecutive term for Modi.

Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)



# Aura of 'invincibility' around PM Modi 'shattered'; opposition energized: World media on Indian election

JUNE 05, 2024

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** The "aura of invincibility" around Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been "shattered" by the Indian voters who gave the Opposition a new lease on life, this is how the international media described the outcome of India's general elections.

According to the results for all Lok Sabha constituencies, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 240 of the 543 seats and the Congress 99. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance has comfortably crossed the majority mark of 272 in the 543-member Lok Sabha though the BJP lost its outright majority.

India's election results appeared as the top news among influential mainstream newspapers in the US.

The New York Times started its report by noting, "Suddenly, the aura of invincibility around Narendra Modi has been shattered."

Terming the results as "unexpectedly sobering," it noted that they were a "sharp reversal a decade into Mr. Modi's transformational tenure."

"Modi's Party Wins, but it's far from a landslide," said the second lead story on the front page of The NYT. "A sobering result for a Prime Minister on the Cusp of a 3rd term," the daily said on its front page which carried a picture of Modi at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi after the election results were out.

"India's voters rebuke Modi," said the lead story of The Washington Post, which is now owned by Jeff Bezos of Amazon, and added that the election results were a rare setback for Hindu nationalists.

For the past decade, India has been "synonymous internationally with its prime minister, Narendra Modi. But on Tuesday, as final election results poured in, the electorate appeared to show dissatisfaction with the status quo and placed the serial winner onto shaky ground," The Post wrote.

There was "tepid support for his Hindu nationalist party, piercing the air of invincibility around the most dominant Indian politician in decades, it said.

"Modi Declares Win but faces Setback," said the lead story of The Wall Street Journal which also had a picture of the Prime Minister at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi along with the party president J P Nadda amidst showering of petals.

Notably, all three major US newspapers had been very critical of Modi during the election campaign and had said that the country was headed towards a majoritarian and authoritarian regime. The exit polls and opinion polls before the election results had said that the BJP would easily cross the 300 mark in a Lok Sabha.

Tuesday's results showed that "India's democracy is not as dead as we thought; that is for sure," Devesh Kapur, a political scientist at the Johns Hopkins

University School of Advanced International Studies was quoted as saying by The Post.

"This electoral surprise shows that voters still have an independent mind. Otherwise, this juggernaut would not have stalled," he said.

The Editorial Board of The Wall Street Journal in its editorial said the election result suggests that Indians have high expectations for their leaders, and have again used the world's largest democracy to warn those leaders to do better.

"The question now will be whether Mr. Modi takes this election warning to heart, or retreats into even more sectarian and authoritarian methods," it said.

"While Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party finished first and is still well positioned to form a government with its allies in the coming days, the BJP's performance paled in comparison to its showing in 2014, when Modi swept to power on a wave of national anger over corruption, or 2019, when he was buoyed by nationalist sentiment over a border clash with Pakistan," The Post

have to depend more on the junior members of its existent multi-party alliance."

The election results indicated Modi had not achieved the landslide victory many had predicted, a piece in The Guardian commented.

"The Opposition alliance appeared to far outperform expectations," the UK-based newspaper added.

CBC News said the Congress Party was given 'a new lease on life' in the election.

The election shows the world's largest democracy is still a democracy, Vox Media, a US-based mass media company emphasized.

"If the basic test of whether a country remains a democracy is that the party in power can still suffer a setback at the ballot box, India passed on Tuesday. Results from the nation's parliamentary elections - the largest in the world - indicate a shocking electoral setback for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)," it said.

"Modi will continue to be the dominant force in Indian politics (and a significant force in global politics) for years to come, but his rise looks less inevitable and invincible than it did just a few days ago, and the world's largest democracy's politics look just a bit more democratic," it said.

In his third term, the Modi-led government might shift its focus to domestic issues, prioritizing public welfare and fair distribution of growth benefits, and even adopting a softer stance on Hindu nationalism, state-run China Daily said, citing analysts.

Qian Feng, director of the research department at Tsinghua University's National Strategy Institute, said in his third term, Modi is

likely to stay consistent with his foreign policy.

Qian said that the government could leverage global and regional shifts to boost India's political, economic and diplomatic strength, enhancing its international presence.

"Modi's victory, even if diluted, is certainly not a good omen for Pakistan. Relations between the two countries hit a new low under the two previous Modi governments. It's not surprising that the Indian prime minister had upped the ante against Pakistan on the election trail," the Dawn newspaper wrote in its editorial titled 'Weaker but still lethal'.

India should reach out to Pakistan, and the state should respond positively to any Indian overtures. Naturally, rebuilding trust will take time, but long-term peace in South Asia is impossible without better Pakistan-India ties, it noted.

"India cannot skirt around the Kashmir question; both sides should at least start talking, even if they agree to disagree. Let India's incoming government start afresh with Pakistan," the leading Pakistani newspaper hoped.



wrote.

Tuesday's result is a humbling moment for a leader whose lead in the polls was lauded by supporters as unassailable, CNN commented.

The election results show that Brand Modi has lost some of its shine, indicating that even Modi is susceptible to anti-incumbency. In other words, he is not as invincible as many of his supporters believed. This offers renewed hope to the Opposition, the BBC said.

"This election is undoubtedly a rebuke for Modi and the BJP," Time magazine quoted Milan Vaishnav, the Director of the South Asia Program at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, as saying.

"After ten years in power, it was in many ways a referendum on its track record in office and there are clearly many Indians who are feeling restless and uneasy."

Modi now faces a more powerful Opposition than at any point over the past decade, it said.

"His (PM Modi) poorer performance will have political ramifications. At a minimum, the BJP will



## Court denies bail to Arvind Kejriwal, says he's fine

The extensive campaigning tours and related events undertaken by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal indicate that he does not appear to be suffering from any serious or "life threatening" ailment, a Delhi court has held while denying him interim bail.

In yet another setback to Kejriwal, the court on June 5 dismissed his application for interim bail on medical grounds in the money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam, as reported by the PTI.

"The extensive campaigning tours and related meetings or events undertaken by Arvind Kejriwal as highlighted during the course of arguments indicate that he does not appear to be suffering from any serious or 'life threatening' ailment so as to entitle him to the benefit," Special Judge Kaveri Baweja said. The judge also extended Kejriwal's judicial custody till June 19. The court is scheduled to take up on June 7 his application seeking default bail in the case.

In the order, the judge further held that grant of interim bail for conducting tests in order to determine if high ketone levels or the stated weight loss could have caused Diabetic Ketoacidosis "stands on an even weaker footing than a medical ground".

## Rahul Gandhi granted bail by Bengaluru court in defamation case

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was granted bail by a local Bengaluru court on Friday, June 7, in connection with a defamation case filed by a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader.

Special magistrate KN Shivakumar granted bail to Gandhi after he appeared in person.

The court has scheduled the next hearing for June 30.

The bail was secured with former Member of Parliament (MP) DK Suresh providing property worth ₹75 lakh as security on Gandhi's behalf.

BJP had pressed charges against the Congress leaders for disseminating false advertisements targeting its party leaders, including the then Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

BJP MLC and general secretary Keshav Prasad had filed the defamation case alleging that 40% commission was charged for the execution of all public works.

The case was filed against Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar and Gandhi.

On June 1, Karnataka CM and deputy chief minister appeared before the 42nd Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.

# Rahul Gandhi alleges 'biggest stock market scam', demands JPC probe

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday, June 6, demanded a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) investigation into what it calls the 'biggest stock market scam'.

"Why did the PM and Union Home Minister give specific investment advice to the five crore families investing in the stock market? Is it their job to give investment advice? Why were both interviews given to the same media owned by the same business group which is also under SEBI investigation for manipulating stock?" Gandhi said at a press briefing.

"What is the connection between the BJP, the fake exit pollsters and the dubious foreign investors who invested one day before the exit polls were announced and made a huge profit at the cost of five crore salaries?" he added.

"We demand a JPC into this. We are convinced that this is a scam. Somebody has made thousands of crores of rupees at the cost of Indian retail investors and the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister have given an indication to buy. So we demand today a joint parliamentary committee to investigate this," Rahul Gandhi was quoted by ANI as saying.

On May 23, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the stock market will hit new highs after the Lok Sabha election results. "I can say with confidence that on June 4, as BJP hits record numbers, the stock market will



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi speaks during a press briefing at the AICC headquarters in New Delhi on Thursday, June 6.

also hit new record highs," he had said.

On May 13, Union home minister Amit Shah had urged not to link the stock market movements directly to the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. "The market has nosedived in the past as well. So one should not link it directly to elections. Anyway, some rumours may have fuelled it (the fall). In my opinion, buy before June 4. The market is going to shoot-up," the minister had told NDTV profit.

Rahul Gandhi alleged that PM Modi and Union home minister who had data on actual election results, advised retail investors to buy stock.

"This is a broader issue than just the Adani issue. It is connected to the Adani issue, but this is a much broader issue. This is directly the Prime

Minister, the Union Home Minister, who is privy to data on actual election results, who has IB reports, who have their own data, who are advising retail investors to buy stock," he said.

"This has never happened before. The Prime Minister has never commented on the stock market before. This is the first time the Prime Minister has commented very interestingly and multiple times, one after the other, saying that the stock market is going to boom," he added.

"At the same time, he has information that the exit polls are wrong. He has information that he knows what is going to happen because he has IB data and he also has his own party data," Rahul Gandhi further alleged.

## Cong effectively at 100, talks on LoP set to start

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Sangli parliamentarian Vishal Patil on Thursday, June 6, extended his support to the Congress, taking the effective tally of the party to 100 even as it fixed two crucial meetings over the next two days that will shape its legislative and political agenda and take a call on naming the new Leader of Opposition (LoP).

Patil, the grandson of former Maharashtra chief minister Vasantdada Patil, was with the Congress, but fought the elections as an independent after ally Uddhav Thackeray staked claim to the Sangli seat. He emerged victorious by around 100,000 votes. His inclusion helps the Congress effectively touch three figures for the first time in a decade after two dismal showings in 2014 and 2019.

"The people of Maharashtra

defeated the politics of treachery, arrogance and division. It is a fitting tribute to our inspiring stalwarts like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar who fought for social justice, equality and freedom. We welcome the support of the elected MP from Sangli Vishal Patil to the Congress party," said Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge.

The morale booster came a day before the party holds its legislative party meeting on Friday with its newly elected 99 members and Rajya Sabha parliamentarians. Another meeting of the top decision-making body, the Congress Working Committee (CWC), will be held on Saturday morning to discuss the 2024 campaign and strategy.

At both meetings, top of the leaders' minds is likely to be the question of appointing the leader of Opposition

(LoP). In both 2014 and 2019, the Congress fell short of the 10% seat benchmark required for appointing an LoP.

Though it is not officially part of the agenda, party leaders said that the issue will be discussed with Kharge likely to make a push for Rahul Gandhi, who is credited for reviving the party in the heartland after two lacklustre outings.

Gandhi won both his seats of Rae Bareilly and Wayanad with significant margins. The 53-year-old is also favoured by Kharge for two reasons, said the people cited above. First, Gandhi is a strident opponent of Narendra Modi and the Sangh Parivar. The party believes having him as LoP will energise the party in Parliament and put the government on the defensive. Two, the party thinks Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra gave him a larger worldview. *Source: HT*



## Canada's Trudeau says 'ready to work with Modi govt to advance ties'

After months of strain in India's diplomatic ties with Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Thursday congratulated his counterpart in New Delhi, Narendra Modi, for securing a third term in the Lok Sabha elections.

"Congratulations to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his electoral victory. Canada stands ready to work with his government to advance the relationship between our nations' peoples — anchored to human rights, diversity, and the rule of law," the Canadian Prime Minister's official account on X quoted Trudeau as saying.

There has been bitterness in Canada and India's relations ever since Trudeau's comments last year, alleging India's involvement in the killing of pro-Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar. India has rejected Canada's allegations.

In May this year, Canada "informed" India about the arrest of three individuals in connection with Nijjar murder case. India said that Ottawa has "not shared any specific or relevant evidence or information till date". A fourth Indian national was arrested in Canada in connection with the case just days after. The Indian High Commissioner to Canada, Sanjay Kumar Verma, on May 7 warned that Sikh groups in Canada who call for the separation of their homeland from India are crossing "a big red line" that New Delhi sees as a matter of national security. He added that both the countries were trying to "resolve" the issue.

Modi is set to form the government for the third time after the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Wednesday elected him as the leader of the bloc.

# Kangana Ranaut: Slapped by CISF woman at Chandigarh airport

CHANDIGARH (TIP)

Newly elected Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Kangana Ranaut on Thursday, June 6, alleged she was slapped and abused by a woman constable of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) at the Chandigarh airport before she boarded a flight to Delhi.

While officials did not comment on the motive of the alleged assault, Ranaut appeared to link it to "extremism and terrorism" in Punjab although a video of the suspect appeared to suggest she lashed out over the Mandi MP-elect's stand on the farmers' protest.

"I was hit on the face, abused. I am safe but concerned about terrorism in Punjab," Ranaut said in a video uploaded to her handle on X at 6.14pm with the caption "Shocking rise in terror and violence in Punjab."

The CISF constable, identified as Kulwinder Kaur, was immediately detained after the incident, and later suspended after Ranaut lodged a complaint with CISF officials on her arrival at the Indira Gandhi airport. The CISF was also in the process of filing a police complaint.

The incident occurred around 3pm at the security checkpoint ahead of Ranaut's flight. While some reports suggested the confrontation occurred after Ranaut did not heed Kaur's instructions to put her phone on the tray during the routine frisking, the BJP MP, in her video, alleged that the constable approached her from the side as she was waiting in the security check area, hit her and began hurling abuses at her, seemingly without any provocation. When Ranaut asked for the reason for her behaviour, Kaur allegedly told Ranaut that she was a supporter of the farmers protests.

"I am safe. I am perfectly fine. There was an incident at the Chandigarh airport during the security check. As I was leaving after completing security checking process, a woman CISF officer came from the side and hit me on the face. She began hurling abuses. When I asked her why she



was doing this, she said she is a supporter of the farmers' protest. I am safe but my question is how we end growing extremism and terrorism in Punjab," Ranaut said in the video. Airport authorities, on condition of anonymity, confirmed that Kaur was unhappy with the actor-turned-politician's stand on the farmers' protest when she said that the agitators were people paid to demonstrate.

Ranaut's flight, Vistara's UK707 to New Delhi at 3.30pm, was delayed, eventually departing at 4.10pm. The BJP MP-elect was met by CISF officials from the airport and Delhi headquarters when she landed in the national capital, where she lodged an official complaint. The force is yet to issue a statement. But an official aware of the development in Chandigarh said, "Constable Kaur was immediately detained after the incident. Kangana Ranaut proceeded to board her flight. Punjab police officials also reached the airport."

A senior CISF officer in Chandigarh said they were also in the process of registering a First Information Report (FIR) against the constable. *Source: HT*

## TDP, JD (U) eye Lok Sabha Speaker's post: Know the importance of the custodian of House

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The support for a numerically challenged BJP appears to be coming at a price with allies demanding key Cabinet/ministerial berths, special status for respective states and, as sources indicate, also the post of the Lok Sabha Speaker. While the demand for Cabinet and ministerial berths is understandable, the big question is why are Telugu Desam Party's N Chandrababu Naidu and Janata Dal (U)'s Nitish Kumar clamouring for the Speaker's post.

Notably, the TDP with 16 seats and the JD (U) with 12 seats hold the key to Prime Minister Narendra Modi Government 3.0. Normally, in a coalition, the party with largest number (in this case the BJP) keeps the post because of multiple reasons, the most critical being to ensure stability and security of its government.

Generally, the first agenda of the House is to elect the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Prior to that the President swears in the pro-tem Speaker who is normally the senior-most member of the House who then administers the oath or the affirmation to the newly elected members. Then the elected representatives become the members of the new Parliament and elect a

**Generally, the first agenda of the House is to elect the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Prior to that the President swears in the pro-tem Speaker who is normally the senior-most member of the House who then administers the oath or the affirmation to the newly elected members**

Speaker from amongst themselves. As per convention, the post of Deputy Speaker is given to a member of the Opposition

For a party with a comfortable majority, like BJP in the past two tenures, the Speaker's post has been mostly ceremonial. In fact, the post of the Deputy Speaker was also kept vacant.

But as the head of the Lok Sabha, the Speaker is the custodian of the House, maintains order in the House, can adjourn/ suspend proceedings in case of absence of decorum, etc. Importantly, the Speaker is also the final authority regarding rules and procedures, and for a party which may not be having a majority on its own, he

or she also holds the key to its stability with final say in issues/disputes related to disqualification and situations like a vote of no-confidence against the government.

Experts say the Speaker's role becomes important when it comes to proving majority on the floor of the House or in case the anti-defection law comes into play.

Take, for example, the classic case of the fall of BJP's Atal Behari Vajpayee's 13-month government in 1999 by just one vote. Cutting the long story short, Giridhar Gamang, who had just become the Congress Chief Minister in Odisha, was allowed to vote in the confidence motion against the government by the Speaker who left the decision to the "conscious" of the voter.

Interestingly, to achieve the majority, the then BJP-led NDA had offered the post of Speaker to the TDP, following which GMC Balayogi, party MP from Amalapuram, was appointed the Speaker.

"When it comes to the Lok Sabha, the Speaker's decision is final. The TDP, which has been a part of several coalition governments, knows the importance of the post," say experts. *Source: TNS*



# India in history this Week

## JUNE 7 TO JUNE 13

### 07 JUNE

1893 Mahatma Gandhi used civil disobedience for the first time in South Africa.

1914 Film director, writer and journalist Khwaja Ahmed Abbas was born on June 7 in Panipat.

1974 Indian tennis superstar Mahesh Bhupathi was born on 7 June in Chennai.

1975 The first match of the first World Cup was played between India and England at Lord's Stadium. India lost in this match.

1631 Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's wife Mumtaz Begum died at the age of 39 in Burhanpur.

1989 India's second satellite Bhaskar I was launched with a Soviet rocket.

2006 India decides to give one billion rupees to Nepal for economic reconstruction.

2008 The Uttar Pradesh government declared 4% VAT on LPG to be completely abolished.

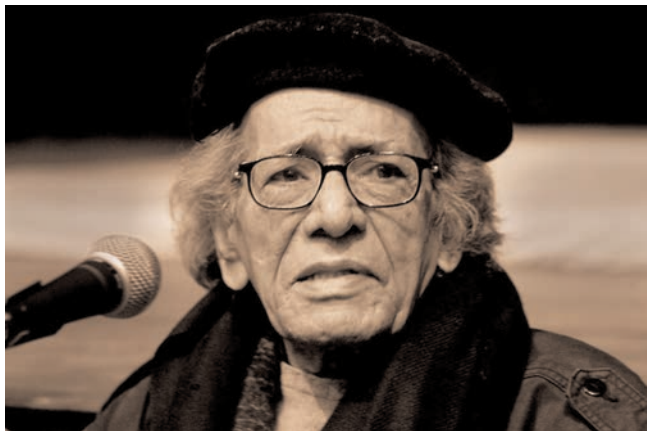
### 08 JUNE

1948 India's first airline, Air India, started air service between India and Britain.

1658 Aurangzeb captured the fort of Agra and Shah Jahan was imprisoned.

1936 The Indian State Broadcasting Service, the official radio service of India, was renamed All India Radio.

2004 After 122 years, the amazing sight of Venus transit was seen again in many countries of the world including India.



2009 Famous screenwriter, theatrical director, poet and actor Habib Tanveer passed away.

### 09 JUNE

1964 Lal Bahadur Shastri became the second Prime Minister of India.

2001 The pair of Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi won the French Open doubles title.

1900 Freedom fighter Birsa Munda died in Ranchi jail under suspicious circumstances.



2011 India's famous painter MF Hussain died in

London.

