

THE HISTORIC VICTORY AND BEYOND



by Prof I.S. Saluja

It has been a glorious journey for BJP from 2 seats in Parliament in 1984 to 302, May 23, 2019, as I am writing this comment. Mr. Narendra Modi, the man who made it possible with the magic wand in his hand, recalled the tough journey in his address to the party workers at BJP Headquarters in New Delhi on May 23. And he proudly announced that during the long and tough struggle "we never felt tired, nor stopped, nor submitted". It is the determination to go forward even in the face of the worst circumstances which finally embraces success. Mr. Modi and BJP must be congratulated for the historic victory.

The election is over. And now is the time to fulfill promises made to people. It was all good to have made all kinds of tall claims of achievements to win votes. But now is the time to devote all energies to do the right service to "New India".

Mr. Modi will need to extend himself to achieve the goals he has spoken of in the past. He has admitted there is poverty and it needs to be eradicated. There is unemployment- record highest in 45 years. Mr. Modi has to create jobs for billions of unemployed youth.

It is an achievement for Mr. Modi that rampant corruption seen a few years before is no more visible. But mere absence of corruption is no guarantee for a state of health for the nation and the people. They need jobs, bread and butter, education, healthcare, and above all, security, which unfortunately, is still elusive.

The most important thing that Mr. Modi needs to do is to curb the feudal mindset. And the cleansing of the Augean stables has to begin from his tribe- the politicians. Not going into details in my comment, I will urge Mr. Modi to take a cue from the US and Canada with regard to the wages and the privileges of lawmakers. The whole nation is expecting Mr. Modi to bring about a qualitative and substantive change in the country. The world is looking at the largest democracy in the world to see if the minorities will be able to live in dignity under the BJP rule. Mr. Modi will have to take care to protect the interests of all Indians, whatever their color or creed. We wish Mr. Modi all the best as he prepares to begin his second five-year term as the Prime Minister of India. **Jai Hind!**

A HISTORIC WIN FOR BJP

Modi calls it the Victory of the People of India

I.S. SALUJA

NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP): Modi had said after the Indian Air Force bombed terrorist location in Balakot in Pakistan, "Humne dushman ko ghar mein ghus kar mara hai". It is almost a similar surgical strike we saw within India in the just concluded elections. Modi simply intruded into the territory of the opposition and decimated them. Modi magic which was evidenced in 2014 worked with greater efficacy this time around. But the huge victory for BJP -302 seats- has not resulted in any bravado which was probably expected of Mr. Modi. In the speech he made to the BJP workers, May 23 at BJP Headquarters in New Delhi, Mr. Modi spoke like a statesman, reassuring the nation that BJP owed allegiance to the Constitution **contd on page 32**



"Bahubali" and "Mahanayak" Narendra Modi being welcomed by party leaders at the BJP Headquarters in New Delhi on Thursday, May 23
Photo / Courtesy Sushil Kumar Verma

Wells Fargo, TD Bank turn over Trump financial records to House Dems



President Trump is putting up a determined legal fight to prevent his financial records being handed over to the House committees

The committee, led by Chairwoman Maxine Waters, D-Calif., is one of several panels that have issued subpoenas and requests for Trump's financial files.

contd on Page 32

WASHINGTON (TIP): Wells Fargo and TD Bank have turned over President Trump's financial records to the House Financial Services Committee, Fox News confirmed on Thursday, May 23, amid a contentious legal battle between the Trump administration and congressional Democrats seeking access to sensitive files.

Mayor de Blasio Directs Ad Money to Community and Ethnic Media

City agencies directed to spend at least 50 percent of their annual print and digital publication advertising budget toward community and ethnic media outlets

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Mayor de Blasio signed an executive order, Wednesday, May 22, mandating all city agencies spend at least 50 percent of their annual print and digital publication advertising in community and ethnic media outlets. The Executive Order becomes effective beginning in Fiscal Year 2020. Since Mayor de Blasio came into office, **contd on page 32**



Mayor de Blasio announcing the executive order Wednesday, May 22.
Photo / NYC Mayor's Office

Indian American Indicted in Puerto Rico for Wire and Bank Fraud Scheme

DALLAS, TX (TIP): On May 15, 2019, a Federal grand jury returned a 34-count indictment charging Gopalkrishna Pai, of Euless, Texas, and previously residing in Puerto Rico, with conspiracy to commit wire and bank fraud, 19 counts of wire fraud, five counts of aggravated identity theft, and nine counts of money laundering, announced Rosa Emilia Rodríguez-Vélez, U.S. Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico.

The indictment alleges that from in or about May 2014, through in or about October

2018, defendant Gopalkrishna Pai conspired, devised, and engaged in a scheme to defraud merchant processors and others by submitting false information and falsified documentation to create merchant accounts in the name of Straw Companies, to process credit card and electronic payments, and to receive a substantial financial benefit. The fraudulent scheme employed by Gopalkrishna Pai disguised his involvement and use of over 100 companies formed to facilitate the

processing of approximately \$98 million in gross revenue in online retail sales.

As a part of the conspiracy, defendant Gopalkrishna Pai owned and operated F9 Advertising LLC a for profit limited liability company organized in Puerto Rico in May 2014 and registered under the Export Services Act, Puerto Rico Act 20 of 2012. F9 engaged in the sale of personal care products, including skin creams, via the internet utilizing a negative option marketing model. Negative option

marketing is a category of commercial transactions in which sellers interpret a customer's failure to take an affirmative action, either to reject an offer or cancel an agreement, as assent to be charged for goods or services.

This fraud scheme and conspiracy generated approximately \$98 million in total revenue, processed based on materially false information, through the Merchant Processors in the names of the Straw Companies. **(Source: DOJ)**

ANDHRA PICKS JAGAN REDDY, CHANDRABABU NAIDU DECIMATED

NEW DELHI (TIP): Andhra Pradesh has given a sweeping mandate to YSR Jaganmohan Reddy for both state and the Centre, practically decimating Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party. Mr Reddy, the chief of the YSR Congress, is leading in 141 of the state's 175 assembly seats and all 25 of its Lok Sabha seats. While Mr Naidu is yet to concede defeat, leaders in Mr Reddy's camp said he is likely to take oath on May 30.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party, which ruled the state since the bifurcation of Telangana in 2014, is unlikely to win a single Lok Sabha seat. In the assembly, he is likely to be reduced to 26 seats. One seat may go to the BJP.

Forty-six-year-old Jaganmohan Reddy is the son of YS Rajasekhara Reddy, one of the state's most popular Chief Ministers who died in a chopper crash in 2009. Jaganmohan Reddy, who inherited his father's supporters, still had to make his mark at the head of a new party formed in 2011. The moment came during his two foot marches - the last one over the special status for Andhra Pradesh, undertaken last year.

YV Subba Reddy, Reddy's uncle and a senior party leader, said, "Full credit to Jagan for the 3648-km padyatra, during which Jagan interacted with over one crore people". It was Jaganmohan



Reddy's push for the Special Status for Andhra Pradesh that's said to be at the bottom of Chandrababu Naidu's move to part company with the BJP and join the opposition camp.

In view of Reddy's record-breaking padyatras, there were questions why the Chief Minister, despite being closer to the Centre, could not get the Special Category status promised to Andhra Pradesh during the bifurcation of Telangana.

Counting of votes started this morning for the 543 seats of the Lok Sabha. Early leads show Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's BJP has crossed 300 seats.

Exit polls have predicted that the BJP will retain power with a comfortable majority. Twelve of 14 exit polls predicted that the NDA will get full majority with seats ranging from 282 to 365. An aggregate of exit polls predicted the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) will win 302 seats and the Congress and its allies 122.

A party or an alliance needs 271 seats to form the government, as the elections were held on 542 of the 543 Lok Sabha seats.

BJP MAKES CLEAN SWEEP IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

SHIMLA (TIP): The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday made a clean sweep in Himachal Pradesh with its candidates winning all the four Lok Sabha seats -- Shimla, Kangra, Mandi and Hamirpur -- in the hill state with record margins in the range of over three lakh votes each and securing up to 72 percent of the polled vote share.

The four victorious BJP candidates included sitting MPs, Anurag Thakur and Ram Swaroop Sharma, who won Hamirpur and Mandi Lok Sabha seats respectively.

The two other victorious candidates included two party MLAs Suresh Kashyap and Kishan Kapoor, who bagged Shimla and Kangra seats respectively.

All four won their respective seats with record margins in the range of three lakh votes each, making their victories historical.

The three-term MP and son of former state Chief Minister Prem Kumar Dhumal, Anurag Thakur retained his Hamirpur seat, defeating his nearest rival Ram Lal Thakur of Congress with a record margin of 3,99,572 votes.

Anurag Thakur, also a former president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) polled 6,82,692 votes against 2,83,120, secured by his rival Ram Lal Thakur.

The polled vote share of the BJP in Hamirpur reached 69.04 per cent against the Congress's 28.63 per cent.

The BJP's sitting Mandi MP Ram Swaroop Sharma too retained his seat, defeating his nearest rival Aashray Sharma of Congress by a margin of 4,05,459 votes.

Ram Swaroop Sharma, who had won from Mandi in 2014 by defeating former Chief Minister Virbhadr Singh's wife Pratibha Singh by 39,856 votes, retained the seat this time by defeating former Union Minister Sukh Ram's grandson Aashray Sharma, who could get only 2,41,730 votes against 6,47,189 votes secured by the sitting MP.

The polled vote share of the BJP in Mandi reached 68.75 per cent against the Congress's 25.68 percent.

BJP MLA Suresh Kashyap from Pachhad won the Shimla seat defeating Dhani Ram Shandil by a margin of 3,27,515 votes. While Suresh Kashyap polled 6,06,183 votes, Shandil managed to secure only 2,78,668. All other four candidates of the Shimla seat lost their deposits.

Congress finds saving grace in Punjab

CHANDIGARH (TIP): Congress has won eight parliamentary seats in Punjab, bucking the pro-Modi trend seen across northern and central India in this general election.

Out of the total 13 seats in the state, Congress romped home to impressive victory on eight seats, surprising both the SAD-BJP combine and the Aam Aadmi Party and improving its tally from three in 2014. It had won Gurdaspur in a bypoll in 2017.

The Akali Dal-BJP alliance won on four seats and the AAP one (Punjab AAP chief Bhagwant Mann retained his Sangrur seat).

SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal, Bollywood actor Sunny Deol, Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal, former Union ministers Manish Tewari and Preneet Kaur, and Ravneet Singh Bittu were among the prominent leaders who won in Punjab.

Major upsets in the poll outcome were Union minister and BJP nominee Hardeep Singh Puri, Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar and SAD candidate Prem Singh Chandumajra.

Akali Dal managed to win only two seats against four it pocketed in last general election.

BJP won Hoshiarpur and Gurdaspur but failed again to break the "jinx" of not winning Amritsar.

AAP appeared routed from Punjab, leading on only one seat out of the 13 it contested. It had surprised many in 2014 Lok Sabha election when it had won four seats in the state.