### 10 JUNE

1986 India won the Test match at Lord's for the first time by defeating England by 5 wickets.

1888 The famous agitator Balraj Bhalla was born.

1900 General Jayantinath Chaudhary of the Indian Army was born.

1946 Gandhiji refused to be excited for his victory. This is because it was not a triumph of truth over liars.



1955 Internationally renowned badminton player Prakash Padukone was born.

1987 Famous Hindi film actor Jeevan passed away.

2008 The 54th National Film Awards were announced, 'Lage Raho Munnabhai' being voted the best popular film.

1958 Litterateur and public servant Anup Sethi was born on 10 June 1958

### 11 JUNE



1897 Ramprasad Bismil, the freedom fighter of India, was born.

1866 Allahabad High Court was established. It was earlier known as Agra High Court.

1964 Ashes of Jawaharlal Nehru, the ashes of his ashes were scattered all over the country.

1930 A cyclonic storm blew a train off the railway near Himtnagar, Gujarat, in which one person was killed and many more were injured.

1932 Renowned businessman Meenu Modi was born.

### 12 JUNE

1932 It is the birthday of India's famous Bharata Natyam dancer and actress Padmini.

1975 The Allahabad High Court found the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi guilty of corruption.

1972 D.G., who wrote an eight-volume treatise on the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Tendulkar died

1998 Decision not to give loans to India and Pakistan by G8 countries due to nuclear tests.

2001 India-Bangladesh talks on border issue begin.

2002 Beginning of child labor prohibition day. The purpose of this day was to spread awareness among the people about child labor.

2007 Sikh students in schools in Australia were allowed to carry the religious symbol Sabar.

1752 Chanda Sahib surrendered in 1752 in Karnataka.



2016 Saina Nehwal won the Australian Open title for the second time in 2016.

2008 Renowned film director Mrinal Sen was awarded at the 10th Osiana Cinefan Film Festival in 2008.

1935 Shyama was born one of the famous actresses of Indian cinema.

1972 The author of the biography of Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. DG Tendulkar, passed away.

1976 Sanskrit scholar and great philosopher Gopinath Kaviraj died.

### 13 JUNE

1757 Robert Clive of East India Company traveled to Murshidabad to battle Siraj-ud-Daula.

1997 As many as 59 people who had come to see the film had lost their lives due to the fire in Delhi's Pratima Cinemas.



1943 Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose reached Tokyo from Germany.

1997 59 people died in a fire during a show at the gifted cinema in the capital Delhi.

1909 Birth of EMS Namboodiripad in Palaghat, Kerala.

1879 Revolutionary Ganesh Damodar Savarkar was born.

1923 Famous lyricist Prem Dhawan of Hindi cinema Jagat was born.

2016 India's famous writer, novelist, playwright, critic and satirist Mudrarakshasa died.



# THE WORLD'S LARGEST INDIA DAY PARADE



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**42<sup>nd</sup> INDIA DAY PARADE  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
38<sup>th</sup> ST. MADISON AVENUE, NYC  
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# Guru Arjan Dev's Martyrdom Day: Righteousness that changed the course of history

**G**uru Arjan Dev was born in 1563 at Goindval, and was the youngest of the sons of Guru Ram Das and Bibi Bhani, the daughter of Guru Amar Das. Before his death, Guru Ramdas nominated his son Har Gobind (who became Guru Arjan Dev) as the next Guru. Thus Guru Arjan Dev became the 5th Sikh Guru on 1 September 1581 in the footsteps of his father Guru Ram Das. Guru Arjan Dev was the founder-builder of the golden temple at Amritsar.

Guru Arjan was the first martyr of Sikh Panth, known as 'Shahidan De Sartaaj', and his sacrifice initiated the development of martial traits in Sikhs thereafter. He was martyred at the hands of Mughal Officials on May 30th, 1606.

The martyrdom of the fifth Guru of Sikh traditions, Sri Guru Arjan Dev, at the hands of the cruel and bigoted Mughal regime, marks a pivotal moment in Indian history, symbolising unwavering faith and sacrifice. It serves as a lesson for today's generation to learn about those who sacrificed everything for our freedom and values.

The martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev was a watershed moment not only in the history of the Sikhs but also the whole of India. This victory of righteousness over evil spelled the beginning of the end of the mighty Mughal empire and the rise of the Sikhs as a proud, courageous and upright community.

Sri Guru Arjan Dev, was a visionary scholar, poet, philosopher, composer of music, administrator with excellent organising ability and eminent statesman.

Sri Guru Arjan Dev was born at Goindwal Sahib on April 15, 1563. His father was Bhai Jetha (later Guru Ram Das) and mother was Bibi Bhani the daughter of Guru Amar Das. He was the youngest of three siblings. His two elder brothers were Prithi Mal and Maha Dev. He became Guru at the young age of 18 on September 1, 1581.

Sri Guru Arjan Dev brought about many changes in the spiritual and temporal aspects of the Sikh community. The most prominent among these were construction of the holy temple Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar and compilation of the Bani (religious literature) of Sikh masters and other prominent saints, into a single holy scripture – the Adi Granth.

These noble contributions of the Guru led to a rapid evolution of the Sikh community and became the main reason for his imprisonment, torture and martyrdom. Not to ignore, of course, the other reasons, personal and political, that led to the terrible tragedy.

During the reign of Emperor Akbar, the Guru had very good relations with



Guru Arjan Dev Ji was the fifth Guru of Sikhs, he compiled the first official edition of the Sikh scripture called the Adi Granth, which later expanded into the Guru Granth Sahib.

the ruling Mughal monarchy and administration. Abul Fazal, the court historian of Emperor Akbar writes in Akbar Namah (official history of Emperor Akbar) that the Emperor visited the Guru at Goindwal on November 24, 1598. He took a round of the commune and also partook Langar (community food) that he was particularly interested in. The Emperor was so impressed that, on the recommendation of the Guru, he ordered to reduce revenue being paid by Punjab.

In the course of his ministry, the Guru cultivated many enemies. Some like his brother Prithi Chand, who had aspired to become Guru and Chandu Shah, a senior noble in the Mughal court, who held a grudge against the Guru due to the broken marriage alliance of his daughter with Hargobind, the son of the Guru, were antagonistic due to personal reasons. Others like Sulhi Khan, a revenue officer in the imperial administration were influenced against the Guru by Prithi Chand and Chandu Shah.

The most significant among the Gurus enemies was the Muslim clergy that felt threatened by his rising religious acceptance among the masses. The chief among these was Sheikh Ahmed Faruqi



Sirhindi, a cleric of the all powerful of Naqshbandi order of Sirhind who also held the title of Qayum (Deputy of God). He looked upon himself as a revivalist of the Islamic order in Punjab and wished to destroy the Guru and the Sikh faith.

The original manuscript of the Adi Granth was installed at Harimandir Sahib on August 16, 1604. Within no time, the protagonists aligned against the

Guru started conniving to use the holy book as an instrument to harm him and the Sikhs. They lodged a complaint with Emperor Akbar that the holy Granth contained passages that were blasphemous to Islam. The Emperor called for the Granth, which was sent to him by the Guru in custody of Bhai Gurdas and Baba Buddha. They were assisted by Mian Mir who was revered by



Akbar as a great Saint. Akbar was satisfied that the contents were, by no means, against any religion let alone Islam. He termed the scripture as a “volume worthy of reverence.” and made an offering of 51 gold coins to the Granth.

The death of Akbar in October, 1605, led to a succession battle between his son Prince Salim and grandson Prince Khusrau. Prince Khusrau travelled towards Lahore and en-route at Taran Taran he met with and received blessings from Guru Arjan Dev. He was defeated by his father and blinded. Prince Salim thus became Emperor and took the name of Jahangir.

For the enemies of Sri Guru Arjan Dev, this was a golden opportunity! They filled the ears of Jahangir telling him that the Guru had aligned with his enemy. Their ministrations found support from many powerful Muslim clergymen who were getting worried by the growing spiritual influence of the Sikh religion and Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji on the common people, especially so, after the compilation of the holy Granth and construction of the Harimandir Sahib in Amritsar. These forces were successful in filling the ears of the Emperor who was already opposed to all those who had been good books of Emperor Akbar and those who has assisted his son in the battle for the throne.

Jahangir was barely in the second year of his reign when he ordered the arrest of Guru Sri Arjan Dev. The justification for the same is contained in his autobiography Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri. He records in the autobiography that Sri Arjan in the garments of sainthood and sanctity had captured many simple minded Hindus as well as ignorant and foolish Muslims who had been persuaded to adopt his ways and manners. Jahangir termed the spirituality of Sikh Guru's as a shop – an exercise for profit. He further admitted that he had it in mind for some time to “stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam.”

It becomes quite apparent that the Emperor was interested in converting the Guru to Islam and nipping in the bud the Sikh religion once and for all and before meeting the Guru he was already prejudiced against. By his own admission in his autobiography he used the Guru's meeting with Prince Khusrau as an excuse to order the arrest.

Thus, while the personal enmity of some with the Guru is mostly quoted as the reason behind his arrest and subsequent murder, the actual reason were political and religious insecurities of the Muslim regime and clergy that has, for long, chaffed at the tolerance of Emperor Akbar.

Emperor Jahangir would want the world to believe that he considered Guru Arjan Dev to be an insignificant irritant but deep down he was very worried by the hundreds of thousands of the people, both Hindus and Muslims, who had started following the teachings of Sikhism and were crowding into Goindwal and Amritsar.

When the Guru received summons to the court of Jahangir, he realised that he



Guru Arjan Dev ji holds a significant connection with the tradition of *chabeel*. *Chabeel* refers to a refreshing drink, usually made of sweetened water, offered to the public during hot summer days. This tradition is associated with the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji and serves as a reminder of his selfless service and the values he stood for.

would probably not come back. Accordingly, as per established rituals, he anointed his son Hargobind as the sixth Nanak.

Sri Guru Arjan Dev explained to Emperor Jahangir that he had simply extended courtesy to Prince Khusrau since the latter was the grandson of Akbar who had shown great respect for the Guru while remaining a benefactor of the Sikhs. He emphasised that there was no political intention on his part.

Jahangir failed to comprehend the high spiritual standing of the Guru and remained unconvinced about the explanation given. He rendered a death sentence to the Guru on the charge of rebellion. In his autobiography Jahangir records that he ordered his Governor of Lahore, Murtaza Khan, to confiscate all properties of the guru and put him to death. Since there is no historical evidence of such confiscation it was either an idle boast or the Governor was scared of the Sikhs and as such did not go to Goindwal to confiscate the properties.

Mian Mir intervened and convinced Jahangir to commute the sentence to a fine of Rupees Two Lakhs plus erasing of a few verses from the Adi Granth which the Emperor had been told were objectionable to the clergy. Sri Guru Arjan Dev refused both the caveats. He said the money of the Sikhs could not be spent for his personal benefit. He was ready to give whatever he possessed personally, but that was not enough. The Sikhs attempted to give the fine but the Guru issued a stern warning that whosoever contributed to pay the fine would not be his Sikh.

On changing the verses in the Adi Granth the Guru was emphatic that not a single word of what has been said by the saints and holy people could be changed especially so since the hymns were not disrespectful to any Muslim prophet.

The Guru was imprisoned in Lahore



Fort and brutally tortured over five days under the supervision of Chandu Shah. On the first day he was given nothing to eat or drink; on the second day he was burnt in a cauldron of boiling water; on the third day he was once again boiled in water while hot sand was poured on his head.

His friend and devotee, Mian Mir, was so devastated by the barbarity that he sought permission to use his supernatural and ecclesiastic powers to destroy the torturers and the entire city of Lahore. The Guru strictly forbade him from doing so since the use of such power goes against the tenets of the Sikh religion. The torture thus continued for the fourth day when the Guru was made to sit on a plate of heated iron while hot sand was poured on his upper body.

The Guru went through the torture in an absolutely calm manner, taking the name of the lord all the time and saying “Tera Kiya Meetha Lage, Nam Padarth Nanak Mange” (your will is sweet nectar for me, I desire only the gift of your name)

. On the fifth day he asked for permission to bathe in the River Ravi. The torturers felt that the cold water on his blistered body will cause more pain so they gave permission. As soon as Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji entered the River, he simply disappeared; his body was nowhere to be seen.

The martyrdom of Sri Guru Arjan Dev became a watershed moment in the Indian history. Guru Hargobind adhered to the direction and initiated the concept of Miri and Piri, which gave to the Guru both spiritual and temporal powers, he wore two swords to indicate his dual powers and raised an Army from among his followers. The Sikhs decided that they would never again tolerate injustice, insult or oppression.

Like all Sikh Guru's before him, Sri Guru Arjan Dev taught the message of compassion, love dedication, hard work, the worship of one God the commitment to peace and harmony for all the peoples of the world, but, in his death he created the strongest influence on the Sikh religion.



# SWING TO THE 'RHYTHMS OF INDIA' WITH WYNTON MARSALIS & JLCO

BY MABEL PAIS

'JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER' closes out its 2023-24 concert season - a year-long celebration of community - with the final inspirational performance: 'RHYTHMS OF INDIA: the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) with Wynton Marsalis', reflecting the organization's commitment to bridging divides and strengthening a global jazz community.

The concert takes place in Jazz at Lincoln Center's Rose Theater located at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center, at 60th Street and Broadway in New York City.

'Rhythms of India' featuring the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JLCO) with Wynton Marsalis unites a range of cultural influences, multigenerational perspectives, and international traditions, serving the organization's local patrons and virtual audiences.

## PROGRAM

WHAT: RHYTHMS OF INDIA: THE JLCO WITH WYNTON MARSALIS

WHEN: FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2024 @ 8:00 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2024 @ 1 PM & 8 PM

WHERE: ROSE THEATER, FREDERICK P. ROSE HALL

BROADWAY @ 60TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY

## THE CONCERT

The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis continues its proud commitment to international community building and cross-cultural exchange, joining master Indian musicians to blend two vibrant and storied musical traditions. An exhilarating evening of cross-cultural exchange: Jazz meets Indian music. Featuring the JLCO with Wynton Marsalis.

**A free pre-concert lecture takes place before each 7pm performance.**

**NOTE:** There will be no pre-concert lecture for the Saturday 1 pm matinee performance.



Anubrata Chatterjee



Ghatam Umashankar



Jay Gandhi



Malini Awasthi



Roopa Mahadevan

Photos / Courtesy Jazz at Lincoln Center

In collaboration with master Indian artists - vocalists Malini Awasthi and Roopa Mahadevan, flautist Jay Gandhi, tabla artist Anubrata Chatterjee, ghatam artist Ghatam Umashankar and music consultant Kavi Mani Kapoor, the JLCO fuses the melodies and rhythms of raga-based music and different folk styles with traditional jazz.

Drawing inspiration from iconic Indian compositions like 'Kesariya Balam,' echoing the voices of Rajput princesses welcoming home their beloveds, and classic raga 'Miyan Malhar,' evoking thundering clouds and pouring rain, this Rose Theater performance invites listeners on a journey through colorful soundscapes and moving stories. From the lively Punjabi folk song 'Kothe Te Aa Mahiya'

influenced these practitioners; the music's power to bridge divides and coalesce these distinct communities; and the role of jazz - and the arts writ large - in maintaining the human connection in the digital era.

Throughout its 2023-24 season, 'Jazz at Lincoln Center' explored these subjects with concerts featuring the forward-thinking composers, virtuosic improvisers, and ingenious conceptualists that populate the 'Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra' with Wynton Marsalis. Implicitly or explicitly, season concerts, education programs, advocacy initiatives, and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra tours directly evoke themes that illuminate, as Managing and Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis puts it, the notion that, "Our music has the exceptional ability to bring people together." For more information on the next season, visit [jazz.org/24-25](http://jazz.org/24-25).

## JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall is committed to employing all measures to ensure the safety of patrons and its artists and staff. Learn more about the venue's health and safety guidelines at [jazz.org](http://jazz.org).

## TICKETS

Learn about different options to purchase tickets and fees by visiting the Box Office (ground floor) or at [jazz.org](http://jazz.org).

to the soul-stirring Thumri 'Ka Karu Sajni,' each piece reflects a unique aspect of Indian culture and history. For more information, visit [jazz.org/india](http://jazz.org/india).

## AFTER-SHOW

Keep the party going after the show by taking your ticket stub to Dizzy's Club for a complimentary cover to that evening's Late Night Session at 11:00pm.

## JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER

Jazz at Lincoln Center's 2023-24 season focuses on the concept of community; the broader community of jazz; the numerous communities that nurtured its master practitioners across its timeline; the communities of consciousness that

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# ASBURY PARK LAUNCHES SECOND NORTH-TO-SHORE FESTIVAL



Gary Clark



Jarod Clemons

BY MABEL PAIS

The 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival' launches the second New Jersey Cultural Summer Festival at ASBURY PARK where more than a dozen much-loved Asbury Park artists will step into the spotlight on the 'Showcase Stage at the Grand Arcade,' a new feature of the 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival.'

The 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival' presents events in Asbury Park June 10 through June 16, including performances by headlining artists Bleachers, Lake Street Dive, Band of Horses and Gary Clark Jr. The festival's full lineup can be found at NorthtoShore.com.

Watch this video - [youtu.be/4-YG6QgMEAs](https://youtu.be/4-YG6QgMEAs)

**JUNE 14**

From 3:30 to 11 PM on Friday, June 14, the stage in the Grand Arcade, located within the historic Asbury Park Convention Hall, will offer a continuous sampler of series of FREE performances by some of the city's most-loved singer-songwriters, spoken word poets, hip hop artists, punk bands, indie rockers and others, interspersed with sets by local DJ Adam Jay. Festival-goers will also have access to centrally located shops, restaurants and more.

This presentation, featuring a cohort of local artists on one stage adjacent to major festival venues like the Stone Pony Summer Stage, is a new feature of 'Prudential presents North to Shore,' the three-week, three-city summer festival of arts and ideas produced by NJPAC, now in its annual second season.

"The 'Showcase Stage' is our way of highlighting the talent of Asbury Park's incredible artists, but also of ensuring that all the folks who come out for a festival event not only have a



Band of Horses -Photos / Courtesy NJPAC

great way to extend their visit, but get a real introduction to Asbury Park's authentic sound and spirit," says John Schreiber, President and CEO of NJPAC.

The majority of the local artists and groups appearing on the 'Showcase Stage' are 'Prudential presents North to Shore Official Selections' - performers chosen to take part in the event by the festival's committee of city arts professionals and community leaders. Each was given a grant to enable them to appear at the festival.

Overall, this season the 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival' handed grants totaling \$355,600 to local artists and organizations in its three host cities: Asbury Park, Atlantic City and Newark.

"From singer-songwriters to R&B, funk, soul, global sounds, world music, rock, pop, punk to funk, this lineup checks all the boxes of Asbury's eclectic

global music sound," says Jennifer Stine, President of Fortune Creative Collective, an Asbury-based marketing company, who is producing the 'Showcase Stage' presentation.

Stine is also Vice President of the Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Historical Society and, as the daughter of local historian Don Stine, a second-generation Asbury Park booster.

"To have the Grand Arcade activated with such talented local artists is very exciting. We cannot wait for everyone coming into town that Friday and see, in this historic setting, everything that Asbury Park has to offer," Stine says.