In 2014 polls, while the SAD-BJP combine had won six seats, AAP and Congress had



Congress candidate from Patiala seat and chief minister Amarinder Singh's wife Preneet Kaur flashes the victory sign.

bagged four and three seats, respectively.

Since the counting of votes began 8 am, Congress continuously maintained lead in the eight constituencies it finally won Amritsar, Faridkot, Anandpur Sahib, Jalandhar, Khadoor Sahib, Ludhiana, Fatehgarh Sahib and Patiala.

Punjab Chief Minister and Congress leader Amarinder Singh's wife and two-time MP Preneet Kaur defeated SAD candidate Surjit Singh Rakhra by 1.62 lakh votes in Patiala.

The party's Manish Tewari won from Anandpur Sahib by trouncing veteran Akali

leader Prem Singh Chandumajra by more than 46,000 votes.

Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal and his wife and Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal were the only SAD candidates who won their respective Ferozepur and Bathinda seats, both considered the party's stronghold.

Former deputy chief minister Sukhbir Badal fought against turncoat and Congress candidate Sher Singh Ghubaya and defeated him with a margin of over 1.98 lakh votes.

Harsimrat Kaur was re-elected from

Bathinda for the third time, defeating Congress candidate Amrinder Singh Raja Warring with a margin of 21,772 votes. A major highlight of the poll outcome was BJP candidate Sunny Deol's win. He wrested Gurdaspur seat from Congress heavyweight Sunil Jakhar by over 82,000 votes.

Ravneet Singh Bittu, a two-time MP and grandson of former chief minister Beant Singh, retained his Ludhiana seat by defeating Lok Insaaf Party nominee Simarjeet Singh Bains by over 76,000 votes.

Winning the majority of constituencies in Punjab, despite a "Modi wave", would strengthen the stature of CM Amarinder Singh who almost singlehandedly rode his party to victory.

The impressive performance by the Congress would also mean voters did not fall for the rival parties' pitch that Amarinder Singh had reneged on his party's poll promises.

The SAD, which was looking to resurrect itself following a backlash over the issue of desecration of religious texts, could manage to win only two seats, out of the 10 it contested.

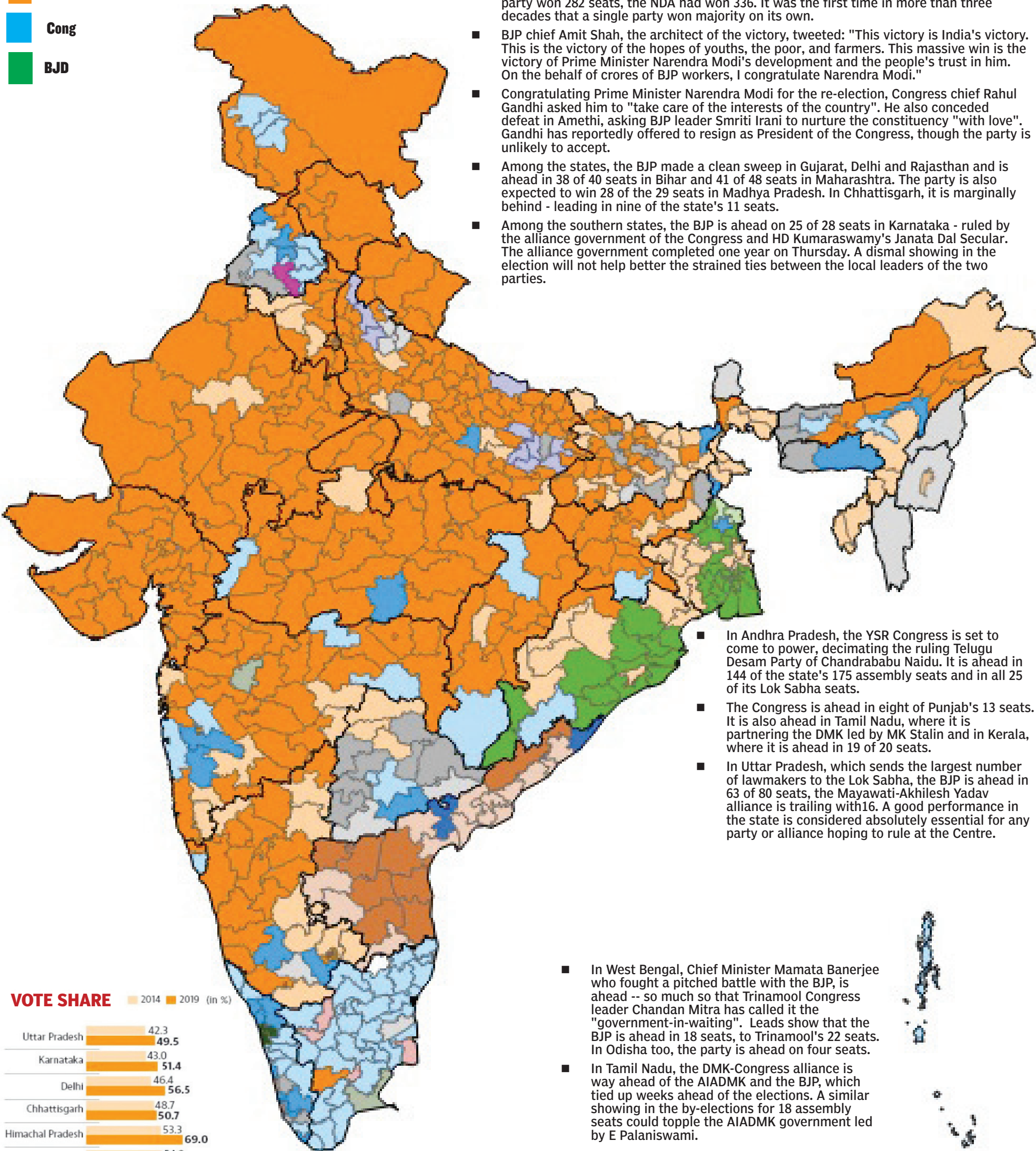
Despite fielding old warhorses from several constituencies, including Jagir Kaur (Khadoor Sahib), Gulzar Singh Ranike (Faridkot), Charanjit Singh Atwal (Jalandhar), Prem Singh Chandumajra (Anandpur Sahib) and Parminder Singh Dhindsa (Sangrur), SAD contestants were badly trailing.

The AAP, in spite of party chief Arvind Kejriwal's extensive campaigning in Punjab, was set to win only Sangrur constituency, from where party's state unit head Bhagwant Mann is contesting, against his rival Kewal Singh Dhillon of the Congress.

TOTAL SWEEP, INDIA CHOOSES MODI 2.0

 **NDA**
 **Cong**
 **BJD**

- The NDA is ahead in 343 of the 542 seats, while the BJP lead has crossed 300. In 2014, the party won 282 seats, the NDA had won 336. It was the first time in more than three decades that a single party won majority on its own.
- BJP chief Amit Shah, the architect of the victory, tweeted: "This victory is India's victory. This is the victory of the hopes of youths, the poor, and farmers. This massive win is the victory of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's development and the people's trust in him. On the behalf of crores of BJP workers, I congratulate Narendra Modi."
- Congratulating Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the re-election, Congress chief Rahul Gandhi asked him to "take care of the interests of the country". He also conceded defeat in Amethi, asking BJP leader Smriti Irani to nurture the constituency "with love". Gandhi has reportedly offered to resign as President of the Congress, though the party is unlikely to accept.
- Among the states, the BJP made a clean sweep in Gujarat, Delhi and Rajasthan and is ahead in 38 of 40 seats in Bihar and 41 of 48 seats in Maharashtra. The party is also expected to win 28 of the 29 seats in Madhya Pradesh. In Chhattisgarh, it is marginally behind - leading in nine of the state's 11 seats.
- Among the southern states, the BJP is ahead on 25 of 28 seats in Karnataka - ruled by the alliance government of the Congress and HD Kumaraswamy's Janata Dal Secular. The alliance government completed one year on Thursday. A dismal showing in the election will not help better the strained ties between the local leaders of the two parties.



VOTE SHARE

	2014	2019 (in %)
Uttar Pradesh	42.3	49.5
Karnataka	43.0	51.4
Delhi	46.4	56.5
Chhattisgarh	48.7	50.7
Himachal Pradesh	53.3	69.0
Madhya Pradesh	54.0	58.0
Rajasthan	54.9	58.5
Uttarakhand	55.3	60.8
Gujarat	59.1	62.2

- In Andhra Pradesh, the YSR Congress is set to come to power, decimating the ruling Telugu Desam Party of Chandrababu Naidu. It is ahead in 144 of the state's 175 assembly seats and in all 25 of its Lok Sabha seats.
- The Congress is ahead in eight of Punjab's 13 seats. It is also ahead in Tamil Nadu, where it is partnering the DMK led by MK Stalin and in Kerala, where it is ahead in 19 of 20 seats.
- In Uttar Pradesh, which sends the largest number of lawmakers to the Lok Sabha, the BJP is ahead in 63 of 80 seats, the Mayawati-Akhilesh Yadav alliance is trailing with 16. A good performance in the state is considered absolutely essential for any party or alliance hoping to rule at the Centre.
- In West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who fought a pitched battle with the BJP, is ahead -- so much so that Trinamool Congress leader Chandan Mitra has called it the "government-in-waiting". Leads show that the BJP is ahead in 18 seats, to Trinamool's 22 seats. In Odisha too, the party is ahead on four seats.
- In Tamil Nadu, the DMK-Congress alliance is way ahead of the AIADMK and the BJP, which tied up weeks ahead of the elections. A similar showing in the by-elections for 18 assembly seats could topple the AIADMK government led by E Palaniswami.

10/10: BJP VICTORY WIPES OUT THREE REGIONAL PARTIES IN HARYANA

CHANDIGARH (TIP): By winning all 10 Lok Sabha seats, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has finally wiped out Congress party in Haryana.

Among the top losers in Haryana are former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda who lost to BJP's Ramesh Chander Kaushik in Sonapat, Kumari Selja of the Congress who was defeated by BJP's Rattan Lal Kataria, Haryana congress chief Dr Kuldeep Tanwar, Shruti Chaudhary and Deepinder Singh Hooda (all Congress nominees).

Bhavya Bishnoi, grandson of Bhajan Lal, is the youngest Congress leader who finished third in Hisar.

Dushyant Chautala of Jannayak Janata Party, who was youngest MP in 2014, was defeated by Brijender Singh of the BJP, the only dynast and son of Union leader Birender Singh who managed to win the election.

The election results have also marked the end of dynastic politics in the state as six dynasts including Bhupinder Singh Hooda, his son Deepinder Singh Hooda, Ajay Chautala's son Dushyant Chautala, Digvijay Chautala, former Haryana chief minister Bansi Lal's daughter Shruti Chaudhary and Bhajan Lal's grandson Bhavya Bishnoi lost elections. "Dynastic politics has ended in Haryana. Opposition parties were taking care of their personal interests than public interests. They have only one vision, to fill their pockets. People



The 2019 Lok Sabha election results wiped out three regional political parties in Haryana, including Loktantar Suraksha Party, formed by former BJP MP Raj Kumar Saini, Indian National Lok Dal and Jannayak Janata Party, formed after INLD split

are fed up with the politics of collusion," Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said.

Besides dynasty politics, the 2019 Lok Sabha election results have also wiped out three regional political parties in Haryana including Loktantar Suraksha Party, formed by former BJP MP Raj Kumar Saini, Indian National Lok Dal and Jannayak Janata Party, formed after

INLD split.

Reacting to the election results, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said that no trust in EVM machines is the illusion from where the opposition should come out. Manohar Lal Khattar said that the opposition was unnecessarily suspecting the EVMS and some even pitched tents outside the strong rooms.

DELHI VOTES FOR BJP

NEW DELHI (TIP): Delhi's voters have often led the way in determining the outcome of the national elections, and this time too, they got it right. The national capital re-elected Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates to all seven Lok Sabha seats, mirroring the landslide national victory of the saffron party on Thursday.

The BJP received 56.5% of the total votes polled in Delhi, which was significantly up from the 46% vote share it got in the 2014 general elections.

The Congress, which had a vote share of 15% in the last parliamentary election, recouped some support, finishing second in five constituencies and polling 22.5% votes across the city.

In contrast, the vote share of the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which had won 67 out of the 70 Delhi assembly seats in 2015, fell from 33% in 2014 to 18.12% in these elections. Delhi's ruling party finished third on five out of seven seats.

While congratulating Prime Minister Narendra Modi for winning a second term, Kejriwal also said he is looking forward to working together in Delhi. "I congratulate Narendra Modi for this historic win and look forward to working together for the betterment of the people of Delhi," he said in a tweet.

"We had fielded very good candidates in Delhi and had done a good campaign. All party workers also had put a lot of hard work. We accept people's mandate. We will keep working for the people of Delhi," he added a tweet in Hindi.

Two BJP candidates -- Parvesh Verma from West Delhi and Hans Raj Hans from North West Delhi -- won with the highest victory margins of over 550,000 in their respective constituencies. "Ye mere mehboob Modi ji ka asar hai [It is my beloved Modi ji's effect]," Hans said outside a counting station. Even the Congress's old guard, which the party fielded in the contest after talks on an alliance with the AAP failed, could not counter the wave in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Three-time chief minister Sheila Dikshit, who fought BJP's sitting MP and state unit president Manoj Tiwari from North East Delhi, lost by 360,000 votes. Former Union minister and Congress's New Delhi candidate Ajay Maken lost by a margin of 250,000 votes to BJP's Meenakshi Lekhi despite his pitch against the ongoing sealing drive targeted at unauthorised construction, invalidation of high-value banknotes in 2016, and the roll-out of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) from July 2017 -- issues the Opposition was hoping would appeal to Delhi voters.

U.S. Chamber Commends PM Modi on His Historic Re-Election

WASHINGTON (TIP): After the landslide victory of BJP in the Lok Sabha election that is bringing Prime Minister Narendra Modi back into office for a second term, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce welcomed the outcome of the largest democratic exercise in history, describing it as 'ushering in an opportunity for global economic and strategic leadership in India.'



Nisha Biswal

Nisha Biswal, President of the U.S.-India Business Council at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said that in 2014, Prime Minister Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party won an election on a platform of development for all and an agenda of robust economic reform. "Over the past five years, we have seen good progress on reforms, which include the establishment of a national Goods and Services Tax, passage of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, and a variety of legal and regulatory reforms which have catapulted India's Ease of Doing Business ranking from 142 to 77. These reforms laid the foundation for India's strong record of economic growth. Still, much remains to be done to unlock the expansive growth potential of the Indian market. With a strong mandate from the Indian people, Prime Minister Modi will have an opportunity to usher in an era of global economic and strategic leadership for India."

"A strong U.S.-India commercial partnership will support these goals, helping India to grow into a \$5 trillion economy in the next five years. USIBC believes that trade and investment between the two countries is a critical element of India's future growth and looks forward to working with Prime Minister Modi and his team to unlock new growth opportunities across the U.S.-India corridor", she further added.

World leaders Congratulate Modi: Great things are in store for US-India partnership, says Trump

World leaders on Thursday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his landslide victory for a second term in office. Congratulatory messages from various parts of the world poured in. While most of them congratulated him over telephone, some leaders took it to social media to extend their greetings.



US President Donald Trump - Congratulations to Prime Minister @NarendraModi and his BJP party on their BIG election victory! Great things are in store for the US-India partnership with the return of PM Modi at the helm. I look forward to continuing our important work together!

Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina - The Prime Minister of Bangladesh had initiated the call to Modi to extend her congratulations on the clear mandate given by the people of India to the NDA Government. In doing so, PM Sheikh Hasina became one of the first foreign

leaders to congratulate the Prime Minister, thus reflecting the extraordinarily close and cordial ties between India and Bangladesh, and the excellent rapport that the two leaders enjoy.

President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V. Putin - Putin called Modi and congratulated him on his victory in the general elections. President Putin expressed his conviction that the Prime Minister would further strengthen the longstanding friendship between the peoples of both countries and enhance the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership that binds the two countries together.

French President Emmanuel Macron - President of France congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi over telephone, describing him as one of the foremost leaders of the democratic world. President Macron reiterated his invitation to Prime Minister Modi to visit France in August 2019 for a bilateral meeting and also to attend the G7 Summit at Biarritz.

Prime Minister of Nepal, K.P. Sharma Oli - K.P. Sharma Oli called Prime Minister Modi and congratulated him on the electoral victory in the Lok Sabha elections.

Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe - Shinzo Abe called Narendra Modi and congratulated him for the resounding

victory of his party in the 2019 General Elections.

Chinese President Xi Jinping - President of People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping sent a letter to Prime Minister Modi congratulating him on the electoral victory of National Democratic Alliance under his leadership. In the letter, President Xi noted the great importance he attached to the development of India-China relations and his desire to work with Prime Minister Modi to take the Closer Development Partnership between the two countries to a new height. President Xi also expressed satisfaction at the strong momentum of development in India-China relations in recent years with the joint efforts of both sides.

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu - Benjamin Netanyahu called his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi to personally congratulate him. "Narendra my friend, congratulation, what an enormous victory. I hope, Narendra, that we can see each other soon, as soon as you form a government and as soon as we form a government," Netanyahu said in a short video clip of the phone call released by the Prime Minister's Office. "Well, thank you for your congratulations on my victory, but there's one difference: You don't need a coalition, I do, and there's a big difference."

HOW OPPOSITION FAILED TO STOP THE MODI WAVE

NEW DELHI (TIP): They came, they met and then they lost the game. The opposition league, which was toying with names such as Secular Democratic Front, failed to dent or stop the Narendra Modi wave. “Today I won’t go into what led to the loss,” said Congress chief Rahul Gandhi. “It is a fight of ideologies and I congratulate Prime Minister Narendra Modi.”

To defeat Modi, Gandhi had agreed to give up several things. He hadn’t insisted on being the opposition’s PM candidate and he let regional leaders Sharad Pawar and Chandrababu Naidu take the lead in stitching the alliance. In the end, it simply wasn’t enough. The Bharatiya Janata Party had successfully conveyed that Gandhi was attempting to flee the threat in Amethi and he lost the seat, which had been with his family for three decades, other than in 1998. After five years of having the Congress at its lowest Lok Sabha tally of 44, Gandhi could only improve the count by less than 10 seats.

The other regional leader to take a hit is Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar. His daughter Supriya Sule managed to hang on to the Baramati family seat, but his nephew Parth Pawar, who was hoping to make his Lok Sabha debut, lost out. While Parth described the results as “shocking”, his uncle termed them “unexpected”, which may be an understatement for the NCP that managed just four seats despite farmers’ distress impacting Maharashtra. In the last few days, Pawar was the man trying



to get allies such as BJD’s Naveen Patnaik on board. Now, it is unclear if Pawar will ever be able to realise his dream of being prime minister.

Prime ministerial ambitions were there for India’s two power women, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee and BSP’s Mayawati. The BJP threatened both by having a gap of just four MPs in Bengal and limiting the grand alliance to 15 seats in Uttar Pradesh, 10 of them for BSP.

“It was too polarised,” said a TMC MP. “We should have made it about Bengal because when we focussed on that in the last phase, we did well.” Banerjee now has two years for the fight in the assembly polls, though the BJP contends that 50 of her MLAs want to quit.

Mayawati too hinted at prime ministerial ambitions, including on the day of voting in Ambedkarnagar, saying

she could even participate in a bypoll. But those dreams of being queen to a coalition will have to wait. Her next decision is whether to ditch her new ally, the Samajwadi Party, and go it alone in the 2022 state elections.

But it is state polls that served a blow to Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu. Having read the signs that Jagan Reddy was about to win his state, he tried to play a role in national coalition politics. Naidu’s party leaders now face the scrutiny of the tax department. A similar fate awaits RJD’s Tejaswi Yadav. Facing CBI cases, Yadav drew a complete blank in Bihar after alliance troubles and dissent within his own family.

The question facing all these leaders -- if they failed to win seats, can they at least prove to be an effective opposition?

Source: HT

BJP’s successes because of greats like him, says Modi after meeting Advani

NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi met BJP patriarch Lal Krishna Advani on Friday, a day after the party’s massive victory in the Lok Sabha election, and acknowledged the senior leader’s contributions in a tweet.

“Called on respected Advani Ji. The BJP’s successes today are possible because greats like him spent decades building the party and providing a fresh ideological narrative to the people,” PM Modi tweeted.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Bharatiya Janata Party’s president Amit Shah to LK Advani’s house. They also went to meet another senior leader of the party — Murli Manohar Joshi later.

Advani, who had exited the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha seat to make space for Amit Shah, had conveyed his congratulatory messages to Modi as it became clear that the BJP was winning the national elections with a massive mandate.

“Heartiest congratulations to Shri Narendrabhai Modi for steering the BJP towards this unprecedented victory in the elections,” said a statement issued by Advani.

The senior leader had also acknowledged the key role played by Amit Shah in steering the BJP to the win.

“Shri Amitbhai Shah as the BJP President and all the dedicated workers of the party have put in enormous effort in making sure that the message of BJP reaches every voter of the country,” Advani said in the statement.

He further said it was a wonderful feeling that in a country as large and diverse as India, the poll process was successfully completed and complimented the voters and all the agencies involved in it.

“May our great nation be blessed with a bright future ahead,” the former deputy prime minister, who represented Gandhinagar in Lok Sabha since 1991, added.

Source: HT



PM Modi seeking blessings from veteran BJP leaders Lk Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi (right) after landslide victory in the Lok Sabha elections.

Seeking blessings from Joshi, Modi said, “Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi is a scholar and intellectual par excellence. His contribution towards improving Indian education is remarkable. He has always worked to strengthen the BJP and mentor several Karyakartas, including me.”



Rahul offers to resign as Cong chief after humiliating loss

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday offered to resign as Congress chief after a humiliating Lok Sabha loss that saw him lose even his stronghold of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh.