**ARTISTS WHO WILL BE FEATURED AT THE 'SHOWCASE STAGE' INCLUDE:**

Vintage-flavored punk/blues band Johnny Nameless

Hip hop spoken word poet and teaching artist Myster-E (aka Eric

Shandroff)

Singer-songwriters Joe Miller, Mike Montrey and Dave Vargo

Funky R&B singer Space and The Goodstock Jamband

Asbury Park indie rock sensation, The Mercury Brothers

Local R&B, soul, rock, funk and pop band Des and the Swagmatics

These 'Official Selection' performers will be joined by spoken word and hip-hop powerhouse and one-time Poet Laureate of Asbury Park Chris Rockwell, rising singer-songwriter Jake Thistle and DJ Adam Jay, a staple of Asbury Park's night life.

**OTHER ATTRACTIONS**

Festival-goers can stop by RWJBarnabas Health's information table in the Grand Arcade to learn about the expansive community health programs offered for free each month

contd on page 30



contd on page 29

at Monmouth Medical Center' LiveWell Center at the Monmouth Mall. They can also be wowed by New Jersey's immersive WOW Experience mobile activation on the Ocean Avenue side of the Grand Arcade.

The Grand Arcade houses an array of retail establishments including restaurants 'The Beach Bar', 'Asbury Oyster Bar and Seahorse', as well as ice cream bar 'Betty's Icebox', coffee shop 'Asbury Park Roastery', 'Paws Pet Boutique', apparel store 'Wanderlust', home decor shop 'Carla Gizzi' and high-concept souvenir shop 'Fun House'.

## JUNE 15

On June 15, 'ASBURY UNDERGROUND' returns!

The ASBURY PARK tradition, last held in 2019, activates the city's entire downtown now presented in partnership with 'Prudential Presents North to Shore Festival.' Hundreds of musicians, visual artists, comedians and poets will participate in a full day of FREE events during revived 'art and music crawl' on Saturday, June 15.

## ASBURY PARK, NJ THE ASBURY UNDERGROUND

Downtown Art and Music Crawl, a much-loved city tradition which fills the streets of downtown Asbury Park with FREE concerts, comedy shows and poetry readings, will be held again this year for the first time since 2011. This year's crawl will be held on Saturday, June 15 from noon to 7 PM.

The event returns to Asbury Park as a feature of the 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival,' New Jersey's three-week, three-city celebration of arts and ideas. North to Shore, produced by NJPAC, will offer concerts and events across Asbury Park June 10 to June 16.

This year's Asbury Underground art and music crawl will include

approximately 100 performances - highlighting the work of over 200 musicians and some 50 visual artists, plus scores of poets and comedians, at 33 different venues, including stages dedicated to jazz, spoken word poetry and comedy.

Visitors following the crawl map to all of the event's stages and venues will travel across the city's downtown, into art galleries, coffeehouses, clothing stores, restaurants and other spaces; each stop along the way will offer a display or a performance by an area artist.

*"The whole idea, from the inception of Asbury Underground, was to bring a broader awareness of just how fertile, in all of the arts, our city truly is," says the founder and producer of Asbury Underground, Patrick Schiavino, a local artist and the owner of art629 Gallery. "It is really heartwarming how everyone pitches in to make this all happen. It is an amazing celebration of who we are as a community." "North to Shore's mission is to turn a spotlight on all the artists and creatives who make New Jersey such a uniquely vibrant place, and 'Asbury Underground' brings so many of them together in one place, at one time. We're so pleased to be part of bringing back this Asbury Park tradition that celebrates this city's incredibly deep artistic bench," says John Schreiber, President and CEO of NJPAC, which produces 'North to Shore.'*

The crawl begins simultaneously at three different venues downtown at noon: art629 Gallery, 629 Cookman Avenue, Over the Moon Art Studios, 808 Springwood Avenue, and at Lock and Shade Courtyard, Court Square, 608-612 Cookman Avenue. Patrons can progress through the downtown, from any of these three locations, for the rest of the afternoon; performances are scheduled to begin at venues along

the path every 15 minutes. All Asbury Underground events are free.

## THIS YEAR'S CRAWL FEATURES SEVERAL SPECIAL EVENTS INCLUDING:

- The Joe Harvard Memorial Stage: A specially curated stage of performers in memory of local musician, artist, author, and "personality" Joe Harvard, an original member of the Asbury Underground crew and recent inductee to the Asbury Angels Hall of Fame. The music will start at 12:30 PM and run till 6 PM at Parlor Gallery, 717 Cookman Avenue. Harvard established The gARTen, a community black-light art garden and gallery, in a vacant lot on the Cookman Avenue corridor. It served as an Asbury Underground performance space for many years.
- Quills and Chills: A Supernatural Soiree with Poe, Crowley, and Yeats, a spoken word event with a mystic flavor, curated by poet Robert Goodman, at The Paranormal Museum, 621 Cookman Avenue, beginning at 4PM.
- The Literally Underground Comedy Show, curated and hosted by comedian Jess Alaimo, will be held in the (surprisingly spacious) basement of Cookman Avenue Italian restaurant Capitoline, from 2 to 3:30 PM. The restaurant is at 639 Cookman Avenue. A schedule and a map of the crawl route for visitors to follow will be available at the Asbury Underground website, [asburyunderground.com](http://asburyunderground.com).

## FOR PARTICIPATING ARTISTS AND THE FULL EVENT SCHEDULE, VISIT [ASBURYUNDERGROUND.COM](http://ASBURYUNDERGROUND.COM)

Facebook: [@asburyunderground](https://www.facebook.com/asburyunderground)  
Instagram: [@asburyunderground](https://www.instagram.com/asburyunderground)

Twitter: [@apunderground](https://twitter.com/apunderground)  
For the latest updates and new concert listings, visit [northtoshore.com](http://northtoshore.com)

For the Asbury Underground/North to Shore Schedule, visit [northtoshore.com](http://northtoshore.com)

Get Festival updates most quickly on social media.

Follow North to Shore on Instagram, X, Facebook and TikTok.

## TICKETS

Tickets for the 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival' are available at [NorthtoShore.com](http://NorthtoShore.com).

## THE PRUDENTIAL PRESENTS NORTH TO SHORE FESTIVAL

The 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival,' launched in 2023, features all the talent, diversity, and creativity that New Jersey has to offer, packed into three extraordinary weekends of performances, screenings, parties and conversations in three of the state's most iconic cities. Hosted by Asbury Park (June 10 - 16), Atlantic City (June 17 - 23), and Newark (June 23 - 30), the 'Prudential presents North to Shore Festival' will bring together events at 50+ venues for an over-the-top showcase of Jersey excellence, aligned with Governor Phil Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy's vision of a celebration worthy of the Garden State's long legacy of innovation in the arts, film and technology. For the latest updates and new concert listings, visit [NorthToShore.com](http://NorthToShore.com).

## THE NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

Learn more at [NJPAC.org](http://NJPAC.org)

(Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Cuisine, Spirituality, Health & Wellness, Business, and Education)

# INDIGENOUS FILMMAKERS' WORK MAKES ITS ROUNDS IN THE USA

BY MABEL PAIS

The 2024 SUNDANCE INSTITUTE INDIGENOUS FILM TOUR, a 83-minute short film program featuring selections from past editions of the Sundance Film Festival and alumni of Sundance Institute's Indigenous Program makes its tour this summer and fall.

The Indigenous Film Tour curates vibrant works by Native filmmakers, providing audiences with a glimpse into the present and future of Indigenous cinema. This year's program will include eight short films

from Indigenous filmmakers: four from the 2024 Sundance Film Festival program, three from the 2023 Sundance Film Festival and one short film from the 2005 Sundance Film Festival.

The tour begins June 8 and runs throughout the month at venues in California, Michigan, New Mexico, and Oklahoma before expanding to museums, festivals, and theaters throughout the summer and fall.

The Sundance Film Festival and Sundance Institute Indigenous Program have a long history of supporting and launching talented

Indigenous directors including Erica Tremblay, Blackhorse Lowe, Sterlin Harjo, Sky Hopinka, Taika Waititi, Caroline Monnet, Fox Maxy and Shaandiin Tome.

Adam Piron, Director of the Sundance Institute Indigenous Program, said, "These eight shorts include narrative and documentary projects, some from Native storytellers outside the U.S., and they've all resonated with Sundance Film Festival audiences in the past - it's our pleasure to take such a diverse cross-section of Indigenous cinema on tour."

## SCHEDULE, TICKETS

For more information and to purchase tickets to the Sundance Institute Indigenous Short Film Tour, visit [sundance.org/programs/indigenous-program](http://sundance.org/programs/indigenous-program)

## THE SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

Learn more at [sundance.org](http://sundance.org). Connect with Sundance Institute on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube.

(Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Cuisine, Spirituality, Health & Wellness, Business, and Education)





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## Anil Kapoor to host Big Boss OTT

Bollywood star Anil Kapoor is confirmed to take over hosting duties from superstar Salman Khan for the third season of the controversial reality show Bigg Boss OTT. He said he was 'reverse ageing' but labels Bigg Boss as 'timeless'. Talking about being the host for the first time, Anil said, "Bigg Boss OTT and I are a dream team! We're both young at heart; people often say jokingly that I'm reverse ageing, but Bigg Boss is seriously timeless. It feels a bit like going back to school, trying something new and exciting." *Source: IANS*

## Geet is back: Kareena Kapoor dances to 'Yeh Ishq Haaye' at Abu Dhabi event

Bollywood superstar and fashion icon Kareena Kapoor Khan recently graced an event in Abu Dhabi for a jewellery brand that has her as its brand ambassador. Videos of Kareena from the event have gone viral which show her dressed in a bespoke saree dancing to the song 'Yeh Ishq Haaye' from her 2007 film 'Jab We Met' directed by Imtiaz Ali.

Kareena wore a pink blush tulle saree with a crafted pearl blouse with a leaf pattern of Kashmir from designer Manish Malhotra's 2024 summer collection. The viral video shows her graceful dancing with the audience rooting and cheering for her mesmerised by her beauty and the impromptu performance. Watch the clip below.

'Jab We Met' revolves around Aditya Kashyap (Shahid Kapoor), a heartbroken tycoon, who aimlessly boards a train after attending his ex-girlfriend's wedding. On board, he meets Geet Dhillon (Kareena), a spontaneous girl who plans to elope with her lover and gets pulled into her rollercoaster life, gradually falling in love with her as she shows him a more fulfilling and entertaining way of living.

Geet was a chatterbox, crazy young girl and Aditya was the stark opposite. The well-known saying 'Opposites attract' truly worked for the plot. The film's songs were also a hit. From 'Ye Ishq Hai' to 'Mauja Hi Mauja', 'Tum Se Hi' and 'Aage Jab Tum', every track from 'Jab We Met' weaved magic. Over the years, the film has developed a cult status, and rumors keep circulating time and again about a possible sequel.

On the work front, Kareena will be seen headlining Hansal Mehta's 'The Buckingham Murders'. Starring an excellent ensemble cast of Kareena, Ash Tandon, Ranveer Brar, and Keith Allen, 'The Buckingham Murders' is directed by Hansal Mehta, and written by Aseem Arrora, Kashyap Kapoor, and Raghav Raj Kakker. It is produced by Balaji Telefilms and TBM Films alongside Shobha Kapoor, Ektaa Kapoor, and Kareena herself. It is a detective drama. The release date of the film has not been announced yet.



## Taapsee Pannu says it was not 'love at first sight' with husband Mathias Boe

Taapsee Pannu and longtime boyfriend and badminton player Mathias Boe married in Udaipur in March. Now in a new interview with Cosmopolitan India, the actor is opening up about her relationship with Mathias, and revealed that it was not 'love at first sight' for her. Instead, she took time in the relationship as she wanted to see how feasible it was for the both of them.

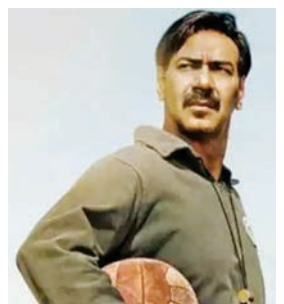
In the interview, Taapsee said that she has a soft spot for athletes and added, "It was not like a love-at-first-sight situation, for me at least—I took time to test if it's really practical...the feasibility of the relationship was important for me. I was obviously fond of him and respected him, and we kept meeting and I grew to love him. So falling in love didn't happen in a month or instantly. It is a fact though, which I keep repeating in most interviews about him—when I met him I felt like I met a man."

She also said, "I had dated so many boys before him, and suddenly, I met a guy who didn't feel like anyone I'd been with before. So there's this sudden sense of security and maturity, which was so evident that I felt like 'okay, you've finally found the man'." *Source: HT*



## Ajay Devgn's 'Maidaan' releases on OTT, now streaming on Prime Video

Maidaan, the sports biopic, featuring Ajay Devgn, Priyamani, and Gajraj Rao, is now available for streaming on Prime Video from June 5. After its theatrical release on April 10, 'Maidaan' has made its digital debut after two months. The film is produced by Zee Studios, Boney Kapoor, Arunava Joy Sengupta, and Akash Chawla, and directed by national-award-winning filmmaker Amit Sharma.



Prime Video's official X account announced the OTT release, captioning it as "Groundbreaking story of India's finest hour in football."

Critics praised the movie, although it struggled to attract audiences to theatres. With the OTT release, viewers have another opportunity to watch the film.

Maidaan tells the story of Indian football coach Syed Abdul Rahim and the golden era of Indian football from 1952 to 1962 under his leadership. This period was significant for Indian football, aiming to establish an identity for India and gain global recognition.





## Glen Powell gives big leading man energy in 'Hit Man'

For a guy like Glen Powell, the ascent to movie stardom isn't really a question. It's more like an inevitability.

Blessed with that square jawline, those bright green eyes, a flop of dirty blonde hair and the kind of symmetrical smile that would seem suspect if it weren't so darn charming, he's a Disney prince before they all became the bad guys. And he's got the kind of effortless, high-wattage charisma that ensures a career beyond soaps and procedurals, the typical resting ground for the laughably handsome. Powell has something, you believe, going on behind the eyes.

This is all to say that suspension of disbelief is a prerequisite going into "Hit Man," a decently entertaining action-comedy-romance about a fake hit man from filmmaker Richard Linklater, who co-wrote the script with Powell.

Based on a "somewhat true story" though it may be, this is a film that asks its audience to buy into the idea that the characters in this film believe that Powell's face is bland and forgettable. This has everything to do with his character, Gary Johnson, a philosophy professor in New Orleans who lives a quiet, solitary life in the suburbs tending to his two cats, birding, tinkering with electronics and helping the local police install surveillance equipment for sting operations. He drives a Honda Civic and wears ill-fitting polo shirts, knee-length jean shorts and socks with his semi-orthopedic sandals. And, of course, like many hot guys in disguise before him, he's got a pair of wire-rimmed glasses. Why he dresses like your middle-aged uncle in 1992 is anyone's guess. Were he in Bushwick, it might not even look odd. But this is a movie and we know that Gary is predestined for a glow-up.

Not that "Hit Man" allows itself to have any fun with the makeover aspect. No, once plain Gary is thrown into this amateur undercover work, we only get to see the final looks he wears to meet all the people looking to hire a hit man. He dips into the theatrical for these occasions, sporting wigs, makeup, accents and fake tattoos in his attempt to be what he thinks each specific person thinks a hit man should be, which is moderately amusing.

Source: AP

# Sofía Vergara says filming sex scenes for 'Griselda' 'kept me awake' and 'worried'

Sofía Vergara opened up she felt "worried" and insecure while filming sex scenes for the 2024 crime drama 'Griselda.' During a Netflix FYSEE event on June 2, the Emmy nominee, 51, shared the experience of shooting intimate scenes for the miniseries was one of the times she felt out of her comfort zone, per The US Sun.

Portraying Griselda Blanco, the mastermind behind one of the most lucrative drug cartels in history, Vergara navigated the complexities of the character's life and death in 'The Cocaine Godmother.'

"I don't think I've ever done like, a sex scene," she confessed, noting the absence of such scenes in 'Modern Family' alongside co-star Ed O'Neill.

"I'm 50! I mean, when I was 30, I wouldn't have worried. I think I was worried that I was going to look horrific."

She admitted, "I was like, 'Where are they shooting me? The cellulite? From the side.' Uh, I'm vain I guess. That one kept me awake I think."

The Hot Pursuit actress acknowledged that the scenes "came out good."

"It's really dark and Andy [Baiz], the director, is very artistic and he made me feel super comfortable and he's like, 'We're never going to stay like a long time on you [the camera].'"

During the production phase Baiz had highlighted Vergara's "physical transformation" as "one of the toughest aspects of the whole show".

Vergara said, "It was in Miami in the '70s and the '80s. Getting the look correct was very important to me."

"I needed to disappear."

The Modern Family star's hair stylist revealed, "We had five wigs, different time periods."



## Dakota Fanning finds a character she is drawn to in Ishana Night Shyamalan's 'The Watchers'

It can sometimes be difficult for child actors to shed public conceptions of them as a kid, hindering them from being taken seriously in Hollywood as adults.

But at 30, Dakota Fanning is feeling better than ever about her creative voice and agency.

"At this point in my life, I feel very settled in like who I am and what I want and what I don't want and what I like and what I don't like," she said while promoting her latest film, "The Watchers".

That's not to say Fanning didn't receive critical acclaim almost as soon as her career began. She is, after all, the youngest person to receive a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination — she was 7 at the time — in the show's nearly 30-year history for her performance in "I Am Sam."

But in the more than two decades since that 2001 breakout role, Fanning has learned a lot about the nature of the business and how to achieve both success and satisfaction in it, something that inspired her to start a production company with her sister and fellow actor, Elle Fanning. "Being an actor for so long, you are reliant on other people to want you to be in their movie, to pick you, to believe in you," she said of their decision to launch Lewellen Pictures. "Eventually you're like, 'Well, I just kind of want to make that happen for myself.'" Fanning has made a lot happen for herself, including earning a degree from New York University despite working consistently since the age of 5. While in school, she studied the portrayal of women in film — something she says she has always been interested in, especially when it comes to female characters who aren't necessarily "likable."





## UKRAINE HITS RUSSIAN OIL FACILITIES

**KYIV (TIP):** In Kyiv's ongoing effort to disrupt the Kremlin's war machine, Ukrainian drones struck an oil refinery and a fuel depot in Russian border regions, officials in the targeted areas said on June 6.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy joined world leaders in France on Thursday to commemorate the D-Day invasion and seek more Western help even as his forces battled to stave off a Russian onslaught near the eastern city of Kharkiv in Europe's biggest conflict since World War II.

Zelenskyy's trip came a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that Russia could provide long-range weapons to other countries so that they could strike Western targets. That threat came after NATO allies said they would allow Ukraine to use weapons they deliver to attack Russian territory. (PTI)

## ANC IN TALKS WITH 5 PARTIES FOR COALITION GOVT IN S AFRICA

**JOHANNESBURG (TIP):** Top officials in South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) have had initial talks with representatives of five other parties over a coalition or other agreement to form a government, but no decision has been made and the talks are at an early stage, the ANC said June 5.

South Africa faced an election deadlock after the long-ruling ANC lost its 30-year majority in an election last week but no party managed to overtake it. The ANC remained the biggest party. ANC spokesperson Mahlengi Bhengu-Motsiri told reporters that there had been "exploratory" talks with the main opposition Democratic Alliance, the far-left Economic Freedom Fighters and three other smaller parties.