Sources told India Today TV that Gandhi told a group of senior Congress leaders including his mother Sonia that he takes full responsibility for the election defeat and that he is willing to resign as the party’s president.

However, Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala denied the reports of Rahul Gandhi offering to resign.

Sources also indicated that the Congress Working Committee (CWC) will meet in a week to discuss Rahul Gandhi’s offer.

Addressing a press conference, the Congress president wished Prime Minister “all the best” and hoped that he looks after the interest of the people.

When reporters asked what went wrong according to him, Gandhi said it did not matter today what he thinks but told Congress party workers to not feel dejected and have faith.

“Today is the day to wish Modi all the best, hopes he looks after the interest of the nation,” he said.

“I told before the campaign that voters will decide the final verdict and they have given their verdict,” he said.

As the final innings of the Lok Sabha elections are set to come to a close, it would be safe to conclude that the Narendra Modi-led NDA government has improved its performance in 2014 and emerged as a stronger force.

When are you quitting politics, Twitter asks Navjot Singh Sidhu on Rahul Gandhi's Amethi loss

NEW DELHI (TIP): With Congress president Rahul Gandhi losing the Lok Sabha elections from Amethi, social media users, especially on Twitter, are asking Punjab minister Navjot Singh Sidhu to keep his word and resign.

Chorus grew on Twitter for resignation of Navjot Singh Sidhu on Thursday as trends indicated Rahul Gandhi losing to BJP’s Smriti Irani. In one of the biggest setback of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Rahul Gandhi lost by a margin of over 50,000 votes.

In April, Navjot Singh Sidhu had out-rightly rejected the claim that Smriti Irani was giving a tough fight to Rahul Gandhi in Amethi, the Congress bastion for years. Navjot Sidhu had vowed to quit politics if Congress president Rahul Gandhi lost elections from Amethi.

As Smriti Irani stretched her lead, a person wrote on Twitter, “As Smriti Irani is leading with 28000 votes in Amethi. Indian politics will miss the services of Navjot Singh Sidhu..”

Taking on Navjot Singh Sidhu after Rahul Gandhi’s defeat, one user wrote on Twitter, “Navjot Singh Sidhu ji start typing your letter to quit politics, it’ll be a good riddance..”

Another said, “Hello @sherryontopp I will quit politics, if Rahul Gandhi loses #Amethi Packing bags ??? World Cup is around and u speak good.”

“I know he is man of his words...now leave,” tweeted another.

Quoting a song, a user said, “Mr. @sherryontopp when you are going to quit Politics ? PS: Waada kiya toh nibhana padde ga.”

Known for his controversial remarks, Navjot Singh Sidhu was criticised by Punjab chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh for damaging the Congress prospects with his ill-timed comments and “hugs”.



EVERY CELL OF MY BODY DEDICATED TO NATION, SAYS PM MODI AFTER BIG WIN

NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people over the BJP's landslide win in the national elections today, saying it was a victory of "democracy". On the occasion, he also made three promises to the people - never to do anything with "ill intention", "never do anything to make a personal fortune" and "every pore, every cell in my body will work non-stop to ensure that the country keeps moving forward".

The BJP's performance has exceeded its tally of 2014 today, crossing the 300-mark just three hours into counting. Overall, the NDA has won or is leading in nearly 350 seats - the counting is still on. In 2014, the party won 282 seats, the NDA had won 336. It was the first time in more than three decades that a single party won majority on its own.

The party's victory, the Prime Minister said, has created a new narrative. "All parties have to introspect" he said.

Targetting the caste-based politics practised in large swathes of the country, he said, "There are only two castes left. These are... the poor. The second - those who remove poverty".

Uttar Pradesh -- the state where caste has been a key component in politics for decades -- has given a huge mandate to the BJP for the second time in a row.

In 2014, the BJP and its ally Apna Dal had won 73 of the 80 seats in the state. This time, in face of a challenge from the Grand Alliance of Mayawati and Samajwadi Party of Akhilesh Yadav, the BJP has won or is leading in 61 seats.

The alliance, which has a huge support base among the scheduled castes, backward castes and the Muslims, are likely to get less than 20 seats.

"We had gone to the people to know about their decisions... today, crores of people have filled this fakir ki jholi (poor man's bag)... this is democracy's biggest incident," PM Modi said, addressing hundreds of workers



at the party headquarters in Delhi.

The reference to the jholi was a dig at the Congress, whose newest recruit, Shatrughan Sinha, recently used it to mock the Prime Minister. "It's time for PM Modi to pick up

his jhola and leave," the actor-turned-politician had told NDTV's Prannoy Roy, referring to an old comment by the Prime Minister.

In 2016, weeks after announcing an

overnight ban on high-value cash, which provoked an opposition outcry, PM Modi had said at a rally: "What can my opponents do to me? I am a fakir. I will take my jhola and leave."

Saffron surge in Bengal witnesses decline of Left

KOKLATA (TIP): Within the first couple of hours of counting on Thursday, two things were evident on ground in West Bengal. One, the BJP emerged as the main rival of the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal with a good lead in 18 of 42 seats. Till late in the evening the BJP maintained the lead. The BJP polled as much as 40% votes -- only three and half percent less than the TMC -- which is the saffron party's best performance in Bengal since its inception in 1980.

The TMC, which is ahead of the saffron party in 22 seats, mostly in south of Bengal, has a bigger reason to worry.

The Left which acted as a buffer between the TMC and BJP, has virtually disappeared. The CPI-M polled only 6.8% votes, while the Left Front's key constituents polled a total of 7.73%, a drop of 22%. In the 2014 Lok Sabha election, the CPI-M had polled 19.75% votes and bagged two seats. Both the CPI-M and Left Front drew a blank as CPI-M's Bengal secretary Surjya Kanta Mishra described the results as "unprecedented." Since 1964, when the CPI-M was founded, this is the worst performance of the party in Bengal.

The BJP's share, on the other hand, rose from 17% in 2014 to 40% -- a jump of 23% even when the counting was on. The victory is indeed attributed to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah



who led the battle for Bengal from the front, addressing 34 meetings between them in six weeks.

Where did BJP perform

The BJP has performed well across the State.

As far as the trends till late on Thursday night, the BJP was leading comfortably in nearly all of six seats in north Bengal -- Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Raiganj and Balurghat. Surprisingly, in the Muslim-majority district of Malda in central Bengal,

the BJP was leading in at least one seat, Malda North

"This is because of deep communal polarisation. While Muslim votes got divided, the Hindu voted en bloc," said a senior Malda journalist.

In the other central Bengal district, Murshidabad, the TMC is set to win two seats out of three. In Jangipur (Murshidabad district), Congress candidate and former MP Abhijeet Mukherjee, son of former President Pranab Mukherjee, is expected to be defeated by the TMC candidate, while in Murshidabad, the sitting CPI-M MP is trailing. Congress' incumbent Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury won for the fifth time in a row in Baharampur, also in Murshidabad district, while Md Salim of the CPI-M is on the verge of defeat in Raiganj.

The Congress too slipped from 9.69% in 2014 to 5.4% in 2019, but was leading in two seats till late Thursday night.

In the five Jharkhand-bordering districts -- Jhargram, Medinipur, Purulia, Bankura and Bishnupur -- which have a sizeable tribal population, the BJP is comfortably ahead of the TMC. Even a TMC veteran, Subrata Mukherjee, is trailing far behind the BJP's Subhash Sarkar. The BJP even bagged seats that have considerable Dalit refugee voters like Bongaon, Ranaghat or Hooghly in south Bengal -- considered a TMC bastion. *Source: The Hindu*

KEY WINNERS & KEY LOSERS

Riding on a massive Narendra Modi wave sweeping through most parts of India, the NDA is now set to return to power, winning more than 350 seats, as per the latest Election Commission trends. Meanwhile, the Congress-led UPA trails far behind with just 88 seats, according to the latest trends released by the poll body for all 542 seats that went to polls. On its own, the BJP could end up winning more than 300 seats, which is enough to form the government on its own. Here are the big winners and losers of the 2019 Lok Sabha election:

 Narendra Modi BJP VARANASI	Narendra Modi WON BY OVER 4.5 Lakh VOTES	 Amit Shah BJP GANDHINAGAR	Amit Shah WON BY OVER 5.5 Lakh VOTES
 Pragya Thakur BJP BHOPAL	Pragya Thakur WON BY OVER 3 Lakh VOTES	 Sonia Gandhi CONGRESS RAE BARELI	Sonia Gandhi WON BY OVER 1.66 Lakh VOTES
 Sunny Deol BJP Gurdaspur	Sunny Deol WON BY OVER 70,000 VOTES	 Rahul Gandhi CONGRESS WAYANAD	Rahul Gandhi WON BY 4,31,770 VOTES
 Jyotiraditya Scindia CONGRESS GUNA	Jyotiraditya Scindia LOST BY OVER 1.2 Lakh VOTES	 Sheila Dikshit CONGRESS NORTH EAST DELHI	Sheila Dikshit LOST BY OVER 3.5 Lakh VOTES
 SHATRUGHAN SINHA CONGRESS Patna Sahib	Shatrughan Sinha LOST BY 2,84,657 VOTES	 HD DEVE GOWDA JD(S) Tumkur	HD Deve Gowda LOST BY 13339 VOTES

Congress president Rahul Gandhi won from Wayanad but conceded defeat in his family's bastion of Amethi, symbolising the Opposition party's dismal performance as the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coasted to re-election with a thumping majority.

Congress may fail to secure leader of the opposition post again

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress is unlikely to get the post of the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha for a second time in a row as it has yet again failed to get 10% seats in Parliament's lower House.

To get the LoP post, a party should get 55 out of the 543 Lok Sabha seats. At the time of filing this report, the Congress had won or was leading on 52 seats, three short of the numbers needed to get the post.

After the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance government came to power in 2014, it refused to give the LoP post to the Congress arguing that with 44 members it did not meet the requisite criteria.

There were protests from the Opposition as the LoP is part of the selection panels for key appointments to statutory bodies such as the Central Vigilance Commissioner and the Lokpal. The LoP is also on the panel to select the Central Bureau of Investigation director.

The Congress raised the issue with then Speaker Sumitra Mahajan insisting that it should get the post as it was the largest opposition party and had pre-poll alliances in certain states. But she too declined the request, citing the past precedents and the attorney general's opinion.

The government was finally compelled to include Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge in the selection panels but it refused to accord him the LoP status.

Previously, it was in 1985 that the then Lok Sabha Speaker Balram Jakhar did not give the LoP post to the Telugu Desam Party, which was then the second largest party after the Congress.

It depends entirely on the government whether to give the LoP post to the Congress considering it has marginally improved its performance this time.

The Congress will separately now deliberate on the poll outcome. The Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's highest decision-making body, is meeting on Saturday to draw up its future plans.

Congress president Rahul Gandhi has taken the responsibility for the poll debacle and might even offer to step aside at the CWC meeting. His entire team of general secretaries and in-charges of states may also follow suit.

In 2014, after the drubbing in the Lok Sabha elections, then Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, the then party vice-president, offered to resign but the CWC unanimously rejected it.

Saturday's meeting could see a repeat of that. The CWC will also review the shortcomings in communicating the party's Nyay (Nyuntam Aay Yojana) promise to the voters. The party had promised a minimum guaranteed income of Rs 72,000 annually to the country's 20% poor families under the scheme.

But reports from the ground suggested that the voters were not excited about the poll promise, given that Congress leaders and workers failed to effectively publicise the proposed poverty alleviation scheme.

Rahul Gandhi, who lost his family pocket borough of Amethi but won from Wayanad in Kerala, is also expected to carry out an extensive overhaul of the organisation.

Four states -- Maharashtra, Haryana, Jharkhand and Jammu and Kashmir -- will be going to the polls later this year. Assembly elections in Delhi will be held in February next year.

Rahul Gandhi has the task cut out for him now -- to make the party fighting fit in these states, especially to take on the BJP which boasts of well-oiled machinery on the ground.

Source: HT

AS I SEE IT



By Jayshree Sengupta

The banks have not yet been nursed back to health even though \$28 billion has already been injected over the past two years in the banking system. Bank credit growth has somewhat accelerated in the past few months, but the aggregate credit growth is still weak.

With more information about the state of the economy coming out, it is clear that the new government will have to kickstart a weakening economy. Clearly, the NDA is leaving behind an economy with severe problems. Industrial output has declined by 0.1 per cent and manufacturing growth hit a new low in March, registering a negative growth of 0.4 per cent. Consumer demand is languishing in almost all sectors.

It is worrisome that big carmakers such as Maruti and Hyundai have reported that their car sales have plummeted. Even motorcycle and scooter sales have fallen in the past few months. Slowdown in car sales and low volume of sales in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and tourism show that across the board, there are signs of a slowdown.

The economic slowdown is now recognized even in official circles as real and GDP growth is likely to be 6.5 per cent in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2018-19. Non-food bank credit has slowed in Q4 also. Capital goods production, which registered a contraction of 8.7 per cent in March, is a key source of weakness.

The revenue collection through GST has not been as good as expected and there is a Rs 1.6-trillion shortfall when compared with the revised revenue estimate numbers for 2018-19. Hence, the government will not have a handful to spend, especially when there is strong

NDA Legacy of a Weak Economy

The economic slowdown is now recognized even in official circles as real and GDP growth is likely to be 6.5 per cent in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2018-19. Non-food bank credit has slowed in Q4 also. Capital goods production, which registered a contraction of 8.7 per cent in March, is a key source of weakness.

likelihood of a slippage in fiscal deficit. The Centre's revenue growth is only at 6.2 per cent instead of the budgeted revenue growth of 19.5 per cent.

Even on essentials like infrastructure, there may be a cutback in public expenditure which is not going to help in the revival of the economy. India has huge infrastructural needs and it must spend on refurbishing and improving infrastructure, building new roads, railways, ports and airports to increase competitiveness.

The government has acknowledged that export growth has been 'tepid' with a wide trade deficit of \$176 billion, which the next government will have to reverse. This is because we are losing out in labor-intensive exports to countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam. Over the years, India's upper hand in labor-intensive exports like textiles, garments and jewelry has been eroding because labor productivity is not rising fast enough. Technical progress, on the other hand, has improved capital productivity dramatically and reduced the relative cost of automation.

The lack of proper healthcare, skill training and education of labor, as compared to countries like China, means that the quality of work relative to the wages of workers is not improving fast enough. It is also due to excessive use of

contract labor that labor productivity is not rising. Unless the financial and labor costs in industry are brought down, there cannot be an increase in India's competitiveness vis-à-vis our rivals in South East Asia and elsewhere.

India's dominant exports are now relatively more capital intensive, such as auto parts, electronics and pharmaceuticals. Labor intensity in the organized sector has declined as a result, which is bad news for job creation. Unless labor intensity in production goes up significantly, the organized sector will not be able to absorb the 10 million jobseekers a year.

Most important is the health of the banking sector. There has been a severe credit crunch for medium and small scale (SMEs) industry because of the problem of NPAs in the banking sector. India still has among the world's worst stressed asset ratio and soured credit as a share of total loans. According to the RBI, this ratio shrunk to 10.3 per cent in March from 10.8 per cent in September. Public sector banks account for nearly 90 per cent of NPAs.

The banks have not yet been nursed back to health even though \$28 billion has already been injected over the past two years in the banking system. Bank credit growth has somewhat accelerated in the past few months, but the aggregate

credit growth is still weak.

The shadow banking companies or the NBFCs (non-banking finance companies) are still in trouble. They have been cash-strapped since the IL&FS crisis, making it difficult for SMEs to borrow from them. The NBFCs provide credit to retail trade also. The SMEs need capital at reasonable cost. Retail market also needs loans to sustain consumption growth and low car sales is a result of NBFC problems. Their borrowings of short-term funds from mutual funds have dried up to a great extent due to investors' concerns about the financial health of mutual funds as they hold \$46 billion debt issued by NBFCs. Many investors have already exited. The shadow banking companies are also struggling to raise funds from the market, but demand for NBFC bonds is dwindling after the IL&FS fiasco.

The doors of wholesale debt market are thus virtually shut and NBFCs are looking at other sources of funds, such as external commercial borrowings or selling down assets. Even the AAA-rated NBFCs are only able to raise funds at a higher cost today - paying 100 basis points more than the market rate.

Interest rates have been reduced twice in recent times by the RBI, but the 'real' (minus inflation) interest rate still remains high. Steeper interest rate cuts will bring down borrowing costs of NBFCs and corporates. The new government may have to prime the economy by giving both fiscal and monetary stimuli to raise private investment from its current stagnant level.

Agriculture needs urgent attention also - which is another story.

(The author is a senior fellow, Observer Research Foundation)



By Ashwani Kumar

India needs to embrace politics of dignity

Overall, this election has brought out, as never before, the worst in human nature captured, in another context, by German philosopher Schopenhauer as "boundless egotism, a fund of hatred, anger, envy, rancour and malice, accumulated like the venom in a serpent's tooth."

The excruciatingly painful spectre of a vitiated electoral process has divided citizens rather than bringing them together in pursuit of a shared future. The legitimacy and moral appeal of an elected government stand shattered.

As the curtain falls on the fiercely contested elections to the seventeenth Lok Sabha, we must ask ourselves whether this 'enormous expression of franchise' leaves much to celebrate about. The philosophical foundation of a democracy rests on free and fair elections based on the autonomy of choice premised on equality and reason that underpins its moral appeal.

It is assumed that the vote reflects an informed choice about people and policies anchored in reflection, deliberation and debate to secure the greatest happiness of the largest

numbers in greater freedom. The debilitating course of the election challenges this foundational assumption.

Given the rancorous, abusive and an almost obscene political discourse anchored in a vicious campaign of calumny, the moral legitimacy of the resultant mandate is suspect.

Nor can we be certain that the world's largest electoral exercise will yield a government equipped to meet daunting challenges, considering the difficulty of forging a broad national consensus on even the most critical issues, given the sharp political and personal animosities.

The authenticity of election results is also in doubt in view of serious apprehensions expressed by the Opposition about an EVM-driven

counting process allegedly capable of technical manipulation. The confiscation of thousands of crores worth of unaccounted cash and drugs, the pervasive use of muscle power and organized poll violence in some States mock claims about the purity of the electoral process.

The 'deluge of trivia, sensationalism and the absurd', the oppression of propaganda and fake news, the routine tarnishing of reputations and the resultant emotional chasm defy the resilience of our democratic process.

Overall, this election has brought out, as never before, the worst in human nature captured, in another context, by German philosopher Schopenhauer as "boundless egotism, a fund of hatred,

anger, envy, rancour and malice, accumulated like the venom in a serpent's tooth."

Respect for consensus discovered through the ballot and entitled to respect even by those not sharing it in the best traditions of parliamentary democracy is now questionable.

The excruciatingly painful spectre of a vitiated electoral process has divided citizens rather than bringing them together in pursuit of a shared future. The legitimacy and moral appeal of an elected government stand shattered.

Fundamental issues that ought to be at the center of the campaign have been relegated as footnotes. A flawed choice is sought to be imposed on the people between a muscular state presented as a condition of national security equated with nationalism, and governance premised on accountability of dispersed constitutional power, as if the two are mutually exclusive.

*Read more on
www.theindianpanorama.news*

NARENDRA MODI: From tea seller at train station to master of political theatre

Case for economic revolution to modernize India



By Ven Parameswaran

Narendra Modi, who once sold tea at a railway station has become the most influential Indian leader in generations, winning a landslide in election results announced, May 23, 2019. Modi's own party, BJP won an absolute majority - 302 seats. The BJP combined with its alliance, the NDA, won 351 seats. As votes were tallied early Thursday, May 23 afternoon, Modi's chief rival, the Indian National Congress, was leading in just 50 races, the second consecutive dismal showing in a national election for what was once India's most powerful political party.

Modi, 68, was born to a poor family in Gujrat State, where he developed a strong dislike for the ruling Congress Party as a result of hanging around a political office near his father's tea stall. While still a child, he started attending daily meetings of the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh), said to be the world's largest volunteer organization, whose Hindu nationalist ideology envisions the country's diverse Hindu population as a single nation with a sacred culture that should be given primacy in India.

Hindu nationalists were sidelined by India's founding Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose vision of India was of a secular nation at ease with its bewildering plurality. Their parties, including Modi's Bharatiya Janata party (BJP), struggled to win more than 10% of the national vote for decades until the 1990s, when they started to expand on the back of a national campaign to demolish a 16th-century Mughal mosque in Ayodhya, U.P. and replace it with a Hindu temple. That push culminated in the destruction of the mosque by a mob of 150,000 Hindu activists, which triggered rioting across India that killed estimated 2000 people. Still, the BJP's support was limited to wealthier Hindus in the country's north and west, with resistance to the party from poor, marginalized Hindus, Muslims, and South Indians thought to be permanent hurdles to Hindu nationalist domination.

Modi's magnetism, especially his personal branding as a tea boy who climbed to the country's highest ranks, has changed those calculations, drawing vast support from the country's emerging middle and lower-middle classes. "He has managed to create this voting bloc - other party's voters who are voting for the BJP just for Modi," said Rahul Verma, a fellow at the Delhi-based Center for Policy Research. "The shifts are actually happening among the more aspirational voters, who think Modi can fulfil their economic aspirations... This leader, who



Narendra Modi, with BJP President Amit Shah and senior leaders of the party, arriving to a tumultuous welcome at the BJP Headquarters in New Delhi, May 23 to address party workers

has risen from the ranks of a poor family, has become a symbol." This symbolism was especially potent among young Indians, a vital and growing electorate in a country with a median age younger than 28. "They have grown up seeing the way of life in the West and in places like Singapore and China," said Vivan Marwana, a journalist who is writing a book on young Indians. "And Modi came on to the scene in 2014 and promised them bullet trains, a million new jobs, the world's largest statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, a former Dy. Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. It is all very aspirational."