She said the ANC had "repeatedly" reached out to the new MK Party of former President Jacob Zuma for talks, but there had been "no positive response." Zuma is a former ANC leader. — AP

## MORE THAN A THIRD OF GAZA HOSTAGES ARE DEAD: ISRAEL

**JERUSALEM (TIP):** Israel believes that more than a third of the remaining Gaza hostages are dead, a government tally showed on June 5, as the United States sought to advance their recovery under a proposal to wind down the war with Hamas.

Of about 250 people dragged into the Gaza Strip by Hamas-led Palestinian gunmen during the Oct. 7 cross-border rampage that sparked the war, scores were freed in a November truce, while others have been recovered - dead or alive - by Israeli troops. (Reuters)

# 40 killed in Israel's 'targeted' strike on UN school in Gaza

**CAIRO/JERUSALEM (TIP):** Israel hit a Gaza school on June 6 with what it described as a targeted airstrike on up to 30 Hamas fighters inside. A Hamas official said 40 people, including women and children, were killed as they were taking shelter in the UN site.

Video footage showed Palestinians hauling away bodies after the attack, which took place at a sensitive moment in mediated talks on a ceasefire that would involve releasing hostages held by Hamas and some of the Palestinians held in Israeli jails.

The United States issued a joint statement with other countries on Thursday calling on Israel and Hamas to make whatever compromises were necessary to finalise a deal after eight months of war in the Gaza Strip.

Ismail Al-Thawabta, the director of the Hamas-run government media office, rejected Israel's assertion that the UN school in Nuseirat, in central Gaza, had hidden a Hamas command post.

"The occupation uses ... false fabricated stories to justify the brutal crime it conducted against dozens of displaced people," Thawabta said.

Israel's military said its fighter jets had carried out a "precise strike" and circulated satellite photos highlighting two parts of a building where it said the



fighters were based. "We're very confident in the intelligence," military spokesperson Lt Col Peter Lerner said, accusing Hamas and Islamic Jihad fighters of deliberately using UN facilities as operational bases.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military has warned the government its policy of cutting off funds to the Palestinian Authority could push the occupied West

Bank into a third "intifada", public broadcaster Kan Radio reported on Thursday.

The warning underlined the increasingly dire state of the West Bank economy where thousands of workers have lost their jobs in Israel and public servants have been unpaid or on partial pay for months. — Reuters

# Mexico elects Sheinbaum as first woman president

**MEXICO CITY (TIP):** Claudia Sheinbaum, a scientist with a PhD in physics, has been elected by a huge margin as Mexico's first female president.

Sheinbaum, 61, will succeed her mentor Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who first included her in the government in 2000 and with whom she broke away from the Party of Democratic Revolution (PRD) in 2014 to form Morena that is also headed for super majorities in both houses of the Congress.

**"For the first time in the 200 years of the republic, I will become the first woman president of Mexico," Sheinbaum told supporters, according to the Mexican media.**

A successful politician in her own right, she was the Mayor of Mexico City during Obrador's tenure as the President. The final vote in Sheinbaum's favour is expected to be 60.7 per cent, making it the highest vote percentage by a Presidential candidate in Mexico's democratic history.



Mexican analysts felt a glass ceiling was broken because of Mexico's pervasive macho culture and the majority Roman Catholic population which tends to circumscribe the role of women in public life in those parts.

They noted that she was the first woman to win a general election in the

entire North America — the US, Mexico or Canada.

The elections were the most violent with 38 candidates murdered amid an expansion of organised crime cartels during Obrador's term as the President during which 1.85 lakh people suffered violent deaths. (TNS)



# EARTHQUAKES SHAKE THE ISHIKAWA REGION OF JAPAN

**TOKYO (TIP):** Earthquakes early on June 4 again struck Japan's north-central region of Ishikawa, still recovering from the destruction left by a powerful quake on January 1, but the latest shaking caused only minor damage.

A magnitude 5.9 temblor on the northern top of the Noto Peninsula was followed minutes later by a 4.8 and then several smaller quakes within the next two hours, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. There was no danger of a tsunami.

Two houses that had been damaged in the January 1 quake collapsed in Wajima city but no injuries or other damage was reported so far, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

JMA seismology and tsunami official Satoshi Harada said on June 4 quakes were believed to be aftershocks of the magnitude 7.6 earthquake on January 1.

Seismic activity has since slightly subsided but Harada urged people to be cautious, especially near buildings that were damaged earlier.

Shinkansen super-express trains and other train services were temporarily suspended for safety checks but most of them resumed, according to West Japan Railway Co.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority said no abnormalities were found at two nearby nuclear power plants. One of them, the Shika plant on the Noto Peninsula, had minor damage, though officials said that did not affect cooling functions of the two



reactors.

Hokuriku Electric Power Co said there were no power outages.

Monday's rattlings rekindled fear among residents who are still struggling to recover from damages from the New Year's quake. NHK public television showed a number of people who came out of their homes and temporary shelters to see if there were additional damage.

Reconstruction comes slowly in mountainous areas on the peninsula and many damaged houses remain untouched.

In Wajima, which was one of the hardest-hit areas, an inn operator told NHK that he immediately ducked under the desk at the reception when the first quake struck on Monday. Nothing fell to the floor or broke, but it reminded him of the January shakings and made him worry that a big quake like that had occurred even five months later.

The January 1 quake killed 241 people. Damages still remain, and many residents remain evacuated. (AP)

## China pressuring other nations not to attend Ukraine peace talks: Zelenskyy

**SINGAPORE (TIP):** President of Ukrainian Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused China of helping Russia to disrupt a Swiss-organised peace conference on the war in Ukraine, speaking at Asia's premier security conference on June 2.

In a news conference at the Shangri-La defense forum in Singapore, Zelenskyy said that China is pressuring other countries and their leaders not to attend the upcoming talks.

"Russia, using Chinese influence in the region, using Chinese diplomats also, does everything to disrupt the peace summit," he said, according to a simultaneous translation of his remarks. "Regrettably this is unfortunate that such a big independent powerful country as China is an instrument in hands of Putin." In a speech earlier in the day, Zelenskyy urged top defence officials to attend the upcoming summit, saying he was disappointed at the failure of some countries to commit to joining.

Chinese Defence Minister Dong Jun spoke earlier in the day at the Shangri-La conference but he did not appear to be in the room when Zelenskyy made his appeal. — AP

# North Korea sends hundreds of more trash-carrying balloons to South Korea

**SEOUL (TIP):** North Korea launched hundreds of more trash-carrying balloons toward the South after a similar campaign a few days earlier, according to South Korea's military, in what Pyongyang calls retaliation for activists flying anti-North Korean leaflets across the border.

Between June 1 and June 2 morning, about 600 balloons flown from North Korea have been found in various parts of South Korea. The balloons carried cigarette butts, scraps of cloth, waste paper and vinyl, but no dangerous substances were included, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said Sunday.

The military advised people to beware of falling objects and not to touch objects suspected to be from North Korea but report them to military or police offices instead. There have been no reports of injuries or damage.

In Seoul, the city government sent text alerts saying that unidentified objects suspected to be flown from North Korea were detected in skies near the city and that the military was responding to them.

The North's balloon launches added to a recent series of provocative steps, which include its failed spy satellite launch and a barrage of short-range missiles launches that the North said was intended to demonstrate its ability to attack the South preemptively.

South Korea's military dispatched chemical rapid response and explosive clearance teams to recover the debris from some 260 North Korean balloons that were found in various parts of the country from Tuesday night to Wednesday.

The military said the balloons carried various types of trash and manure but

no dangerous substances like chemical, biological or radioactive materials. Some of the balloons were found with timers that suggested they were designed to pop the bags of trash midair.

In a statement on Wednesday, Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, confirmed that the North sent the balloons to make good on her country's recent threat to "scatter mounds of wastepaper and filth" in South Korea in response to leafletting campaigns by South Korean activists.

She hinted that balloons could become the North's standard response to leafletting moving forward, saying that the North would respond by "scattering rubbish dozens of times more than those being scattered to us."

South Korea's Unification Ministry said Friday that North Korea must stop

the provocations — also including its missile launches and other acts — or face unspecified "unbearable" consequences.

South Korea's military has said it has no plans to shoot down the balloons, citing concerns about causing damage or the possibility that they might contain dangerous substances. Firing at balloons near the border would also risk triggering a retaliation from the North at a time of high tensions.

"(We) decided it was best to let the balloons drop and recover them safely," Lee Sung Joon, spokesperson of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, said during a briefing Thursday.

North Korea is extremely sensitive about any outside attempt to undermine Kim Jong Un's absolute control over the country's 26 million people, most of whom have little access to foreign news. (AP)



## PAKISTAN ELECTED AS UNSC NON-PERMANENT MEMBER

**UNITED NATIONS (TIP):** Pakistan, Somalia, Denmark, Greece and Panama on June 6 were elected as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for a two-year term, starting January 1, 2025.

They were elected by a secret ballot in the UN General Assembly. In the two seats for African and Asia-Pacific States, Somalia got 179 votes and Pakistan received 182 votes. Among the Latin American and Caribbean States, Panama got 183 votes, while in the Western European and other States, Denmark got 184 votes and Greece got 182 votes. "Proud moment as Pakistan receives a resounding 182 votes and is elected to the UNSC," Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif posted on X. (PTI)

## 6 INDIAN TOURISTS INJURED IN JEEP MISHAP IN NEPAL

**KATHMANDU (TIP):** Six Indian tourists, mostly senior citizens, were injured when the jeep they were travelling in overturned near a lake in Nepal's Chitwan district on June 2, officials said. The accident took place near Darai Lake at Khairani. The tourists were heading towards Chitwan National Park for a jungle safari, said Kedarnath Panta, chairperson of ward number 12, Khairani municipality. Chitwan National Park, 250 km south of Kathmandu, is famous for one-horned rhinos and Bengal Tigers. All those who sustained injuries hail from the Bendali Thana area in Mumbai and most of them are above 60, police said. They are identified as Ramchandra Yadav, Sudesh Shanker Khadia, Pankaj Gupteshwor, Vaishali Gupteshwor, Sushmita Sudesh Khadia and Vijaya More. The injured are undergoing treatment at hospitals in Bharatpur and Ratnanagar, police said, adding that they have taken the jeep driver, a Nepalese, into custody. (PTI)

## NEPAL GOVERNMENT RECALLS 11 ENVOYS, INCLUDING FROM INDIA, USA AND UK

**KATHMANDU (TIP):** Nepal government has recalled ambassadors from 11 countries, including those serving in India and the US and appointed under the Nepali Congress' quota, three months after Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' terminated his alliance with the party and joined hands with KP Sharma Oli. Despite strong reservations from Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Narayan Kaji Shrestha, the government on June 6 recalled these ambassadors, including Nepal's envoy to India Shankar Sharma. The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported. (PTI)

# Pakistani PM Sharif in Beijing for talks with President Xi to seek more investments, elevate ties

**BEIJING (TIP):** Visiting Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reached Beijing for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leaders to elevate all-weather bilateral ties and prospects of more aid and investments to bail out his cash-strapped country from the current economic crisis.

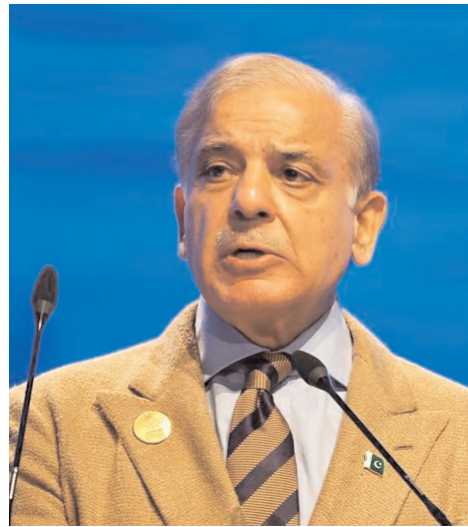
Sharif, on a five-day official visit to China since June 4, toured the southern high-tech city of Shenzhen on June 4 and addressed the investors meeting.

During his stay here, Sharif will meet Xi, Premier Li Qiang and other leaders, Pakistan's state-run APP news agency reported.

He will also attend a Pakistan-China Friendship and Business event and have meetings with the CEOs of leading Chinese companies working on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Several MoUs between the two countries on cooperation in various fields are likely to be signed, the report said.

Cash-strapped Pakistan's economy is facing severe headwinds, and it has formally requested the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the next bailout package between USD 6 billion and USD 8 billion with the possibility of augmentation through climate



financing.

In his address to the investors meeting in Shenzhen, Sharif assured full security to the Chinese personnel from the recurring terrorist attacks targeting them.

The 72-year-old leader embarked on his first visit to China after he took over as prime minister for the second term after his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party-led coalition government assumed power in March.

Addressing the Pakistan-China Business Forum, Sharif assured all-out facilitation to Chinese investors and security of Chinese individuals,

projects, and investments in Pakistan.

He said his government had taken various measures to ensure fool-proof security to protect the lives of Chinese workers in Pakistan.

"I will spare no effort to protect the lives of Chinese workers and assure and guarantee that we will provide them security more than our children. This will never happen again," he said.

Referring to the March terrorist attack in Besham in Pakistan, in which five Chinese personnel and their Pakistani driver were killed, he said it was one of the saddest days of his life when the whole nation felt saddened.

The latest was the March suicide attack in Dasu in which five Chinese nationals and a Pakistan driver were killed. Pakistan paid USD 2.58 million as compensation to the families of those killed in the attack.

The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI is seen as an attempt by China to further its influence abroad with infrastructure projects funded by Chinese investments across the world. (PTI)

## Top leaders of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, 4 other nations likely to attend Modi's oath ceremony

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Top leaders of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, Mauritius and Seychelles are likely to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the weekend, authoritative sources said on June 6.

It is learnt that India has already sent invites to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and some other leaders of the countries chosen to grace the ceremony.

Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth and President of Seychelles Wavel Ramkalawan are among the leaders being invited to Modi's swearing-in ceremony.

Modi is all set to take charge as the prime minister for a historic third consecutive term with the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) winning 293 seats in the Lok Sabha polls.

The guest list of foreign leaders for Modi's swearing-in ceremony was

primarily guided by New Delhi's "Neighbourhood First Policy" and its strategic focus on island nations considered important in the Indian Ocean region, it is learnt.

Modi is likely to take oath on June 9.

The invitation to Muizzu assumes significance as it came amid frosty ties between the two countries.

The ties between India and the Maldives came under severe strain since November last year when Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, took charge as Maldivian president.

Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel from his country. The Indian military personnel were replaced by civilians earlier this month.

The media division of President Wickremesinghe's office on Wednesday said Modi invited him to the swearing-in ceremony during a phone conversation. It said Wickremesinghe accepted the invite.

"During the conversation, Prime Minister @narendramodi invited President Wickremesinghe to his swearing-in ceremony, which President @RW\_UNP accepted," it said on X.

Modi also had a phone conversation with Hasina on Wednesday. In the phone conversation, Modi invited Hasina to attend his swearing-in ceremony and she accepted it, diplomatic sources said.

Modi held separate phone conversations with Prachanda as well as Jugnauth.

On Thursday, Bhutanese PM Tobgay called up Modi and congratulated him on the victory of the NDA.

"Prime Minister Tobgay appreciated Prime Minister Modi's visionary leadership in the last decade, and conveyed his warm wishes for his successful third term," an Indian readout said.

"The prime minister thanked prime minister Tobgay for the warm felicitations. The prime minister conveyed that India accords the highest priority to its exemplary partnership with Bhutan," it said.

It said India-Bhutan partnership is characterized by utmost trust, goodwill, and mutual understanding at all levels and is reinforced by robust people to people linkages and close economic and development partnership. (PTI)





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# Walnuts may help fight ageing effects

Eating an overall healthy diet, including certain foods such as walnuts and other whole foods, may reduce the risk of physical function impairments throughout the ageing process in women, a new study has found.

Women who consumed 1-2 servings of walnuts per week (1/4 cup per serving) showed reduced risk of developing impairments in physical functions, the study said. Walnuts are unique among nuts in that they are primarily composed of polyunsaturated fat (13 grams per ounce), which includes alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), the plant-based omega-3 fatty acid.

They are the only nut to contain a significant amount of ALA with 2.5 grams per one ounce serving, the study noted.

"There is a lot of research that looks at specific health conditions in ageing, such as diabetes and heart disease, but less attention to research on quality of life and ability to maintain independence with ageing," said Francine Grodstein, Professor at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in the US.

Further, a higher intake of fruits and vegetables, lower intake of sugar-sweetened beverages, trans fat and sodium and moderate alcohol intake were diets most associated with reduced rates of incident physical impairment.

Among food components, the strongest relations were found for increased intakes of oranges, orange juice, apples, pears, romaine or leaf lettuce and walnuts.

Overall diet quality, rather than individual foods, may have a greater impact on reducing risk of physical function impairments, emphasised the paper published in the Journal of Nutrition.

For the study, the team looked at data from 54,762 women in the Nurses' Health Study, which tracked women for over 30 years.

Between 1992 and 2008, the team examined these participants' association between the dietary habits of the participants and subsequent impairment in physical function.

## Helps weight loss

Contrary to what people believe, walnuts can form a part of weight management diet. Several studies have suggested that regular consumption of walnuts is unlikely to cause weight gain or obesity. In fact, an



ounce of walnuts contains 2.5g of omega 3 fats, 4g of protein and 2g of fibre that help provide satiety. Any successful weight management plan must include satiety factor; so walnut is undoubtedly the right food to consider if you are into a weight management programme. Despite being 'dense in calories, walnuts can be an important tool in helping you lose weight.

## Induces sleep

Walnuts contain a compound called melatonin, responsible for conveying messages regarding the cycle of light and dark to the body. Since melatonin is already synthesised by the body, consumption of walnuts increases the blood levels of melatonin, thereby inducing sleep. That's why eating walnuts can be a great way to improve sleep.

## Great for your hair

Walnut is a good 'hair food' too. This is because walnuts contain biotin (vitamin B7) that helps strengthen hair, reduce hair fall and improve hair growth to certain extent. In addition to walnuts, you can try these foods to prevent hair loss.

## Prevents heart disease

Among all the dietary plants and nuts, walnuts contain the highest amount of antioxidants. Around 100 g of walnuts will give more than 20 mmol antioxidants, which makes them extremely effective in combating heart disease by their ability to destroy free radicals. They are also loaded with omega-3 fatty acids that lowers bad cholesterol and increases the production of good cholesterol making it a great snack to keep your heart in great health.

# Hydrate, exfoliate, moisturize to avoid dry skin

Save your skin from dryness and dehydration. Increase water intake and exfoliate the dead skin cells to achieve smooth skin, says an expert.

An expert has shared a few tips to get spotless skin:

- **Hydrate:** Hydrating yourself is absolutely essential to keep your skin healthy. A lot of water content from the body is lost while you sweat during summer season. Therefore, it is essential to increase water intake by a couple of glasses every day.
- **Avoid caffeinated drinks** and keep away from aerated drinks too as they further dehydrate the skin. Instead, opt for freshly squeezed lime juice or go for coconut water and other fresh juices.
- **Exfoliate:** Exfoliation helps in the removal of dead skin cells and in achieving smooth skin. You can do it yourself at home with the right mix.
- **Oatmeal, honey, lemon, curd, cucumber** are some of the ingredients that can work wonders on your skin. In summer season, exfoliate at least thrice a week to remove dead skin and improve blood circulation.
- **Moisturize:** It is necessary to moisturise your skin before you step out in the searing sun. This will keep your skin hydrated and prevent it from becoming dry and scaly.
  - Apply a light and non-greasy moisturiser after you step out from a shower and before applying sunscreen. Follow this procedure in the night.
- **Balanced diet:** It is not just water that helps you to stay hydrated; indulging in fresh fruits, leafy vegetables and salads help as well. Eat the right food to nourish your skin and stay fit during summer. Avoid boiling or steaming vegetables for too long, as this will reduce their water content.