Young Indians had grown up being told their country was on the cusp of becoming a superpower. In Modi, they had a leader who spoke as if it already was. Alongside aspiration, the BJP promotes a vision of Hindu cultural supremacy that sidelines the country's 300 million minority population. As Chief Minister of Gujarat state, Modi was a firebrand Hindutva campaigner. In 2002, anti-Muslim riots in his state killed at least 1,000 people, resulted in the future Prime Minister becoming an international pariah who was banned from entering the U.S. In response, Modi presented himself as an outsider being attacked by elites: a refrain that would become a central part of his political messaging. "He would say he was constantly being targeted by the English-speaking media out of Delhi," said Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, author of a biography of the Indian leader. "He made himself the symbol of the underdog, projected himself as somebody who is against the status quo forces. The times came to suit Modi. When the popular disgust at corruption scandals plaguing the previous Congress government boiled over into street protests in 2011, it provided the rightwing populist leader a national springboard.

"Modi was at the forefront of projecting this strong, centralizing leadership," said Milan Vaishnav, the director of the South Asia program at the Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace. "He realized what people are looking for is somebody who gets stuff done."

HIS MASTERY OF POLITICAL THEATRE, AND FINGER ON THE PULSE OF INDIANS, HAS NOW SECURED HIM THE STRONGEST MANDATE OF ANY LEADER IN DECADES.

But it will do little to create jobs, alleviate financial stress in the country's vast agriculture sector or grow the economy on the backdrop of a US trade war and a global slowdown.

"Issues of economy will be the focus of his first 100 days," said Rajat Sethi, a fellow at the influential BJP-aligned India Foundation think-tank. He said Modi could also look to broaden a program of targeted payments to farmers and other struggling groups.

The scale of Thursday's victory creates room for Modi to ram through reforms, but also the possibility that he may not have to, said Giles Verniers, a political scientist who teaches at Haryana State's Ashoka University. "It is a peculiar result because there were a multitude of ground realities that were clearly going against the BJP. It won despite jobless growth, rural distress, a tepid economy," said Verniers. "It's as if all those adverse factors did not matter at all. "And so the worry is that it could translate into a belief that the BJP can win despite poor performance, and that may not necessarily translate into incentives to address the deeper issues with the economy."

UNEMPLOYMENT has gone up from 2.2% in 2011 to 6.1% in 2019. It is hoped that Modi will finally build the necessary infrastructure to build large scale factories to manufacture 100 million pieces of varieties of clothing needed by American consumers. The former Reserve Bank of India Governor, Raghuram Rajan, now Professor at the University of Chicago has argued that India needs to create an export-oriented economy. Fortunately, President Trump currently negotiating terms of trade

" HIS MASTERY OF POLITICAL THEATRE, AND FINGER ON THE PULSE OF INDIANS, HAS NOW SECURED HIM THE STRONGEST MANDATE OF ANY LEADER IN DECADES."

with China is anxious not to depend on China for many of its imports. President Trump will be happy to do business with India provided India has the capacity and capability to deliver the needs of American consumers.

100% TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY will allow India to manufacture for several reasons. First, India has a large supply of engineers and professionals. Second, India has a comparative advantage with China and the USA. Third, President Trump must also cope with the skyrocketing prices of drugs manufactured in the U.S.A. Fourth, India has a large supply of biotechnologists, microbiologists, and other health care scientists and professionals. Sixth, making drugs in India will cost a miniscule of what it costs in the USA. The US drug industry can expand its global market share by making drugs in India.

Lockheed Martin, United Technologies, Raytheon, General Dynamics and other military manufacturers can cut the cost of production if they were to make their products in India. Thus, a confluence of factors such as supply of engineers, scientists and professional managers; comparative advantage in wages and salaries; skyrocketing prices of drugs and military hardware in the US; deterioration of US-China relations in trade; national security and cybersecurity problems; and others look attractive for Prime Minister Modi. He has a huge mandate now and nothing but a Modi economic revolution could solve many problems with one stroke.

Never before, Modi had the good fortune of not facing any major opposition for his initiatives or policies. Modi has almost two thirds majority in the Parliament. Modi must translate the mandate and the extraordinary goodwill from the electors and the global community into Modi economic revolution that will modernize India. The roadmap should call for GDP growth of 10 to 12% for the next decade. Hope Prime Minister Modi comes up with a roadmap for the next 100 days.

(The author, former CEO, First Asian Securities Corporation, NY and Senior Adviser, Imagindia Institute, a New Delhi thinktank lives in Scarsdale, NY. He can be reached at vpwaren@gmail.com)

Indian origin Sharma Creates History as First Indian-Origin Man to Win in Australian Election



Sharma held a number of senior positions in the Australian public service

SYDNEY (TIP): Former Australian ambassador to Israel Dave Sharma - now a Liberal Party politician - created history by becoming the first Indian-origin lawmaker to win a seat in the country's Parliament in the federal election.

Sharma defeated independent candidate Kerryn Phelps in the heavily Jewish district of Wentworth in eastern Sydney, once held by former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

"Down at Edgecliff Station this morning to thank the people of Wentworth for putting their faith in me. I'm committed to being a full-time local representative and I won't let them down!" he tweeted.

"Very humbled by the trust placed in me by the people of Wentworth. Look forward to being a voice for them in the parliament and the party room", Sharma wrote earlier.

Sharma held a number of senior positions in the Australian public service, including from 2010 to 2012 as the head of the International Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Indian American Wins America's Premier Business Award



Nitin Rakesh, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of Mphasis, an Information Technology solutions provider

DALLAS, TX (TIP): Nitin Rakesh, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of Mphasis, an Information Technology solutions provider specializing in cloud and cognitive services, was named the winner of a Gold Stevie Award for 'Tech Innovator of the Year - Services' in The 17th Annual American Business Awards.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-Origin Scientists selected for DARPA's Next-Generation Nonsurgical Neurotechnology Program



Dr. Gaurav Sharma, Dr. Pulkit Grover, and Dr. Krishnan Thyagarajan

WASHINGTON (TIP): Three Indian-origin scientists and their team in the US have been selected for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's (DARPA) Next-Generation Nonsurgical Neurotechnology program to pursue a mix of approaches to developing wearable interfaces for communicating with the brain. DARPA has awarded funding to six organizations to support the Next-Generation Nonsurgical Neurotechnology (N3) program.

Battelle Memorial Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), Rice University, and Teledyne Scientific are leading multidisciplinary teams to develop high-resolution, bidirectional brain-machine interfaces for use by able-bodied service members. These wearable interfaces could ultimately enable

diverse national security applications such as control of active cyber defense systems and swarms of unmanned aerial vehicles, or teaming with computer systems to multitask during complex missions.

The Battelle team, under principal investigator Dr. Gaurav Sharma, aims to develop a minutely invasive interface system that pairs an external transceiver with electromagnetic nanotransducers that are nonsurgically delivered to neurons of interest. The nanotransducers would convert electrical signals from the neurons into magnetic signals that can be recorded and processed by the external transceiver, and vice versa, to enable bidirectional communication.

The Carnegie Mellon University team, under principal investigator Dr. Pulkit Grover, aims to develop a completely

noninvasive device that uses an acousto-optical approach to record from the brain and interfering electrical fields to write to specific neurons. The team will use ultrasound waves to guide light into and out of the brain to detect neural activity. The team's write approach exploits the non-linear response of neurons to electric fields to enable localized stimulation of specific cell types.

The PARC team, under principal investigator Dr. Krishnan Thyagarajan, aims to develop a completely noninvasive acousto-magnetic device for writing to the brain. Their approach pairs ultrasound waves with magnetic fields to generate localized electric currents for neuromodulation. The hybrid approach offers the potential for localized neuromodulation deeper in the brain.

Indian American's Company granted 'Breakthrough Device Designation' from FDA for its Sirolimus coated Catheter

TAMPA, FL (TIP): Indian American cardiologist and entrepreneur Dr. Kiran Patel's company Concept Medical Inc. (CMI) has been granted 'Breakthrough Device Designation' from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) last month for MagicTouch, its sirolimus drug-coated balloon (DCB) catheter, for the treatment of coronary in-stent restenosis (ISR).

The goal of the FDA 'Breakthrough Devices Program' is to provide patients and health-care providers in the US with timely access to these medical devices by speeding up their development, assessment, and review, while preserving the statutory standards for premarket approval, 510(k) clearance, and De Novo marketing authorization, consistent with the Agency's mission to protect and promote public health.

The Breakthrough Devices Program offers manufacturers an opportunity to interact with the FDA's experts through several different program options to efficiently address topics as they arise during the premarket review phase,



Indian American cardiologist and entrepreneur Dr. Kiran Patel is well known for philanthropy efforts, globally

which can help manufacturers receive feedback from the FDA and identify areas of agreement in a timely way. Manufacturers can also expect prioritized review of their submission. Under the program, FDA will provide CMI with priority review and interactive communication regarding device development and clinical trial

protocols, through to commercialization decisions.

"The FDA's designation of MagicTouch for the Breakthrough Device Program will allow CMI to meet its ambition to provide this promising technology and innovative treatment for ISR patients in the USA. Our confidence in MagicTouch emanates from the positive feedback that we are receiving from the users of our product from current and ongoing commercial sales of MagicTouch in many European countries" said cardiologist Dr. Kiran Patel, Chairman of CMI. "CMI is encouraged that the selection of MagicTouch, with its unique drug delivery technology, for the FDA's Breakthrough Device Program may allow timely access of this promising new technology to the US patients with coronary ISR with a potential to provide safe and effective treatment", he further added.

Dr. Patel is the Founder and Chairman of the 'Drs. Kiran and Pallavi Patel Family Foundation', well known for their philanthropy efforts, globally.

GOPIO-CT Hosts Indian Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty and Elected Officials at Public Forum in Connecticut



Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty presenting the book 'India Unveiled' to Norwalk Mayor Hsarry Rilling in the presence of GOPIO-CT officials and representatives of Norwalk Sikh Gurudwara

STAMFORD, CT (TIP): Indian Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty and Deputy Consul General Shatrugna Sinha were hosted by the Connecticut chapter of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO-CT) on May 3rd in Stamford and Norwalk, Connecticut. Arriving at 2.30 p.m. Consul General Chakraborty called on to Stamford Mayor David Martin at the Govt. Center in Stamford, along with GOPIO-CT President Anita Bhat, Past Presidents Shailesh Naik and Shelly Nichani and Treasurer Biru Sharma. Later in the afternoon, both called on to Norwalk Mayor Harry Rilling along with GOPIO-CT officials and Norwalk's Indian community leaders including Raj Misra and Anna Duleep as well as representatives of Norwalk's Sikh Gurudwara.

The discussions were very cordial with both mayors and there were agreements on many new initiatives. Consul General Chakraborty very graciously offered to send various artists and performers from India visiting the USA to come and do shows in both the cities Stamford and Norwalk. Both the Mayors offered full help and cooperation to facilitate such performances. Both mayors and the Consul General are interested in student exchange programs and the Consul General will further work in the same.