## FOOD CORNER

# Nawabi Pulao

## Ingredients

- 1/2 kg chicken
- 1/4 kg mutton
- 1/2 kg rice
- 1 cup curd, well beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 3 onions
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup green peas, shelled
- 1 pod arlic
- 1 big piece of ginger
- 1 tsp rose water
- Ghee or oil for frying
- Salt to taste



## Method

- Clean and wash rice and soak it in water for 15 minutes.
- Cook the rice till half done. Keep aside. 3. Clean

and cut the mutton into cubes. Joint the chicken. Boil the eggs and keep aside.

- Slice the onions. Grind ginger and garlic to a paste.
- Heat ghee in a frying pan, add onions, ginger-garlic paste and fry well.
- Add the jointed chicken and fry. Add 3 cups of water and salt to taste and cook on slow fire till the meat is tender and only 1/3 of the gravy is left.
- Add some more ghee and the well beaten curd. Cook on a slow fire until the curd gets absorbed.
- Add 1 tsp of rose water after the meat has cooled.
- Take a heavy bottomed pan and arrange alternate layers of rice and cooked meat taking care that the first and last layers are that of rice.
- Place in an oven and cook for about 15-20 minutes on low heat.
- Garnish with fried onions, quartered boiled eggs and boiled green peas.



# 10 best fruits to support your heart health, boost immunity

Eating sweet and refreshing fruits is a delightful way to beat the heat in summer. A storehouse of important vitamins and minerals, fruits can replenish energy levels and fill you with energy on hot summer days. Fruits are also heart-healthy and promote cardiovascular wellness. Eating fruits like oranges, apples, bananas and berries can benefit your heart and aid in reducing cholesterol levels.

Eating these fruits is a flavourful way to nourish your heart and promote cardiovascular wellness.

## Berries

Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and blackberries are packed with antioxidants called flavonoids, which can help lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease.

## Oranges

The citrus fruits are rich in vitamin C, potassium, and fibre, all of which are beneficial for heart health. Potassium helps regulate blood pressure, while fibre aids in reducing cholesterol levels.

## Apples

They contain soluble fibre, which can help lower cholesterol levels. They are also rich in antioxidants and flavonoids, which may reduce the risk of heart disease.

## Bananas

They are an excellent source of potassium, which plays a key role in maintaining heart health by helping to regulate blood pressure. They are also low in sodium,



which is important for heart health.

## Avocados

They are packed with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, which can help lower bad cholesterol levels (LDL) and raise good cholesterol levels (HDL). They also contain potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure.

## Grapes

Grapes, particularly red and purple varieties, contain antioxidants called polyphenols, which have been shown to improve heart health by reducing inflammation and preventing blood clots.

## Pomegranates

They are rich in antioxidants, particularly punicalagins and anthocyanins, which can help protect the heart by reducing inflammation and improving cholesterol levels.

Source: HT



## Alcohol-based mouthwash may not be good for your oral health: Study

Commonly used alcohol-based mouthwashes may have adverse effects on oral microbiomes—the community of bacteria that live in the mouth—raising risks of periodontal diseases and some cancers, according to a study.

The oral microbiome plays a role in digestion and keeps the mouth healthy.

The research, published in the Journal of Medical Microbiology, included men who have sex with men, who regularly use mouthwash as a method to reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.

Three months of daily use of the alcohol-based mouthwash increased the amount of two species of opportunistic bacteria—Fusobacterium nucleatum and Streptococcus anginosus—in the mouth of these men, said the team from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp in Belgium.

The two bacteria are known to raise the risk of gum disease, and oesophageal and colorectal cancers.

Further, the researchers also observed a decrease in a bacteria group called Actinobacteria—crucial for regulating blood pressure.

"Alcohol-based mouthwashes are widely available. The public may use them daily to tackle bad breath or prevent periodontitis, but they should be aware of the potential implications. Ideally, long-term usage should be guided by healthcare professionals," said Jolein Laumen, from ITM's Unit of Sexually Transmitted Infections.

The researchers also called for larger studies to establish the risk.

Source: IANS

## Low-dose aspirin eases inflammation caused by sleep loss: Study

A recent study discovered that low-dose acetylsalicylic acid, popularly known as aspirin, can attenuate inflammatory responses to sleep deprivation. Study is to be presented at the SLEEP 2024 annual meeting.

The results suggest that prior treatment of low-dose aspirin during sleep restriction lowered pro-inflammatory responses compared to a placebo. Aspirin specifically reduced interleukin-6 expression, COX-1/COX-2 double positive cells in lipopolysaccharide-stimulated monocytes, and C-reactive protein serum levels.

"The novelty of this study is that it investigated whether we can pharmacologically reduce the inflammatory consequences of sleep restriction," said lead author Larissa Engert, who has a doctorate in behavioral physiology and is a postdoctoral fellow in the department of neurology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and the division of sleep medicine at Harvard Medical School in Boston. "We used a non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drug because it has been shown to affect specific inflammatory pathways, which were previously shown to be dysregulated by experimental sleep restriction or sleep disturbances."

The researchers collected data from 46 healthy adults in a randomized placebo-controlled crossover trial with three protocols - sleep restriction/aspirin, sleep



restriction/placebo, and control sleep/placebo - each consisting of a 14-day at-home phase followed by an 11-day in-hospital stay. In the sleep restriction/aspirin condition, participants took low-dose aspirin during the at-home phase and in-hospital stay. Each in-hospital stay started with two nights of an eight-hour sleep opportunity. Then, under the sleep restriction conditions, participants were exposed to five nights of a four-hour sleep opportunity, followed by three nights of recovery sleep. The control sleep condition provided an eight-hour sleep opportunity throughout the in-hospital stay. Sleep and immunologic measures were assessed at baseline and various points throughout the study.

Source: ANI

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### DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



**DR. SATISH ANAND**  
Former Chairman, Board of Trustees, AAPI National  
E-Mail: sanandmd@gmail.com

**GITANJLI ANAND**  
Former President, India Association of Long Island (IALI)  
E-mail: gitanjlianand@gmail.com



## Meta Verified for WhatsApp Business now available in India

Meta recently announced it is rolling out the Meta Verified program for WhatsApp Business users in India, Brazil, Indonesia and Colombia. Launched in September last year for WhatsApp Business, the verification was limited to Instagram and Facebook users until now.

Similar to Instagram and Facebook, merchants who subscribe to the Meta Verified subscription service will get the verified badge along with impersonation protection if they share their business details with the company. Moreover, verified businesses can also get a dedicated WhatsApp channel for marketing purposes.

WhatsApp Business users who purchase the subscription can also log in to their account from multiple devices and even create a custom web page with their business details which can be shared with customers and vendors. The company is also working on a new feature that allows people to call WhatsApp Business users using APIs. The functionality works as a customer support number and eliminates the need to share or use a personal phone number. It looks like the company is also working on new tools which will let AI respond to the most common questions users ask business owners. Meta said they plan to charge companies for the feature but did not disclose details on how much it will cost.

## Meta's WhatsApp launches new AI tools for businesses

Meta launched its first AI-driven ad targeting program for businesses on WhatsApp, as it tries to wring revenue out of the popular chat service, the company announced on Thursday at a conference in Brazil.

CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced the new tools in a video which was exhibited during the event.

The announcement marks a shift for WhatsApp, an encrypted messaging service that heavily touts its privacy credentials and has long eschewed the types of targeted advertising tools that underpin Meta's other apps, like Facebook and Instagram.

The social media giant has been introducing commerce and payment features on the app for several years, including "business messaging" tools companies can use to conduct customer service chats and send marketing materials to people who have shared their phone numbers with the companies.

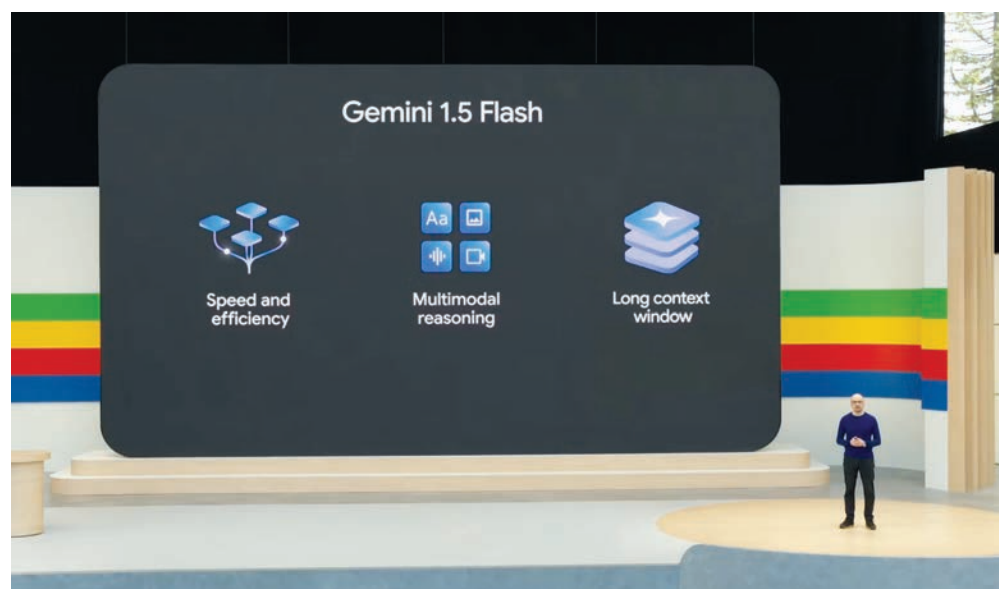
# Google's NotebookLM now powered by Gemini 1.5 Pro

Google has introduced a slew of features to its AI research and writing assistant NotebookLM. The upgraded version of the tool is powered by Google's most capable model Gemini 1.5 Pro. With the latest upgrade, the tool will now be available across 200 countries and territories around the world.

"Our goal from the beginning with NotebookLM has been to create a tool to help you understand and explore complex material, make new connections from information, and get to your first draft faster. You can upload sources — your research notes, interview transcripts, corporate documents — and instantly NotebookLM becomes an expert in the material that matters most to you," said Steven Johnson and Raiza Martin from Google Labs, in a blog post introducing the new upgrades.

### What's new in NotebookLM?

With the latest upgrade, NotebookLM now supports Google Slides and web URLs as sources along with Google Docs, PDFs, and text files. When it comes to inline citations, users will now be taken directly to supporting passages in their sources. This makes it easy to fact-check the AI response or dive deeper into the original text. Besides, the Notebook Guide gives you a high-level understanding of sources by converting them into useful formats like FAQs, Briefing Docs, or Study Guides. Owing to Gemini 1.5 Pro's native multimodal capabilities, users can now ask questions



about images, charts, and diagrams in Slides or Docs. NotebookLM will also include citations to images as supporting evidence whenever relevant.

When asked about the accuracy and reliability of citations, Martin said that NotebookLM generates citations for all its answers and it always cites the sources for every piece of information provided, ensuring that the answers are based on the sources one uploads.

"For instance, if you upload a source that contains information A, B, or C, any related questions you ask will pull answers directly from that source. To verify the credibility of the sources used, NotebookLM constantly monitors the quality of the answers. It performs checks to ensure that the answers are grounded in the uploaded sources.

Additionally, quality is closely monitored whenever new features or upgrades are released or when new models are introduced to ensure there are no losses in quality," Raiza told indianexpress.com.

When it comes to privacy and security of the source's data and processes, NotebookLM ensures this by adhering to Google's standard data protection practices. "Notably, NotebookLM does not train on any user data, ensuring that your data remains private. This privacy guarantee is particularly important for users who wish to use NotebookLM with sensitive work or school documents. Safeguards are in place to protect user information, maintaining confidentiality and security at all times," Raiza said.

Source: The Indian Express

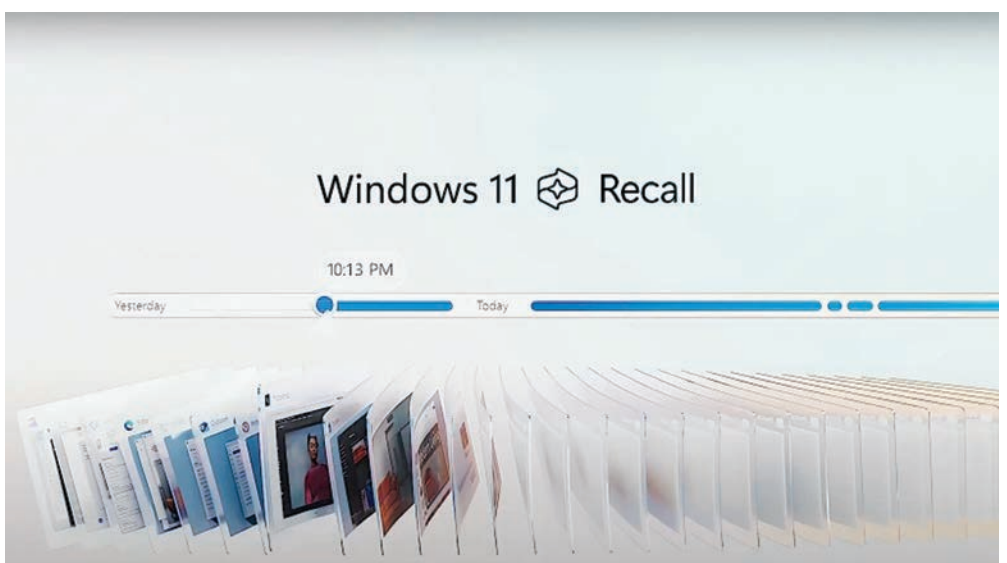
## Windows 11 Recall feature hacked ahead of launch

With Microsoft hyping the Windows 11 AI-powered Recall feature, earlier this week a security researcher who previously worked for the tech giant called it a 'security disaster.'

The feature takes a screenshot of everything you do on your PC and makes all of your past actions searchable. This may look great at first, but a security expert claims it stores data including passwords and card numbers in a plain text SQLite database.

Now, a developer named Alexander Hagenah has published a Python script that "copies the databases and screenshots and then parses the database for potentially interesting artifacts." This means threat actors can automate the process of extracting passwords and other sensitive information and get away with it. Since the tool can be used to look for terms like "password" from the database and takes little to no time and does not break any encryption, it might allow hackers to steal all your information in mere seconds.

While Microsoft has repeatedly



claimed that all Recall data is private and cannot be accessed by anyone other than the user; several security exploits that allow unauthorised users to get access to the database how come to light. The tech giant also claimed that threat actors will need physical access to your machine if they want to steal your passwords but malware might soon evolve to evade

detection techniques.

For those not in the loop, the upcoming Windows 11 Recall will be limited to Copilot Plus PCs coming later this month, but the same security expert who called it a 'security disaster' claims that he was able to use it on a PC without an NPU, which Microsoft says is a prerequisite for Recall to work.





## RBI maintains status quo for 8th time in a row

The Reserve Bank of India on Friday, June 7, decided to keep the policy rate unchanged for the eighth time in a row, saying it will maintain a tight vigil on inflation.

The rate increase cycle was paused in April last year after six consecutive rate hikes, aggregating to 250 basis points since May 2022.

Announcing the second bi-monthly monetary policy for the current financial year, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent.

He said MPC will remain watchful of elevated food inflation amid the expectation of a normal monsoon.

The RBI raised the growth projection to 7.2 per cent from an earlier estimate of 7 per cent for the current financial year.

The government has mandated the RBI to ensure CPI inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

In a bid to bolster the safety and security of digital payments and enhance regulatory frameworks, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) unveiled a series of proposals aimed at fostering innovation, inclusivity, and efficiency in the financial ecosystem.

These initiatives, announced by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, signify the central bank's commitment to fortifying India's digital infrastructure and promoting a conducive environment for financial transactions.

One of the key announcements made by Governor Das pertained to the establishment of a Digital Payments Intelligence Platform.

This platform, leveraging advanced technologies, aims to mitigate payment fraud risks and enhance the safety of digital transactions.

According to the annual report released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on May 30, there was a significant surge in the number of financial frauds reported by banks, increasing by 166 per cent year-on-year in the financial year 2023-24 to reach 36,075 cases.

This figure starkly contrasts with the 13,564 cases reported in the previous fiscal year, FY23.

# \$3 trillion: Nvidia beats Apple to be 2nd most valued company

## SANTA CLARA (TIP)

Nvidia Corporation, the world's most valuable semiconductor company, has now become the first computer-chip firm to hit a \$3 trillion market capitalisation, as per a Bloomberg report.

The Santa Clara, California-based company's shares have surged roughly 147 per cent this year, adding about \$1.8 trillion due to the increasing demand for its chips that power artificial intelligence (AI) tasks.

On June 5 (US local time), shares rose by 5.2 per cent to close at a record \$1,224.40, pushing the chip maker's market value above \$3 trillion, surpassing Apple Inc. in the process.

The last time Nvidia's value exceeded Apple's was in 2002, five years before the first iPhone's release. Back then, both companies were valued at less than \$10 billion each.

## Future Plans and Generative AI

Nvidia shows no signs of slowing down. Chief Executive Officer Jensen Huang announced that the company plans to upgrade its AI accelerators annually. Wednesday's stock surge increased Huang's wealth by more than \$5 billion, bringing his total to \$107.4 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.

Huang described the rise of generative AI as a new industrial revolution, expecting Nvidia to play a significant role as technology shifts to personal computers. During a keynote address at National Taiwan University, he highlighted the company's pivotal



**AI chipmaker's stock has surged 147% so far in 2024, underscoring shift in tech world as demand for its processors far outstrip supply.**

role in this transformation.

Senior equity analyst at CFRA Research, Angelo Zino, told Bloomberg he sees this development as just the beginning, citing improved visibility and greater momentum in GPU, CPU, and networking as drivers for consensus estimate upside.

## Impact on the Tech Industry

Nvidia has benefited immensely from a surge in AI spending, propelling the company into a race to become the

world's most valuable company. Although it still trails Microsoft Corp. by market value, Wall Street analysts believe it is only a matter of time before Nvidia overtakes it.

Conversely, Apple has faced challenges this year, with its shares pressured by concerns over declining iPhone demand in China and a fine from the European Union. Despite this, Apple shares have recently turned positive for 2024 as investor sentiment slowly improves.

## White collar hiring improving on rise in demand from oil and gas, banking, FMCG sectors: Report

### MUMBAI (TIP)

White collar hiring has begun improving steadily on the back of major sectors like oil and gas, banking and FMCG, a report said.

Hiring activity grew by 6 per cent in May compared to April driven by sectors like healthcare and travel and hospitality, according to the report.

White collar hiring, however, was down by 2 per cent compared to the same month last year.

Most sectors reported mid-single-digit growths, however, decline in hiring in IT (0 per cent YoY), BPO (3 per cent) and education (5 per cent) dragged down the overall Naukri JobSpeak Index, it stated.

Major sectors such as oil and gas (14 per cent), banking (12 per cent) and FMCG (17 per cent) notched up healthy growth, while healthcare and travel and hospitality, each showcased a robust 8 per cent growth, said the report.

Smaller cities continued to outperform major metropolitan areas, and there was



notable demand for senior professionals, contributing to a healthy year-on-year growth in opportunities for experienced candidates, it added.