Most importantly the Consul General made an offer to the Norwalk Mayor Rilling and the Sikh community to hold a grand 550th Anniversary of Guru Nanakjis birth anniversary. He will contact some eminent academican to come and give a talk on the life of the Guru. This was a major accomplishment and a tribute to our Sikh community. Mayor Rilling offered his full support. GOPIO-CT also proposed an India section at the Norwalk public Library which Mayor Rilling agreed and the Consul General has offered to provide books.

On the economic front, both mayors would like to invite Indian companies to consider Stamford and Norwalk to open their US destination. In this regard, Stamford Mayor Martin will take assistance from the Indian Consulate to invite Indian companies to business expo and investment seminars in Stamford. GOPIO-CT will facilitate such efforts.

Consul General Chakraborty also had a very good discussion with Congressman Jim Himes who is a leading member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Congressman Himes is very supportive of India's interests and values.

CG Chakraborty also had a very informative discussion with Connecticut State Senator Bob Duff, the Majority



Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty along with GOPIO-CT officials after meeting US House Rep. Jim Himes and Connecticut Senator Bob Duff. From L to R: Biru Sharma, Mrs. Misra, Raj Misra, Deputy Consul General Shatrugna Sinha, Senator Duff, Consul General Chakraborty, GOPIO-CT President Anita Bhat, Ritu Johorey and Shailesh Naik



GOPIO-CT officials and other Indian community leaders at the Reception/Dinner with Indian Consul General Sandeep Chakraborty and Deputy Consul General Shatrugna Sinha

Leader in Conn. Senate.

In the evening a reception was held at Hampton Inn for the many leaders of Indian diaspora in Connecticut to meet and greet Consul General Chakraborty and Deputy Consul General Sinha. GOPIO-CT President Anita Bhat welcomed the guests. GOPIO-CT Treasurer Biru Sharma moderated the session. Connecticut House Representative Matt Blumenthal, who represents Stamford, also joined the dinner meeting. Rep. Blumenthal was very appreciative of the contribution by the Indian American community in

Connecticut.

Consul General Chakraborty gave a very descriptive talk on the election in India and how the country is a well-established democracy. A Q&A session followed where the participants asked questions and expressed their concerns.

A donation of \$2000 was made to Future 5, an organization in Stamford that takes underprivileged students from local high schools and tutor them in the hours after school.

(Based on a press release issued by GOPIO-CT President Anita Bhat, 203-524-2935m abnewyork71@gmail.com)

NY City Comptroller questions 'purpose' of Chirlane McCray's Thrive NYC program

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): City Comptroller Scott Stringer raised serious concerns over the "purpose" of first lady Chirlane McCray's ThriveNYC, saying the taxpayer-funded mental health initiative shouldn't come "at the expense of transparency and accountability."

In a letter to Thrive director Susan Herman released Thursday, May 23, Stringer said he found a severe lack of coordination between the \$250 million-a-year program and other city-funded mental health services. He also demanded Thrive do a better job tracking its spending and progress so it could "shore up public confidence."

"I commend the city for prioritizing an issue that for too long has been neglected and working ... to help New Yorkers access the care they need," Stringer



Scott Stringer said, "Mental health has 'worsened' over the past year despite Thrive NYC".

wrote in the letter dated Wednesday. "But the provision of these services cannot come at the expense of transparency and oversight, and without the public's trust that these dollars are being spent effectively, the program cannot achieve its goals."

(Read full story on www.theindianpanrama.news)

Melinda Katz ahead of her Rivals in winning Endorsements in Queens DA Race

QUEENS, NY (TIP): Endorsements of political organizations, labor unions and elected officials are sure to help signal to voters what kind of candidate they'll be casting their ballot for on Tuesday, June 25. Melinda Katz seems to be far ahead of her rivals in winning endorsements.

Among Organizations, she has got endorsements from Hum Hindustani, The Indian Panorama, Jamaica Bangladesh Friends Society, National Organization for Women - NYC and Brooklyn-Queens, New American Voters Association, Queens County Democratic Party, South Asian Democratic Alliance

Labor has endorsed her in a big way with endorsements pouring in from 32BJ SEIU, Alliance of South Asian American Labor, CWA Local 1180, International Union of Elevator Constructors Local One, Mason Tenders



With a large number of endorsements from organizations, Labor and public figures, Melinda appears to be leading in the race for Queens DA

District Council, New York Hotel Trades Council, New York State Laborers, SMART Transportation Division, Teamsters Local 237, TWU Local 100, Uniformed EMT's Paramedics and Fire Inspectors Local 2507, Uniformed Firefighters Association of Greater New York, Uniformed Fire Officers Association Local 854. (Read full story on www.theindianpanrama.news)



MY FRIEND CIRCLE IS LIMITED: SUNNY LEONE

Actress Sunny Leone, who is in the 'best phase' of her life personally and professionally, says she enjoys having a small circle of friends. In her seven-year journey in Hindi film industry, Sunny has created a name for herself. She often used to talk about being judged in the past. Does she still feel the same?

"I have created a niche for myself with my own set of friends. I don't really get out and party, so the circle is limited. I don't know if I am yet judged, but back then also I was in a happy space and so am I now," Sunny said. She married Daniel Weber in 2011, and together, they have three children. The couple adopted a girl child, Nisha, in 2017 from Latur and announced the birth of her twins Noah and Asher via surrogacy last year.

Sunny finds it a little tough to maintain a balance between motherhood and work. "I have seen many parents maintain a balance. It is harder in my case, because every day is different. But once you become a parent, you automatically start strategising your schedule. Looking at your child is the most beautiful feeling in the world."

VIVEK OBEROI'S TWEET ABOUT AISHWARYA SLAMMED

Twitter has slammed actor Vivek Oberoi's recent tweet, in which he made jokes at the expense of Salman Khan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and her husband, Abhishek. "Disgusting and classless," wrote actor Sonam Kapoor in response to the tweet, which included a politically themed meme.

Sharing the 'creative' meme with due credit, Vivek wrote that there's 'no politics here, just life'. The attached picture collage contains three images; the first shows Aishwarya with ex-boyfriend Salman Khan, the second shows her with Vivek, whom she also dated, and the third shows her with Abhishek and their daughter, Aaradhya. The captions for each of the three images read, 'opinion poll', 'exit poll' and 'result', respectively.

Retweeting the post with a comment, journalist Nidhi Razdan wrote, "Distasteful. Move on Mr Oberoi." Nidhi was perhaps alluding to Vivek's controversial history with both Aishwarya and Salman. The actor in a now infamous press conference had alleged that he was being threatened by Salman, while he was dating Aishwarya.

Commenting on Nidhi's tweet, Sonam wrote, "Disgusting and classless." Others who've reacted to the tweet include shuttler Jwala Gutta, who wrote, "Extremely absurd of you to tweet this. Disappointing!"

Vivek in a recent interview had asked Salman rhetorically, "Do you believe in forgiveness?"

Vivek will return on screen this Friday, with his delayed biopic of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Aishwarya was recently seen at the Cannes Film Festival, where she makes annual appearances. Salman, meanwhile, is gearing up for the release of his Eid film, Bharat.



HAD TO MAKE OUT WITH STRANGER, SAYS ADITI RAO HYDARI ON AUDITION WITH ARUNODAY SINGH



Actress Aditi Rao Hydari says during her audition for "Yeh Saali Zindagi", she had to get intimate with a stranger.

During a talk show for an OTT platform, Aditi told the hostess: "I don't have any whacked out stories from auditions, except the 'Yeh Saali Zindagi' audition where I had to literally make out with someone I didn't know." She was referring to actor Arunoday Singh, who was opposite her in the film.

"But at that point, I didn't know him and he was a huge hulk of a guy and I was just like, 'Uh...what's going on here?'" She said he was "very polite".

Aditi also spoke about other aspects of her life, including how Mani Ratnam's "Bombay" is what attracted her to the world of films. She was especially enamoured by the song "Kehna hi kya".

The actress also opened up a bit on her personal life, admitting that she had received her first love letter when she was just in the fifth standard.

"It was really long. It was like, two pages. All I know is that it was from senior. Very soon after that, I was packed off to boarding school," she said with a laugh.

She recollected how she had shown the letter to her mother herself.

Looking back at the incident, she said: "I was nine at the time. It basically said that I was the most beautiful girl and blah blah. Now when I think about it, I'm like, 'I was nine! How does that even work?'" Opening up on her "dating game", Aditi, who had tied the knot with actor Satyadeep Mishra when she was 21 and later separated, said: "If I got into a relationship like that at 21, my dating game would be zero, right? I don't think I know how to date."

"After that, I joined the movies. What dating am I going to do? I don't know how to date."



Famke Janssen joins 'The Postcard Killings'

X-Men star Famke Janssen has boarded the cast of crime thriller 'The Postcard Killings'. According to the report, the actor will star opposite Jeffery Dean Morgan in the film.

The story follows Jacob Kanon (Morgan), a hardened New York detective, in search of the person responsible for the murder of his only daughter.

Janssen plays Valerie Kanon, the mother of their now deceased child. The plotline adds: Across Europe, newlywed couples are being targeted in a string of bizarre homicides that leave the young victims' bodies looking like copies of great works of art.

Danis Tanovic is directing the movie, which is produced by Good Films' Miriam Segal alongside Paul Brennan, Peter Calvin Nelson and Leopoldo Gout.

JOE JONAS SAVED MY LIFE, SAYS SOPHIE TURNER

Star Sophie Turner said her husband, singer Joe Jonas, saved her life following years of mental health and body image struggles. In an interview with media source, the actor said when she first met Jonas at the age of 20, she "was going through this phase of being very mentally unwell."

"He was, like, 'I can't be with you until you love yourself, I can't see you love me more than you love yourself. That was something, him doing that. I think he kind of saved my life, in a way,' Turner said.

She was 13 when she started working on drama series, her first acting project, and was 15 when the show premiered in 2011.

Turner said there was too much exposure on social media soon after her debut. The actor believes she would have been in a healthier space if her adolescent life was not 'displayed in public'.

She said the scrutiny and criticism made her 'desperately unhappy' and a 'complete mess' and she even considered suicide. But at the age of 19 she went for therapy and things changed for better.

"Suddenly, everyone's metabolism slows down at 17, 18 and then that's documented. My skin and everything. People commenting on it. I was too aware of my body at a young age. And it just kind of took over my mind, it was all I would think about. Calorie counting, everything. 'Oh, I'll just eat nuts today.'"

"I stopped having my period for a year that's when I decided to have therapy. I just think it's so important everyone should have a therapist, honestly," she said.