"The consistent job growth in the AI-ML domain stands out as a major positive and signals that the Indian economy and its talent pool is well aligned with the global tailwind on AI. Moreover, despite the May index staying within 2 per cent of 2023 base, we saw healthy growth in most Non-IT sectors, cementing our job market's diversified footprint further,"

Naukri.com chief business officer Pawan Goyal said.

The report further revealed that the hiring in mini-metros continued to outpace major metropolitan areas.

This trend highlights the growing economic vibrancy and employment opportunities in smaller urban centres, driven by factors such as urbanisation, infrastructure development, and decentralisation of economic activities, it stated.

Non-metro cities like Surat (23 per cent) and Raipur (22 per cent) emerged as hiring hotspots, while metro cities like Delhi-NCR, Chennai, and Hyderabad witnessed stable hiring trends with a slight improvement in the hiring trend in Pune, it added.

Meanwhile, the report stated that the demand for experienced professionals remained high, with roles for candidates with over 16 years of experience clocking a remarkable 23 per cent surge in hiring activity.



# Sikh History This Week

## JUNE 7 TO JUNE 13

### 7th June



1864 Maharaja Dalip Singh married Miss Bamba in Alexandria, Egypt.

1984 GurSikhs from rural Punjab march to defend Sri Darbar Sahib despite the heavy presence of armed forces.

1984 Operation Bluestar: Sikh soldiers rebellion. Several Sikh soldiers killed. Thousands of the Sikh soldiers arrested. The shocks of operation Bluestar were not limited to Amritsar and Punjab. As Sikh soldiers learned of this sacrilege of Sri Darbar Sahib, they anguise resulted in rebellions at several places. However, these rebellions were suppressed, several Sikh soldiers killed and thousands of the Sikh soldiers arrested.

1984 Destruction of Sikh Reference Library by Indian Armed forces. The army deliberately set fire to the Sikh Reference Library. Valuable archives and material of significant historical importance were destroyed in this fire. This was yet another extremely sad incident. The army claims that the library caught fire during crossfire. However, according to Government of India's White Paper, the library caught fire because the militants were firing homemade grenades after using a match. Please note, that the exact date on this event is on question.

### 8th June

1924 Waryam Singh of Dhugga was killed at Chak No. 54, district Lyallpur.

1956 Gian Singh Rarewala announced his intention to join Congress.

1981 Secret meeting of Akali Dal where strong opinions were expressed for Khalsitan.

1984 Operation Woodrose started. Sikh youth from villages picked up and eliminated. MacCarthy style witch hunt led to killing of hundreds of Sikhs and arrest of thousands of Sikhs.

1984 Giani Zail Singh, President of India, visits Darbar Sahib after Indian Army's assault there.

1984 Khushwant Singh returned his "Padam Sri" in protest of Indian army's attack on Darbar Sahib.

### 9 June



1716 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and select Sikhs were tortured to death under orders of Badshah Farukhsiyar. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was offered

life on embracing Islam. After his refusal, his son was murdered before his eyes. The child's heart was thrust into Banada Singh's mouth. Then his right eye was pulled out followed by the pulling out of his left eye. Then his left foot was chopped off, next to were his arms. Then his flesh was cut off bit by bit. His brain was struck with a hammer. So was Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, along with his infant son and a few select followers, was mercilessly tortured to death in Delhi by the order of Emperor Farukh Siyar (successor to Bahadur Shah). The remaining Sikhs were beheaded on June 10, 1716.

1946 Punjab board established.

1946 Sikhs rejected Cabinet Mission proposals.

1949 Hindu members of the Panjab University opposed Punjabi as a medium of instruction.

### 10th June

1716 Remaining Sikhs captured with Baba Banda Singh Bahadur were beheaded.



1746 Lakhpat Rai killed more than 10,000 Sikhs. This is known as "Chhota Ghalughara", small carnage. Over 10,000 Sikhs out of a total population of 15,000 were killed. This disaster goes by the name of "chhota ghalughara", small holocaust (as against the great holocaust of 1762). After the 1745, Sarbat Khalsa resolution, Sikhs attacked Lahore one evening and decamped with a large booty. Yahya Khan who had taken over as Governor asked Diwan Lakhpat Rai to displace the Sikhs from the nearby swamp hounds. One of the units led by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia on the way to the hills clashed with his younger brother Jaspat Rai and chopped of his head. Lakhpat Rai now in rage vowed to erase the Sikhs from the pages of history. Lakhpat Rai with the help of the provincial forces fell upon the Sikhs concentrated in the marshes of Kahnuwan on Ravi. Some cut their way through hostile hillmen to Kiratpur. The main body turned back and after heavy losses crossed the Bease and the Sutlej into Malwa. 7000 Sikhs were killed, and another 3000 taken prisoners were executed at Nakhas, horse market. In March of 1747, Yahya Khan, the Governor of Lahore, was ousted by his brother Shah Nawaz Khan and Lakhpat Rai was put in prison.

1842 During midnight, at the instance of Dhian Singh Dogra, Maharani Chand Kaur's skull was crushed with grindstone by her maids who themselves were put to death later in the day.

1896 Death of Attar Singh Bhadaur.

1957 Vir Singh passed away.

1974 Giani Kartar Singh, an Akali Leader died at Patiala.

1978 Nirankari Gurbachan Singh declared apostate by Akal Takht. A Hukamnan was issued to the Sikhs for social boycott of the Nirankari Mafia organization by Akal Takht.

### 11th June

1595 Prakash Utsav, Sixth Patshah, Guru Hargobind Ji.



1982 Kulwant Singh Nagoke killed in fake encounter. This murder marked the beginning of the era of fake encounters.

1982 15 Birs of Sri Guru Granth Sahib were burned at village Makha, district Bathinda.

1984 Dal Khalsa announced its Government in Exile.

1984 Dawinder Singh Garcha, an Congress(I) member for Ludhiana, resigned his position in protest of Indian Army's attack on Darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

### 12th June

1985 Jathaedar Pritam Singh Gojran demanded the formation of sovereign Sikh State.

1960 The Sikh procession in connection with Punjabi Suba agitation was fired upon at Delhi. Sardar Harbans Singh and three others accepted shahadat.

1984 Badal and Surjit Singh Barnala arrested under Indian Security act.

1984 Sikh Soldier riots erupted at 6 places and count reach over 1000.

1984 Firing can be clearly heard in the broadcast of Hukam from darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

The broadcast of Darbar Sahib program from Amritsar, also relayed the gun-fire while Head Granthi Sahib, Giani Sahib Singh Ji was reading the day's Hukam.

### 13th June

1647 Pir Budhu Shah was born. BUDHU SHAH: a Sadhora (district Ambala) resident muslim Pir (holy man). His real name was Sayed Shah Badrudin. He had enrolled 500 Pathans in service of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Patshah. The four chiefs of these Pathans were Kala Khan, Bhikan Khan, Nijabat Khan, and Hayat Khan. Only Kala Khan turned out to be trustworthy, who did not betray Guru Sahib's trust. The remaining three chiefs simply abandoned Guru Sahib during the Bhangani battle and joined the enemy forces.

1886 Khalsa Akhbar newspaper in Gurmukhi started in Lahore.

1940 Udhm Singh of Sunam was sentenced to death for avenging the killings of Jallianwala Bagh by killing Sir Michael O' Dwyer in London.

1984 Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan announced a government in exile.







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**BEJAN DARUWALLA AND  
CHIRAG DARUWALLA**

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JUNE 10 TO JUNE 16, 2024

**By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla**



### ARIES

Ganesha says this week is going to be good for you. Will get support from family. Family members will be seen working together. Married people will seem happy with their spouse, but for some reason, there will be tension between them. There will be financial benefits from ancestral property. Today you will create a budget and manage all your expenses. Time is good for higher education. Luck will favor you. You will also get opportunities for education from abroad. You will spend some time with the children. Take blessings by touching your mother's feet. You can also invest in a new property, which will give you huge benefits in the future. To improve your health, you will include morning walks, yoga, and meditation in your daily routine.



### TAURUS

Ganesha says this week is going to be good for you. Your love life will be better. There will be some tension in domestic life, but you will be successful in eliminating it with your wisdom. If you want to invest in property then this is a good time. You will achieve success in the field of education. Time is good for higher education. It would be better for employed people to continue at their old jobs. People doing business will be successful in taking the business forward by implementing new plans for the business. Health will gradually improve. In case of any problem, it will be better for you if you consult a good doctor. Expenses will be more. You will also spend on travel. The economic situation will remain strong. All the family members will together plan a trip to some religious place.



### GEMINI

Ganesha says this week is going to be very good. Will get support from family. You will be seen planning to travel somewhere with your family. You will also spend some time in religious programs for your mental peace. With the help of a distant relative, the obstacles in your brother's marriage will be removed. An auspicious program will be organized at home. Everyone in the



### CANCER

Ganesha says people with the Cancer zodiac sign will look very happy this week. There will be happiness and peace in family life. Today you will recognize the importance of your spouse and take care of their happiness. People living a love life will be able to meet their beloved and express their feelings. You will achieve success in the field of education. Time is good for higher education. If you are participating in any competition then you may have to work hard. The economic situation will remain strong. Will be confused about a job change. There will be an increase in business. Your health will be good. To keep yourself fresh, include morning walks and yoga in your daily routine. There will be financial benefits from the property. You can invest your money somewhere, which will give you benefits in the future.



### LEO

Ganesha says people living a love life will get the support of their lover. Some good relationships will come for unmarried people. You will be successful in the field of education, but you will have to stay away from your friends who waste your time. People who are working should not run after a new job, it would be better if they stick to their old job. You will get many opportunities in this. You will get a chance to meet very big people in business. If you make some changes in your health, you will see improvement. Your financial condition will be good. You can invest in land. If you want to buy a new vehicle, you can buy it, but it will be better for you if you do all the work keeping your expenses in mind.



### VIRGO

Ganesha says this week will get support from family members. You will learn a lot from your family members, which will be useful in your future. The economic situation will remain strong. Besides, the expenses will also be higher. You will go on a romantic dinner with your spouse. Single people can find their

desired life partner. Auspicious programs will be organized in the family. Will also do some shopping for home decoration. You will get help from some good people in taking the business forward. Your hard work in the field of education will bear fruit. Will get success in competition. People working will do their assigned work with full hard work. Will get support from officials. Will plan to go to some religious place with the family, where everyone will look very happy. You can invest in property.



### LIBRA

Ganesha says people of the Libra zodiac sign will not feel anything special this week. There will be some kind of discord in the family. Due to the harshness of speech, there will be discord in love life also. To improve your health, you will have to change your daily routine. Time is good for higher education. You will get a chance to go abroad and get an education. Your financial condition will be good. You will be successful in returning everyone's money. You will get income opportunities through friends. The efforts you were making to expand your business will be successful. There will be opportunities for promotion in the job. This week you can invest in land. If you are planning to buy a house or plot, you will get success in that also.



### SCORPIO

Ganesha says this week, Scorpio people will get their desired work completed, which they have been wanting to do for a long time. You will get support from friends. You will also plan to travel somewhere with friends, which may involve higher expenses. You will get a promotion in your job. You will also get success in taking your business forward. There can be talk of relationships between unmarried people. Worship will be organized at home. Maintain sweetness of speech while talking to officials. Be careful about your health. There will be some tension in domestic life. The financial situation will be good. There will be an increase in income and your expenses will also be considerable. You will do some shopping for yourself and your family. You will achieve success in the field of education. Time is good for higher education. One can go from one city to another to get an education.



### SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says this week, people with the Sagittarius zodiac sign

will do some important work, which they were not able to do for a long time. You will spend loving moments with your spouse and start some new work, in which your spouse will fully support you. Your love life will be better. Health will improve. You will succeed only by working hard in the field of education. The economic situation will remain strong. A working person will hear good news from officials. You can invest in land. You will also get the pleasure of a new vehicle. Will invest money in the education of brothers and sisters. Avoid investing in the stock market. Will get support from family. You will get the company of your mother.



### CAPRICORN

Ganesha says this week you will have to take great care of your relationships and relationships. Interference from an outsider may result in discord. Spend time with family, and plan a trip somewhere. The economic situation will improve. Daily income will increase. You may face some difficulty in getting an education. Time is good for higher education. The obstacles coming in the way of the brother's marriage will be removed. An auspicious program will be organized at home. Everyone will go shopping together. There will be an atmosphere of happiness due to the arrival of a new guest in the family. Today your friends will also help you with money. Take the help of a good advisor for investment. Health will improve. A new job offer will also come. Your brother will help you in furthering your business.



### AQUARIUS

Ganesha says you will spend some time with family and learn to save money, which will be very useful in the future. You will get success after hard work in the field of education. You have to stay away from such friends. Those who waste your time. The economic situation will be strong. You can buy a new house. You will also get the pleasure of a new vehicle. Married life will be full of happiness. Your love life will be better. There will be a chance to do business with foreign countries. There will be opportunities for promotion in the job. There can be talk of relationships among bachelors.



### PISCES

Ganesha says this week you will feel very energetic, due to which you will complete all

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## BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JUNE 10 TO JUNE 16 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

### JUNE 10

Ganesha says the new relationships you forge today will be long-lasting. Returns on past investments can be lucrative, and you can overcome past emotional issues related to your aging. Today you can expect to earn money from your passion project. Stress and tension can lead to minor health problems. You should contact someone influential today who has the potential to significantly change your outlook and personality.

### JUNE 11

Ganesha says new relationships and alliances can be formed today. You may be in a good position and your abilities may give you better opportunities. You and your partner should plan to go on long trips and spend many happy moments together soon. Health concerns of a family member may require regular medical care today. During this time your income can increase and you can invest wisely. Your main ally can be your husband.

### JUNE 12

Ganesha says today is a day of happiness for you. Especially due to the encouragement you get from loved ones and friends, today you can see a tremendous jump in your confidence. In the later days, some people may get a promotion, and a change of place may also happen. A situation of stress and anxiety can arise regarding the health of the parents. Avoid money transactions with friends and family to avoid future troubles. You are spending on entertainment and luxuries may increase with the increase in income. It is advisable to make new investments as there may be gains from previous investments.

### JUNE 13

Ganesha says you can use your knowledge, experience, and skills in an important presentation today. You may be motivated more by fame and fortune than by monetary gain. However, your salary may be substantial and you may also make some significant investments. Major features today include new buildings, refurbishment, and socialization. You

may be inclined to plan your foreign trip.

### JUNE 14

Ganesha says today you can meet new people, which can benefit your career. Even in a position of ownership, your partner can be supportive and helpful. Minor health issues including back pain, stiff neck, and body aches can often cause problems during the day so be sure to take some time to rest. Apart from this, you can experience unexpected progress in your career. If you go out and join clubs and other social events, you can be quite successful socially.

### JUNE 15

Ganesha says your employer may appreciate your confidence and enthusiasm today. Many tasks that you previously considered impossible may be possible to accomplish. New contacts can bring financial benefits for you today. Small domestic disputes and worries may bother you. Be sure to take extra care of your health by watching what you eat. Going on a picnic or meeting up with friends can



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA**

be enjoyable and intellectually stimulating. Friends and family can give you encouragement and support today.

### JUNE 16

Ganesha says today people at the workplace can be impressed by your charisma and communication skills. Although there may be an increase in your salary, saving money can be quite challenging for you today due to your excessive expenses. If you want to reach your goals, you should not let anything stand in the way of your career aspirations. The elders and children of the house may require a lot of your attention today.

**Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at [www.bejandaruwalla.com](http://www.bejandaruwalla.com) [info@bejandaruwalla.com](mailto:info@bejandaruwalla.com) ; +91 81412 34275**

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your pending tasks. You will express your feelings to your lover and spend some time together; will get support from family. The ongoing distance with your spouse will reduce. The economic situation will improve. Your superiors at your job will praise your work. You will be successful in business also. There will be an opportunity to import and export from foreign countries also. You will get good news from friends. Health will improve. You will achieve success in the field of education. A lot of hard work will have to be done in preparing for the government paper. Time is good for higher education. Can invest in the stock market. You will do some shopping for the decoration of your home.

### Author Bio

Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website [chiragdaruwalla.com](http://chiragdaruwalla.com). **He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: [info@chiragdaruwalla.com](mailto:info@chiragdaruwalla.com)**

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# Kamda Saptami Vrat



**K**amda Saptami Vrat has special significance in astrology. Kamda Saptami Vrat is completely dedicated to the sun. In the scriptures, this fast has been considered special to fulfillment. This faster to fulfill the wishes is fast throughout the year. This fast is done to each Shukla Saptami and every four months should be passed in every four months.

It is believed that by doing this fast, health, wealth, child and reputation are received. Brahma ji had told the glory and importance of Kamda Vrat Lord Vishnu.

Kamada Saptami Vrat is an important Hindu festival that is celebrated on the seventh day of the Chaitra month, according to the Hindu calendar. This day is dedicated to Lord Surya, the Hindu god of the Sun. The festival is also known as Chaitra Shukla Saptami, and it is believed that observing a fast on this day can bring good health and prosperity. According to Hindu mythology, the festival has a special significance as it is said that Lord Surya blesses his devotees and removes all their sins on this day. The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm in many parts of India, particularly in North India. It is an important day for Hindus, and observing Kamada Saptami Vrat is considered a way of showing devotion to Lord Surya and seeking his blessings.

## Story of Lord Shiva and Kamada Ekadashi

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Shiva once narrated the story of Kamada Ekadashi to Goddess Parvati.

It is said that a pious and virtuous woman named Kamada observed the Kamada Ekadashi vrat with utmost devotion and dedication.

She prayed to Lord Vishnu to bless her husband with good health, wealth and prosperity.

Her prayers were answered and her husband was blessed with all the good things in life.

Since then, Kamada Ekadashi is celebrated every year as a day of penance and devotion toward Lord Vishnu.

## Significance

Lord Satyanarayan and Lord Venkateshwara are considered the presiding deities of Kamada Saptami Vrat.

Lord Satyanarayan is believed to be the incarnation of Lord Vishnu and is worshipped for wealth, prosperity and happiness.

Lord Venkateshwara is another form of Lord Vishnu and is considered the lord of wealth and prosperity.

## Symbolic representation of Kamada Saptami Vrat

Kamada Saptami Vrat is observed on the seventh day of the Chaitra month (March-April) according to the Hindu calendar.

It is believed that observing this vrat with devotion and dedication can help one attain peace, prosperity, and happiness.

The vrat is observed by fasting and performing various rituals and puja.

It is also believed that observing Kamada Saptami Vrat can help in getting rid of sins and negative karma.

## Preparations for the festival

- Cleaning and decorating of the house and the temple
- Making offerings to Lord Vishnu or Lord Satyanarayan
- Preparing special food items for the fast

## Rituals and traditions observed during the festival

- Devotees wake up early in the morning, take a bath and dress in clean clothes
- They offer prayers to Lord Vishnu or Lord Satyanarayan and recite mantras and shlokas
- Fasting is observed by the devotees, and some choose to eat only fruits or drink only water
- Devotees offer flowers, fruits and other items to the deity
- In some regions, people take a dip in the holy river or perform charity work

## Important information

**Shukla Paksha Saptami**

**Thursday, 13 June 2024**

**Saptami Starts: 12 June 2024 at 07:17 pm**

**Saptami Ends: 13 June 2024 at 09:33 pm**

**Did you know : Kamda Saptami Vrat is done to each Shukla Saptami and every four months should be passed in every four months.**

## Importance of fasting

- Fasting is believed to purify the body and mind, and help the devotee focus on the spiritual aspect of the festival
- It is seen as a way to express devotion and gratitude to the deity
- Some devotees also fast to seek blessings for their family, friends, and loved ones
- The fast is broken in the evening after performing the aarti and offering food to the deity.

The festival is associated with several Hindu mythological stories and legends.

One of the most popular stories is the tale of Lord Shiva and Kamada Ekadashi, which marks the beginning of the Kamada Saptami Vrat.

Another story involves Lord Satyanarayan, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and how he helped a poor Brahmin overcome his troubles.

## Spiritual and religious significance

Kamada Saptami Vrat is considered an important festival in Hinduism and is observed with great reverence and devotion.

It is believed that observing the fast and performing the rituals during the festival can help in fulfilling one's wishes and desires.

The festival is also seen as an opportunity to seek the

**“Everyone thinks how to become a better son or daughter, mother or father, brother or sister, husband or wife, and man or woman. But no one puts actual thoughts on that they are all HUMAN and how to become a better HUMAN. What can we do to learn how to be a better human? ”**

**-- Arish K Sahani**

blessings of the gods and goddesses and to cleanse one's mind and body of impurities.

## Role of Vrat in promoting devotion and self-discipline

- Fasting during Kamada Saptami Vrat is seen as a way of purifying oneself and showing devotion to the gods and goddesses.
- The festival is also seen as an opportunity to practice self-discipline and to strengthen one's willpower.
- By observing the fast and performing the rituals with sincerity and dedication, devotees aim to deepen their spiritual connection with the divine and to improve their overall well-being.

In conclusion, Kamada Saptami Vrat is a significant Hindu festival that is celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm. The festival has both historical and mythological significance and it is an important part of Hindu culture and tradition. Through the festival, people not only seek the blessings of Lord Shiva and other deities but also strive to cultivate virtues such as self-discipline, devotion, and compassion. In today's modern world, the festival holds great relevance as it reminds us of our cultural heritage and the importance of preserving it. It is essential to continue celebrating festivals like Kamada Saptami Vrat to keep our traditions and culture alive for future generations. Let us strive to maintain the sanctity of this festival and promote cultural diversity and harmony.

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**“If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it?”**

**“If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it?”**

**“Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one.”**



**Saturday June 15, 2024**



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# Sikh History This Week

## JUNE 7 TO JUNE 13

### 7th June



1864 Maharaja Dalip Singh married Miss Bamba in Alexandria, Egypt.

1984 GurSikhs from rural Punjab march to defend Sri Darbar Sahib despite the heavy presence of armed forces.

1984 Operation Bluestar: Sikh soldiers rebellion. Several Sikh soldiers killed. Thousands of the Sikh soldiers arrested. The shocks of operation Bluestar were not limited to Amritsar and Punjab. As Sikh soldiers learned of this sacrilege of Sri Darbar Sahib, they anguise resulted in rebellions at several places. However, these rebellions were suppressed, several Sikh soldiers killed and thousands of the Sikh soldiers arrested.

1984 Destruction of Sikh Reference Library by Indian Armed forces. The army deliberately set fire to the Sikh Reference Library. Valuable archives and material of significant historical importance were destroyed in this fire. This was yet another extremely sad incident. The army claims that the library caught fire during crossfire. However, according to Government of India's White Paper, the library caught fire because the militants were firing homemade grenades after using a match. Please note, that the exact date on this event is on question.

### 8th June

1924 Waryam Singh of Dhugga was killed at Chak No. 54, district Lyallpur.

1956 Gian Singh Rarewala announced his intention to join Congress.

1981 Secret meeting of Akali Dal where strong opinions were expressed for Khalsitan.

1984 Operation Woodrose started. Sikh youth from villages picked up and eliminated. MacCarthy style witch hunt led to killing of hundreds of Sikhs and arrest of thousands of Sikhs.

1984 Giani Zail Singh, President of India, visits Darbar Sahib after Indian Army's assault there.

1984 Khushwant Singh returned his "Padam Sri" in protest of Indian army's attack on Darbar Sahib.

### 9 June



1716 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and select Sikhs were tortured to death under orders of Badshah Farukhsiyar. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was offered

life on embracing Islam. After his refusal, his son was murdered before his eyes. The child's heart was thrust into Banada Singh's mouth. Then his right eye was pulled out followed by the pulling out of his left eye. Then his left foot was chopped off, next to his arms. Then his flesh was cut off bit by bit. His brain was struck with a hammer. So was Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, along with his infant son and a few select followers, was mercilessly tortured to death in Delhi by the order of Emperor Farukh Siyar (successor to Bahadur Shah). The remaining Sikhs were beheaded on June 10, 1716.

1946 Punjab board established.

1946 Sikhs rejected Cabinet Mission proposals.

1949 Hindu members of the Panjab University opposed Punjabi as a medium of instruction.

### 10th June

1716 Remaining Sikhs captured with Baba Banda Singh Bahadur were beheaded.



1746 Lakhpat Rai killed more than 10,000 Sikhs. This is known as "Chhota Ghallughara", small carnage. Over 10,000 Sikhs out of a total population of 15,000 were killed. This disaster goes by the name of "chhota ghalughara", small holocaust (as against the great holocaust of 1762). After the 1745, Sarbat Khalsa resolution, Sikhs attacked Lahore one evening and decamped with a large booty. Yahya Khan who had taken over as Governor asked Diwan Lakhpat Rai to displace the Sikhs from the nearby swamp hounds. One of the units led by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia on the way to the hills clashed with his younger brother Jaspat Rai and chopped off his head. Lakhpat Rai now in rage vowed to erase the Sikhs from the pages of history. Lakhpat Rai with the help of the provincial forces fell upon the Sikhs concentrated in the marshes of Kahnawan on Ravi. Some cut their way through hostile hillmen to Kiratpur. The main body turned back and after heavy losses crossed the Beas and the Sutlej into Malwa. 7000 Sikhs were killed, and another 3000 taken prisoners were executed at Nakhas, horse market. In March of 1747, Yahya Khan, the Governor of Lahore, was ousted by his brother Shah Nawaz Khan and Lakhpat Rai was put in prison.

1842 During midnight, at the instance of Dhian Singh Dogra, Maharani Chand Kaur's skull was crushed with grindstone by her maids who themselves were put to death later in the day.

1896 Death of Attar Singh Bhadaur.

1957 Vir Singh passed away.

1974 Giani Kartar Singh, an Akali Leader died at Patiala.

1978 Nirankari Gurbachan Singh declared apostate by Akal Takht. A Hukamnan was issued to the Sikhs for social boycott of the Nirankari Mafia organization by Akal Takht.

### 11th June

1595 Prakash Utsav, Sixth Patshah, Guru Hargobind Ji.



1982 Kulwant Singh Nagoke killed in fake encounter. This murder marked the beginning of the era of fake encounters.

1982 15 Birs of Sri Guru Granth Sahib were burned at village Makha, district Bathinda.

1984 Dal Khalsa announced its Government in Exile.

1984 Dawinder Singh Garcha, an Congress(I) member for Ludhiana, resigned his position in protest of Indian Army's attack on Darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

### 12th June

1985 Jathedar Pritam Singh Gojran demanded the formation of sovereign Sikh State.

1960 The Sikh procession in connection with Punjabi Suba agitation was fired upon at Delhi. Sardar Harbans Singh and three others accepted shahadat.

1984 Badal and Surjit Singh Barnala arrested under Indian Security act.

1984 Sikh Soldier riots erupted at 6 places and count reach over 1000.

1984 Firing can be clearly heard in the broadcast of Hukam from darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

The broadcast of Darbar Sahib program from Amritsar, also relayed the gun-fire while Head Granthi Sahib, Giani Sahib Singh Ji was reading the day's Hukam.

### 13th June

1647 Pir Budhu Shah was born. BUDHU SHAH: a Sadhora (district Ambala) resident muslim Pir (holy man). His real name was Sayed Shah Badrudin. He had enrolled 500 Pathans in service of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Patshah. The four chiefs of these Pathans were Kala Khan, Bhikan Khan, Nijabat Khan, and Hayat Khan. Only Kala Khan turned out to be trustworthy, who did not betray Guru Sahib's trust. The remaining three chiefs simply abandoned Guru Sahib during the Bhangani battle and joined the enemy forces.

1886 Khalsa Akhbar newspaper in Gurmukhi started in Lahore.

1940 Udhham Singh of Sunam was sentenced to death for avenging the killings of Jallianwala Bagh by killing Sir Michael O' Dwyer in London.

1984 Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan announced a government in exile.





The only hill station of Rajasthan, Mount Abu is located in the Aravali range. The most important attraction, however, are undoubtedly the Dilwara temples, which is one of the most stunning pieces of architecture in the country. Travellers can enjoy calm and relaxed boating in Nakki Lake, and a view of the sunset from the vista points. The restaurants and eateries around the lake are great places to eat local food and chill. The highest peak of the Aravali Range - Guru Shikhar also lies in Mt. Abu. Mount Abu Forest Sanctuary with an abundance of flora and fauna is also a highlight.

The exceptionally intricate architecture of the Dilwara temples are of course the main attraction here, and you can easily spend hours wondering how these temples were built over 2 centuries, almost 1000 years back. The temples were specifically made so that they are plain from the outside to avoid the attraction of plunderers, and have withstood the test of time extremely well.

#### NAKKI LAKE

Believed to have been dug out by a god using his nails, the sacred Nakki Lake is one of the landmarks of the hill town of Mount Abu. About half a mile long, the lake is deeper towards the dam on the west. Carry your picnic hamper, a book and camera and spend a peaceful afternoon on the banks of the lake. Boat riding is another activity that interests visitors here. A pleasant stroll around the lake will lead you to Toad Rock, a boulder that looks just like a toad about to hop into the lake. The 14th-century Raghunath Temple stands near the lake's southern shore.

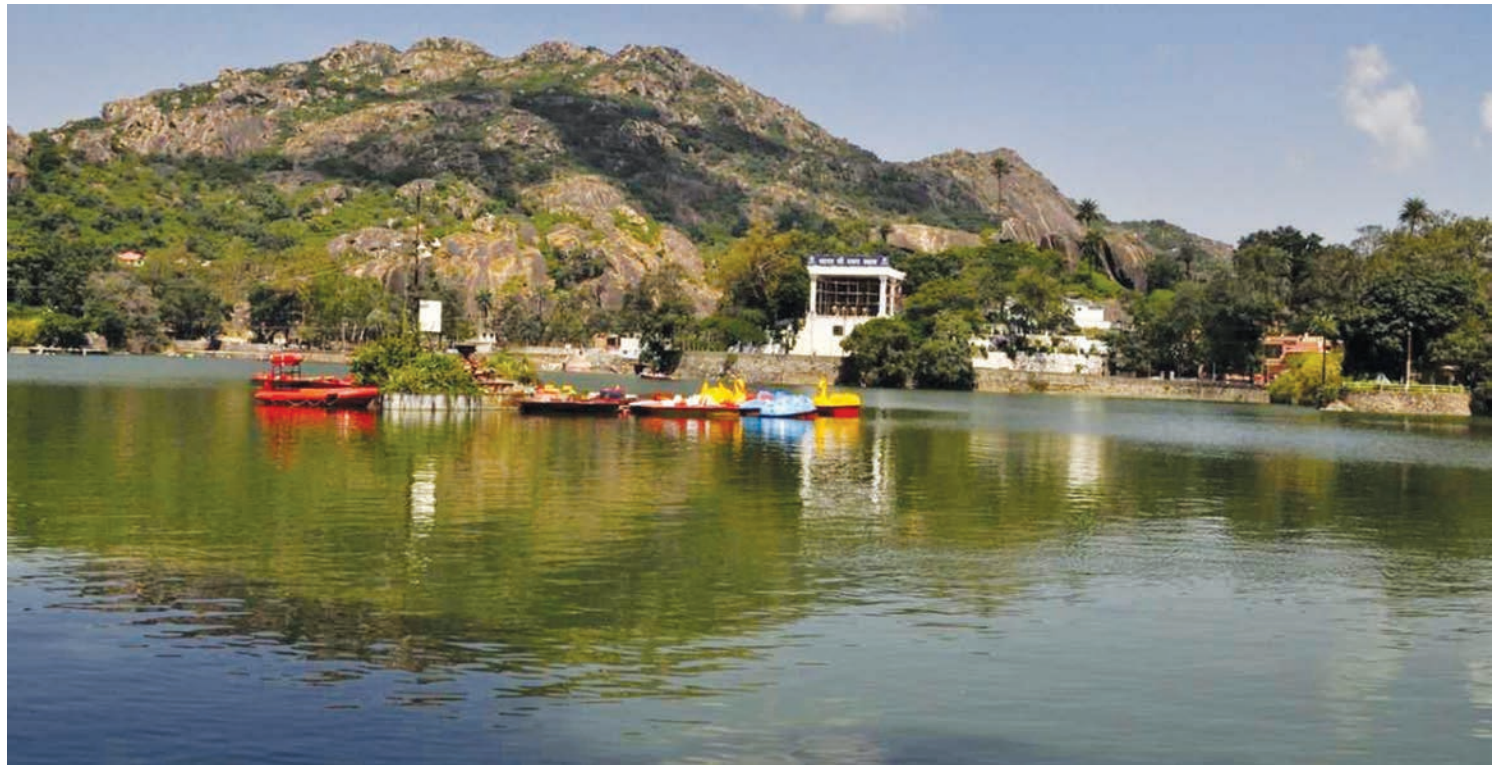
#### ACHALGARH FORT

Bordered by massive walls that enclose a few beautiful temples inside, the Achalgarh Fort offers interesting glimpses of Mewar architecture. Built in the year 1452 by the famous Rajput ruler of Mewar, Rana Kumbha, the fort is situated 11 kms to the north of Mount Abu. Various viewpoints from the fort offer scenic lookouts onto the hill town, the Aravali ranges and the picturesque sunset views.

#### ADHAR DEVI TEMPLE

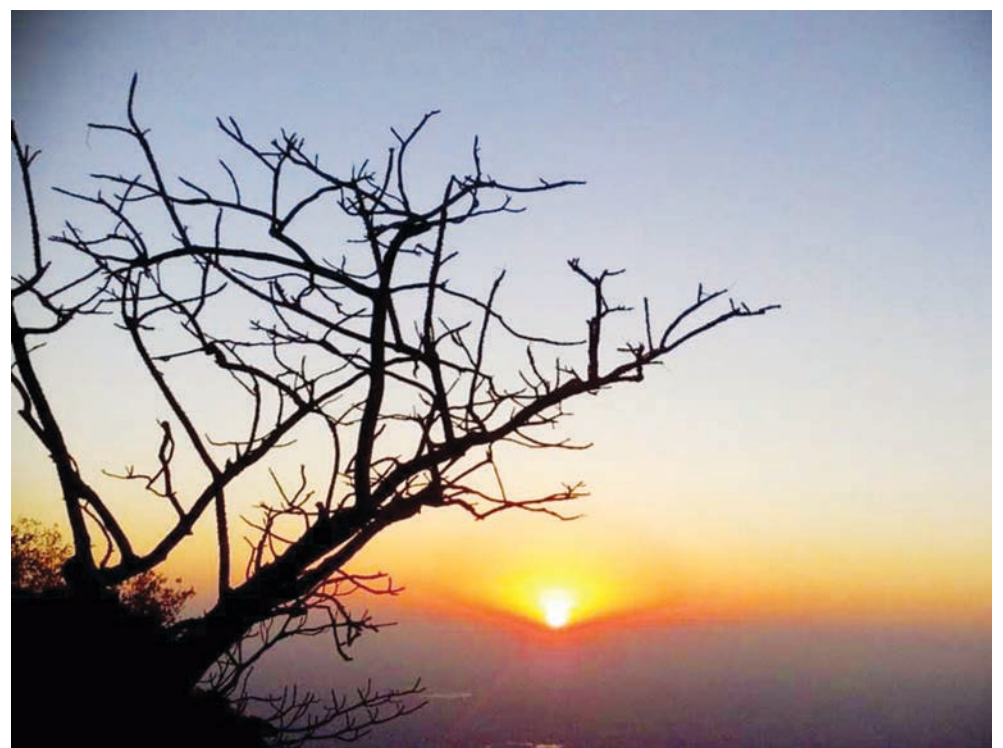
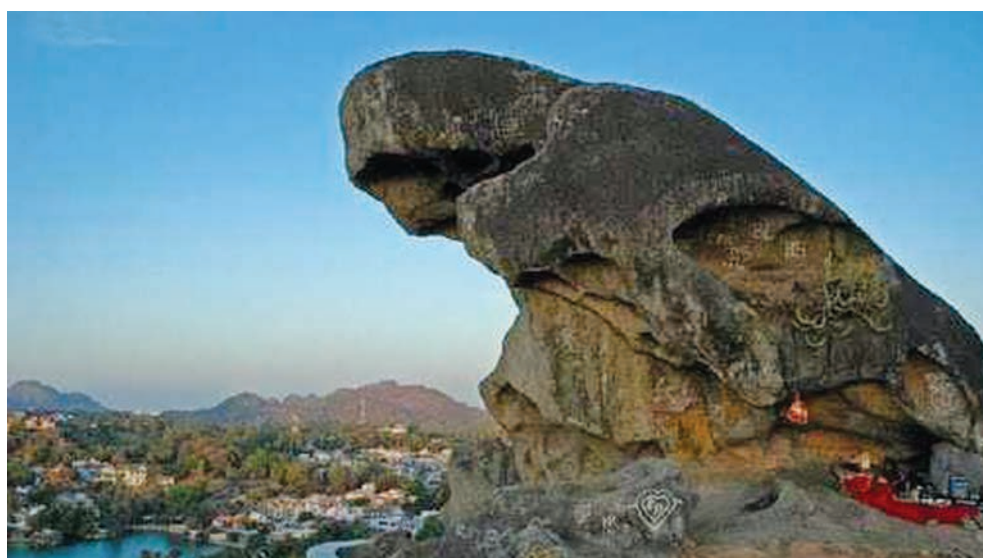
Situated atop a cliff in a cave, a visit to the Adhar Devi Temple, also known as Arbuda Devi Temple requires you to climb 365 steep steps, but the strenuous

# Mount Abu: A beautiful hill station in Rajasthan



journey is worth the effort. Offering a bird-eye-view of the hill-station from the top, the temple is constructed out of a large rock, and visitors have to stoop and crawl to enter the inner shrine. Located 3 km away from Mount Abu, the temple is dedicated to Goddess Durga and is considered as one of the prominent religious spots in the hill town. The temple is visited by hordes of Hindu pilgrims during Navratri, a nine-day Hindu festival that is celebrated with full gusto.

Adhar Devi Temple is quite old and legend has it that 'Adhar' of the Goddess fell here. It is also believed that goddess's image hangs in the mid air. Besides, the temple has a number of gorgeous statues that you can admire and looking at those arts will make you praise the artists from the bygone era. And the view of mountains and forests you get to see after climbing those hundreds of stairs will make you forget all the tiredness and fatigue. It is recommended you wear proper and comfortable clothes and footwear because the climb uphill is really tiring.



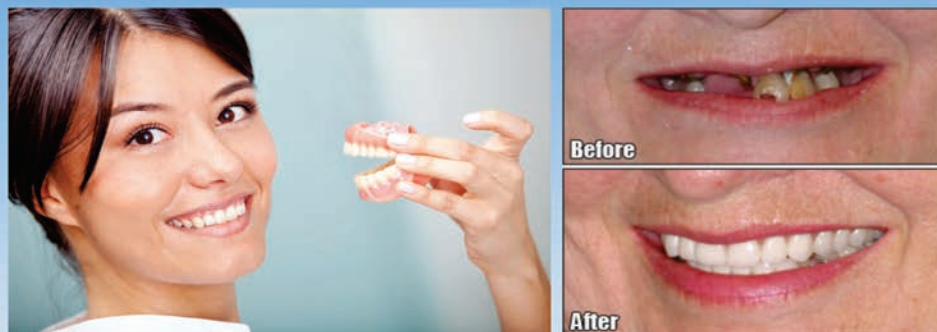


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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

## Narendra Modi to take oath of office of Prime Minister for the third time on June 9

claim to form the government at the Centre for a third consecutive term.

Chosen by BJP-led National Democratic Alliance as their leader to become Prime Minister for the third time, he also said the NDA government in the next 10 years will focus on good governance, development, quality of life and minimum interference in the lives of common citizens.

He said mutual trust was at the core of this alliance and they were committed to principle of 'sarv pantha sambhava' (all sects are equal).

He will take oath for the third time on June 9 at 6 p.m.

## Donald Trump's felony conviction entails inadmissibility to a host of countries including Canada and UK

Here are just five of the over 35 nations that can ban Trump from entry now that he's a felon:

**ISRAEL** : Despite Trump once retweeting someone who referred to him as the "King of Israel" and bragging that he moved the US embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, Trump may not be able to visit the nation now that he's a felon.

Israel reserves the right to refuse entry to anyone with a criminal record, including felonies. Border control forces in Israel have the authority to bar entry for anyone suspected of committing a crime or with a record, and Trump meets both of those qualifiers.

**CANADA** : According to the Canadian government's tourist hub, any "US Citizen or permanent resident that has a felony conviction on their criminal record may be deemed inadmissible to Canada for the purposes of immigrating, or even if they're merely coming to Canada to visit."

Canada even retains the right to bar individuals "arrested or accused of a felony crime ... even though you have not been convicted," meaning Trump would have faced issues visiting the US's northern neighbor the moment he faced charges.

The government notes that "a felony will likely result in inadmissibility."

**JAPAN** : Japan is fairly strict with its immigration and visitation rules, including laws preventing convicted criminals from entry.

Under Japanese law anyone convicted of a violation of "any law of regulation" of any country and who has been sentenced to "imprisonment with or without work for one year or more, or to an equivalent penalty" can be barred from entry.

Japanese law does note that individuals convicted of a "political offence" are not subject to those rules. In Trump's mind, at least, he could qualify to visit under those terms. It's unclear if Japan would buy his version of events.

**UK** : Under UK law, a felon can visit

England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland with some restrictions and requirements in place. However, Britain can bar access to convicted felons.

Unless an "Immigration Officer is satisfied that admission would be justified for strong compassionate reasons," they can refuse access to any convicted felon so long as the crime they committed would also be punishable by imprisonment in the UK.

**CHINA** : China has strict policies when admitting anyone over its borders. Chinese officials conduct character assessments for anyone applying for a visa, and that includes a criminal history check, including felonies.

Even minor offences can get someone barred from entering China, so Mr Trump may not be able to chide the Chinese in person if he were ever so inclined.

### COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES THAT RESTRICT VISITS FROM FELONS

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Dominican Republic  
Egypt, Ethiopia  
India, Indonesia  
Iran, Ireland  
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Kenya  
Malaysia  
Macau  
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Morocco  
Nepal  
New Zealand  
Peru  
Philippines  
Singapore  
South Africa  
South Korea  
Taiwan  
Tanzania  
Tunisia  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Arab Emirates  
United Kingdom

## Boeing's Starliner crew is back after encountering new issues en route

en route to the orbiting laboratory, reports CNN.

This is the first time astronauts have arrived at the space station via a Boeing Starliner spacecraft.

"Nice to be attached to the big city in the sky," Wilmore said after docking was confirmed.

Pressure was equalized between Starliner and the station, and the hatch between the two opened at about 3:46 p.m. ET.

Wilmore and Williams were welcomed with a ringing bell and plenty of hugs from the seven astronauts and cosmonauts already on board. With their arrival, there are now nine people working and living on the ISS.

"I'm not sure we could have gotten a better welcome," Wilmore said during welcoming remarks after the entire

station crew assembled. "We had music. Matt was dancing. It was great. What a wonderful place to be back."

Wilmore shared his thanks "to all of you who got us going and kept us going," including those in NASA mission control, Boeing and United Launch Alliance.

"These organizations are the epitome of teamwork, and it's a blessing and a privilege to be a part of it," he said.

Williams also shared her gratitude to the family and friends who have been with them during the lead-up to launch.

The flight marks only the sixth inaugural journey of a crewed spacecraft in US history, NASA Administrator Bill Nelson noted in a May news conference.

"It started with Mercury, then with Gemini, then with Apollo, the space shuttle, then (SpaceX's) Dragon - and now Starliner," Nelson said.

Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams flew to space for the third time on Wednesday along with a colleague, scripting history as the first members aboard Boeing's Starliner spacecraft to the International Space Station.

Crew Flight Test mission carrying Williams, and Butch Wilmore lifted off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida after multiple delays.

Williams, 58, is the pilot for the flight test while Wilmore, 61, is the commander of the mission.

Williams also made history as the first woman to embark on such a mission. And it won't be her first entry in the history books.

In 2012, during a prior trip to the International Space Station, Williams became the first person to finish a triathlon in space, during which she simulated swimming using a weight-lifting machine and ran on a treadmill while strapped in by a harness so she wouldn't float away.

That came after she ran the Boston Marathon from the space station in 2007.

Williams received her commission as an Ensign in the United States Navy from the United States Naval Academy in May 1987. Williams was selected as an astronaut by NASA in 1998 and is a veteran of two space missions, Expeditions 14/15 in 2006 and 32/33 and 2012.

She served as a flight engineer on Expedition 32 and then commander of Expedition 33.

Boeing's Crew Flight Test mission has been delayed for several years because of setbacks in the spacecraft's development.

Last-minute computer trouble nixed Saturday's launch attempt for Boeing's first astronaut flight, the latest in a string of delays over the years.

It was the second launch attempt. The first try on May 6 was delayed for leak checks and rocket repairs.

With the launch, Boeing became the second private firm able to provide crew transport to and from the ISS, alongside Elon Musk's SpaceX.

## Judge Orders Bannon to Surrender for Prison Term by July 1

that investigated the Jan. 6, 2021,

attack on the Capitol.

Judge Carl J. Nichols, who has overseen the case, allowed him to remain free while he appealed. Last month, however, Mr. Bannon lost the first round of that challenge as a three-judge panel of a federal appeals court in Washington decided that his guilty verdict on charges of ignoring the House committee's demand for his testimony was proper.

Because of the panel's ruling, Judge Nichols said he no longer believed that Mr. Bannon could rightfully continue to postpone serving his sentence.

"I do not feel my original basis for Mr. Bannon's stay exists any longer," he said.

Lawyers for Mr. Bannon have promised to ask the full appeals court to reconsider the panel's decision. And Judge Nichols said that Mr. Bannon would have to start serving his sentence in less than four weeks unless the full appeals court took the case and issued its own ruling to pause the sentence from being enforced.

Judge Nichols's decision seemed to catch Mr. Bannon's lawyer, David Schoen, by surprise, and he approached the podium after it was issued and started arguing with the judge.

Judge Nichols dressed him down.

"One thing I think you need to learn as a lawyer is that when a judge has decided, you do not get up and yell at them," the judge shot back.

After the hearing on Thursday, he remained recalcitrant, declaring that he would challenge his conviction all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary.

Speaking to reporters outside the courthouse, Mr. Bannon sought to portray the case against him as an attack on Mr. Trump and his supporters.

"This is about shutting down the MAGA movement, shutting down grassroots conservatives, shutting down President Trump," he said, adding, "There's nothing that can shut me up."

Mr. Bannon's legal travails could continue after - or even during - his stint in prison.

A couple of months after he was found guilty of contempt of Congress in Washington, state prosecutors in Manhattan accused him of misusing money he helped raise for a group backing Mr. Trump's border wall. In his final hours in office in 2021, Mr. Trump pardoned Mr. Bannon in a separate federal case that focused on similar accusations.

Mr. Bannon's fraud trial is scheduled to take place later this year in the same Manhattan courthouse where Mr. Trump was recently convicted on charges of falsifying business records to cover up a sex scandal that threatened his 2016 run for the presidency.

Another former aide to Mr. Trump is already serving a prison term for refusing to take part in the House committee's wide-ranging investigation into Mr. Trump's efforts to remain in power after losing the 2020 election.

In March, Peter Navarro, who once worked as a trade adviser to Mr. Trump, reported to federal prison in Miami to begin serving his own four-month prison stint after a jury found him guilty of contempt of Congress for ignoring one of the committee's subpoenas.





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# Indian Diaspora holds the limelight in T20 World Cup

SIX OF 20 PARTICIPATING TEAMS ARE REPRESENTED BY INDIAN DIASPORA



BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

After the hosts USA defeated Canada in the opening game of the T20 World Cup in Dallas last weekend, Indian Diaspora continues to hold the limelight in this marquee event. In the second game on the same venue, it was the European challenger, the Netherlands beat Nepal by six wickets, focus continued on players of the Indian origin.

The USA-Canada match saw several players of South Asian origin in action. The second game, too, saw players of Indian origin playing a crucial role in the win for the Dutch.

Though Cricket is a game of British origin, it has, like field hockey, come to be known as a game of the South Asian Diaspora. Six of the 20 teams competing in the first ever T20 World Cup being held on the US soil have players of South Asian descent.

While the USA team is led by Monank Patel, it has several other players of South Asian descent. They include Shayan Jahangir, Jessy Singh, Ali Khan, Nitish Kumar, Saurabh Netravalkar, Nisarg Patel, Harmeet Singh, and Milind Kumar. Contrary to belief that cricket is a new game to the American continent, there has been a long history of this "gentleman game" being played in the continent even before the "Test" cricket was introduced. A three-day match played in New York had seen visiting Canada triumph by 23 runs in 1844. Incidentally the first Test match between Australia and England dates back to 1877, 33 years after the first recorded international game in North America.

Canada is also led by a player of South Asian origin. He is Saad Bin Jaffer who is credited with taking the wicket of Pakistan's star batsman Babar Azam. Other players of Canadian team of South Asian origin include Ravinder Pal Singh, Harsh Thakker, Dilpreet Singh, Navneet Dhaliwal, Pargat Singh, Junaid Siddiqui, Kaleem Sana and Shreyas Movva.

They dominated the high scoring opening game of the tournament, giving the nearly filled Stadium a good return for its money. Good work by players of South Asian Diaspora continued in the second game at Dallas where Vikramjit Singh, while playing for the Netherlands, knocked off 22



runs of the Nepalese attack to help his team win the opener. Teja Nidamanura is another player of Indian origin the Dutch team.

Brief Scores of that game are Nepal 106 (19.2 overs) (Rohit Paudel 35, Karan KC 17, Gulshan Jha 14, Logan van Beek 3/18, Tim Pringle 3/20 and Paul van Meckeren 2/19). The Netherlands 109/4 in 18.4 overs (Max O' Dowd 54 not out, Vikramjit Singh 22, Sybrand Engelbrecht 14, Dipendra Singh Airee 1/6, Sompal Kami 1/18, Abinash 1/29).

Other than the US, Canada and the Netherlands teams, players of South Asian descent are also represented on New Zealand, Oman, and Uganda.

While Rachin Ravindra and leg spinner Ish Sodhi are donning Kiwi colors in the T20 World Cup, four players are in the Oman squad. They are Jatinder Singh, Prajapati Kashayap, Pratik Athawale and Sunny Shrivastav.

Uganda, representing Africa along with South Africa, also has three players of Indian origin in its ranks. They are Ronek Patel, Dinesh Nakarani and Alpesh Ramajani. Former Indian star allrounder Yuvraj Singh is one of the brand ambassadors of the T20 World Cup 2024.

*(Prabhjot Singh is currently in New York covering the T20 World Cup. He is a senior journalist who has the rare felicity of covering sports and political news with equal aplomb. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)*





# When the T20 World Cup matches are played on 'ghost' pitches

By Prabhjot Singh

After incurring few blows, including a hit on the shoulder of its skipper Rohit Sharma, India raced to a comfortable eight-wicket win over Ireland in its T20 World Cup opener at Nassau County Cricket Stadium on Wednesday. Wicketkeeper batsman, Rishabh Pant, who smashed McCarthy's second ball of 13th over to the maximum, to hoist win for the 2007 Cup champions India, had also received a nasty hit on his elbow early in the innings.

These blows apart, players and team officials, are making no secret of their feelings about the variable bounce of the "ghost" or "drop in" pitches on use here at County Cricket Stadium. None of the four innings played on this pitch in the two matches so far, any team would reach the triple figure mark.

In the opener, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 77. Ireland innings folded up for 96. Indian bowlers cannot be denied their due as Hardik Pandya (three for 27), Jaspreet Bumrah (two for 6) and young Arshpreet Singh (two for 30) bowled extremely well on a pitch of uneven bounce. While the Indian batting coach Vikram Rathod said that playing conditions were the same for every team, Indian batsmen have quickly adapted themselves by trying to "control the controllable". He admitted that the "drop in" pitch at Nassau County Cricket Stadium was a "challenging wicket".

Varying are opinions of players and team officials who have had a chance to train or play on this ground.

"Toss is crucial on this ground and we are lucky, we won the toss and bowled first," he said corroborating what the Springboks did in the first game against Sri Lanka. They won the toss and put in their opponents to bat first and bowled them out for 77.

India saw its skipper Rohit Sharma hoisting milestone of completing 1000 T20 runs by clubbing successive balls from Joshua Little to the maximum to reach the mark in style. At that time, he had reached 42 from 33 balls to take India to 64 for one in 9 overs. Earlier, India lost its star batter Virat Kohli caught at third man off Mark Adair for . Rohit retired at 56 putting Rishabh Pant in command who closed the game with a six of McCarthy with eight wickets and 46 balls to spare.

The sheen and glory of the big win has been partially taken away by the pitches, curated in Florida and brought in here the newly fabricated Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, the game's first-of-its-kind modular playing arena that has got mired into controversies, less than a week of its commissioning.

Its uneven bounce and behavior have been worrying teams.



India, after winning the toss, put Ireland into bat first as pacers Arshdeep Singh and Mohammed Siraj exhibited speed and uneven bounce that saw Indian keeper both jumping high and bending low to gather dot balls in the power play. Arshdeep was first to meet with success as he had removed both Adam Balbirnie and Paul Stirling with impressive figures of two for four at one stage. Arshdeep came for severe punishment in his fourth and last over to end with figures of 2 for 30.

Jaspreet Bumrah was virtually unplayable on this unplayable pitch after he came as a first change to end with two for six from three overs,.

Paul Stirling was clueless to a sharply bouncing delivery that crept up from length and led to a top edge. Harry Tector was hit on the gloves by another Arshdeep delivery and shook his fingers in pain. Later, he was dismissed by a Jasprit Bumrah delivery that darted into him, taking an inside edge onto his helmet on the way to the cover fielder.

The uneven and abrupt bounce continued as one of rising deliveries of Arshdeep flew over the head of Benjamin White.

Great Little Master Sunil Gavaskar, who is one of the commentators, could not resist saying: "You can see the bounce. The ball is climbing over the stumps. LBWs will be a little difficult."

Determined Ireland batters waged a fight and managed to reach 96 even after being reduced to 50-8 at one stage.



When India came to bat in chase of the winning target of 97, skipper Rohit Sharma had to retire hurt after he was hit on the shoulder by a Josh Little delivery. Rishabh Pant, too, received a blow to his elbow off the same bowler. He needed a check from the physio before resuming.

As I mentioned in one of my previous dispatches, four main pitches and six drop-in surfaces were curated in Florida and transported to New York for the T20 World Cup. Some experts who support drop in pitches hold that it takes time for the surfaces to settle down before it starts supporting both batters and bowlers alike.

It is not pitches alone that have come

under severe criticism. Even outfields, too, have been drawing wrath of some players and officials. Some sandy patches were picked for mention.

Since the match of the tournament - India-Pakistan encounter - is to be played on one of these four "ghost" or "drop in" pitches on June 9, it may also like earlier matches turn out to be a low scoring game to the disappointment of cricket crazy South Asian Diaspora here.

"We want to see action, hits to the maximum and some entertaining cricket and not the ball playing the mischief," remarked a veteran cricketer, Mr Yash Kapoor, who is long settled here.



# USA cause an all-time great upset, defeating Pakistan in super over

By Prabhjot Singh

The USA could not have asked for more. After a winning start in the first-ever T20 World Cup on its soil, the home team continues to produce historic moments as it stunned Pakistan with a splendid nail-biting finish in the super over. Earlier, a boundary of the last ball had helped the home team to extend the game to the super over. The decisive super-over saw the USA batsmen put up 18 runs on the board before taking a wicket and restricting Pakistani batsmen to 13 in one of the major upsets in instant cricket.

Pertinently, the USA had defeated its neighbor and arch-rival Canada in the opener in what was termed the revival of the 188-year-old cricket rivalry between two North American nations.

With two wins from as many matches, the USA now stands at the top of the pool.

Once again, Grand Prairie Stadium has proved lucky for the US team. Two games played at a 7,000-capacity stadium have ended in impressive wins for the hosts.

The USA owes its triumphs - both against Canada and Pakistan today - to kits players of Indian origin as skipper Monank Patel made a well-deserved 50 in a game that saw Pakistan put up 159 for seven. The USA responded well finishing at the same total with a boundary coming off the last ball of their 20 overs innings.

While the USA is playing its first-ever T20 World Cup, Pakistan has reached at least the semi-finals in six of the eight editions of the T20 World Cups, including a runners-up finish in the 2022 edition. But today, it was not the day of one of the Asian cricket giants. They were up against a USA team that did everything right on the day to pull off one of the biggest results in the history of the game.

Pakistan relied on Mohammed Amir for the super over. Three wides and a couple of overthrows saw the home team



put up an impressive score of 18 with Aaron Jones contributing the only boundary in the decisive over. And when Pakistan returned to bat, Netravalkar, also a player of South Asian origin, held his nerve and verve to restrict Pakistan to 13 for one. It was another migrant of South Asian descent, Nitin Kumar, who scored a boundary of the last ball to force the game to the super over.

The match would go down in the annals of US cricket as the most stunning win ever recorded on American soil in this ancient game seeking a comeback.

Chasing 160 for an outright win, the US lost its opener for 12. It brought in

skipper Monank Patel who chipped in with a classy 50 and stood like a rock as the Pakistani bowlers toiled hard to keep the Americans from reaching anywhere near the victory target. He put in 68 with Gaus in a game-changing partnership.

Set 160 to win in regulation time, the USA very nearly won the game in their initial allocated overs as their top order dealt well with a high-caliber Pakistan attack.

Opener Steven Taylor departed for 12 (16) in the final over of the Powerplay, but Monank Patel and Andries Gous put Pakistan on the back foot with a brilliant partnership that moved the tournament co-hosts into treble figures and

seemingly in control of the run chase.

Monank was particularly impressive, hitting a classy half-century to give his side hope, putting on 68 in a crucial stand with Gous.

Now, Pakistan faces India on Sunday. After its shock defeat at the hands of the USA, demand for tickets for the India-Pakistan game has dropped significantly.

Though the ICC stated that all efforts are being made to make the drop in pitches at the Nassau County Cricket Stadium to produce some excellent cricket on Sunday, the US has put a spanner with its superb showing at Dallas, one of two other venues of the T20 World Cup.







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