Sarah Gadon and Eili Harboe to star in 'The Northwoods'



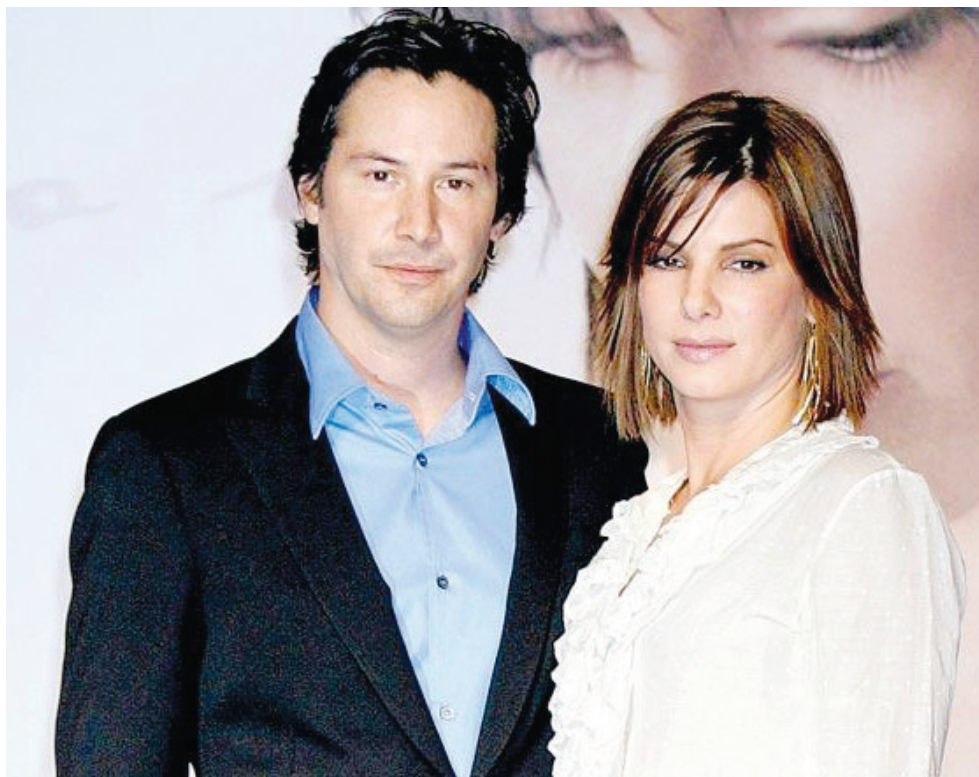
Alias Grace star Sarah Gadon and 'Thelma' actor Eili Harboe are set to headline the Canada/Norway co-production 'The Northwoods'. According to the Hollywood Reporter, Emma Higgins is directing the feature from her own script.

The two actors will play sisters who return home for the first time since their mother's death and reconnect on a trek of the vast Norwegian fjords. "When their guide mysteriously disappears, they realise

that trying to outrun the horrors of their past is just as futile as escaping watch is waiting in the darkness," the plot synopsis read.

The project is being produced by Dave Hudakoc of levelFILM, Einar Loftesnes of Handmade Films In Norwegian Woods, Daniel Quinn, Jeff Pangman and Evan Landry.

The film will be shot in northern Norway and Canada.



Keanu Reeves: I had a crush on Sandra Bullock during 'Speed'

Last year Sandra Bullock had said that she had a crush on Keanu Reeves during the making of 'Speed' and now the action star has revealed that the feelings were mutual.

During an appearance on an American comedy TV talk show, the 'John Wick' star was treated with a clip of Bullock's 2018 interview in which she had opened up about developing a liking for him.

In his response to the video, Reeves said, "She obviously didn't know that I had a crush on her, either."

The actor said he did not share his feelings

with his co-star to maintain a professional environment on the sets.

"We were working. It was nice to go to work. She's such a wonderful person."

After his reply, the host shouted, "Sandy, come on out", making both the audience and the actor believe that Bullock was at the studio.

Reeves said he was nervous to turn around, but the host informed him that she was just joking with him.

"It would have been really nice," he said about the possibility of reuniting with Bullock on the show.

Indian woman climber dies on Mt Everest

KATHMANDU (TIP): A 54-year-old Indian woman climber died while descending the Mt Everest, taking the toll of those who perished during this season's expedition in the Himalayan nation to 13, according to a media report on May 23.

Mumbai-based Anjali S Kulkarni died at above Camp IV after she fell ill while coming down from the summit point on Wednesday, Thupden Sherpa, an official at Arun Treks, which organised the climb said. — PTI

10-year-old girl's murder, rape triggers massive protest in Pak

ISLAMABAD (TIP): A 10-year-old girl in Pakistan was murdered after being allegedly raped, triggering massive protests by her family members and locals on May 20.

The victim's family protested against the brutal murder of the girl by keeping her body at Taramri Chowk in Islamabad on Tuesday.

The protesters, calling for action to be taken against the culprits, said they will bury the victim only after negotiations are successful with the district administration.

According to an FIR filed by the victim's father, his daughter had gone out to play on May 15 in the evening in Shahzad Town area of the capital but did not return.

The body of the girl with torture marks and wounds was found on May 20. The father alleged that his daughter — who had been missing for at least four days before her body was found in a wooded area — had been raped before she was killed.

The father alleged that police instead of taking action or filing an FIR, had blamed the girl and posed insensitive questions to the family, such as asking whether she had eloped with someone. He alleged that the family had "continuously requested concerned police station for FIR but they refused". Police also said that three suspects were arrested and shifted to undisclosed location. Those arrested were Afghan refugees living in the area. — PTI

Sri Lanka president extends national emergency by month

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on May 22 extended by a month the state of emergency imposed in the wake of the deadly Easter Sunday bombings that killed nearly 260 people. The president issued a special gazette notification extending the state of emergency by a month, citing "public security". The emergency law gives police and the military extensive powers to arrest, detain and interrogate suspects without court orders. Sri Lanka initially imposed the emergency on April 23 to crack down on the nine suicide bombers who attacked three churches and as many luxury hotels April 21. (PTI)

Pakistan PM Imran Khan congratulates Modi

Expresses desire to work with him for peace in South Asia

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Thursday congratulated his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on his victory in the general elections and expressed desire to work with him for peace, progress and prosperity in the region.

Prime Minister Modi led his Bharatiya Janata Party towards what looks set to be a resounding victory for a second term in office.

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

The results of India's general elections are very significant for Pakistan as the formation of the next government in New Delhi will determine the course of Indo-Pakistan ties, which were pushed to a new low after the Pulwama terror attack.

In April, Khan said he believed there may be a better chance of peace talks with India and settle the Kashmir issue if Modi's party BJP wins the general elections.

Tensions flared up between India and Pakistan after a suicide bomber of Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM) killed 40 CRPF personnel in Kashmir's Pulwama district on



February 14.

Amid mounting outrage, the Indian Air Force (IAF) carried out a counter-terror operation, hitting the biggest JeM training camp in Balakot, deep inside Pakistan on February 26. The next day, Pakistan Air Force retaliated and downed a MiG-21 in an aerial combat and captured an IAF pilot, who was handed over to India.

On May 22, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that his country has delivered a "message of peace" by opening the

Kartarpur Corridor for Sikh pilgrims from India as he underlined the importance of "conflict resolution" for peace and stability in South Asia.

Addressing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz capital, also attended by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Qureshi said enduring peace and prosperity in South Asia will remain elusive without good-faith diplomacy and result-oriented dialogue. (PTI)

Sri Lankan leaders unite in congratulating Narendra Modi as BJP heads to major poll win

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and main Opposition leader Mahinda Rajapaksa congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he led his Bharatiya Janata Party towards a resounding victory for a second term in office. The BJP was set to return to power Thursday as the partial vote count released by the Election Commission showed that it was leading in 296 of the 542 Lok Sabha seats that went to polls in seven phases, demolishing the combined opposition with the Congress Party stuck at 51 seats. "Congratulations on your victory and the people's re-endorsement of you leadership," Sirisena said in a tweet.

"I have immense pleasure in extending to you my warmest congratulations and sincere best wishes on the victory of the BJP," Wickremesinghe's message of congratulations said. "Heartfelt best wishes and congratulations," Rajapaksa said in his message. Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera interrupted his speech in Parliament to offer congratulations to Prime Minister Modi.

Several other lawmakers in Parliament offered best wishes to the Indian leader. Last year, Sri Lanka faced a major constitutional and political crisis which lasted over 50 days after Sirisena took a controversial decision of sacking Wickremesinghe as Prime Minister to replace him with Rajapaksa in late October.

He was then forced to restore Wickremesinghe in office as Rajapaksa was not able to prove his majority in Parliament. (PTI)

Malaysian police raid Deloitte office in 1MDB probe

KUALA LUMPUR (TIP): Malaysian police on May 23 raided the Kuala Lumpur offices of auditor Deloitte as they ramp up investigations into a multi-billion-dollar corruption scandal, an official said.

Huge sums were stolen from Malaysian state fund 1MDB, allegedly by former leader Najib Razak and his cronies who spent it on everything from yachts to rare artwork.

Deloitte has come under scrutiny after it audited 1MDB's 2013 and 2014 financial statements.

Mazlan Mansor, the police's head of commercial crimes, confirmed to AFP that a raid had taken place on Deloitte's office "in the course of 1MDB investigations".

Police seized documents and files during the operation, The Star newspaper reported.

Malaysia's securities regulator had already fined the firm 2.2 million ringgit (\$525,000) in January for breaches related to a 1MDB bond issuance.

Deloitte was the third major accounting company to audit 1MDB's books, after KPMG and Ernst & Young.

Deloitte quit as 1MDB's auditor in 2016.

The same year, the firm said its audits of 1MDB's financial statements could no longer be relied upon after the US filed lawsuits linked to the scandal.

US authorities are seeking to claw back assets allegedly bought in America with funds stolen from 1MDB and believe \$4.5 billion was looted from the fund.

The allegations played a large part in persuading voters to eject Najib's coalition at historic elections last year after more than six decades in power.

He has since been hit with dozens of charges linked to the scandal, and last month went on trial.

He denies wrongdoing. (PTI)

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Conferred on IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath



WASHINGTON (TIP): India born International Monetary Fund Chief Economist Gita Gopinath, who was conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2019 in the category of Academics, finally accepted the award in the US. As she was not able to receive the award in India because of her busy schedule with IMF, the award was presented to her May 9 at the Embassy of India, Washington D.C.

India's Ambassador to the US Harsh V Shringla presented the prestigious Award to Ms Gita Gopinath. Several dignitaries, including previous recipients of the PBSA, ED IMF, other IMF officials, family and friends of Ms Gita Gopinath, participated in the function.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Shringla congratulated Ms Gopinath on being awarded the PBSA and hailed the achievements of Indian diaspora in various fields in USA as also its contribution in fostering India-US ties. Ms Gita Gopinath expressed her gratitude to Government of India for considering her for the esteemed award.

Ambassador Harsh V Shringla presenting the prestigious Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award (PBSA), 2019 to Ms Gita Gopinath, Chief Economist, International Monetary Fund, at the Indian Embassy, May 9

Photo / courtesy Embassy of India

INDIAN TECHIE DENIED H-1B VISA; IT FIRM SUES US GOVERNMENT



The 28-year old Indian techie Prahars Chandra Sai Venkata Aniseti was hired by Xterra Solutions for Business Systems Analyst position

DALLAS, TX(TIP): A Silicon Valley based IT firm has filed a lawsuit against the United States government for denying H-1B visa to an Indian techie. The North American IT firm, Xterra Solutions has filed a lawsuit against the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) where it claims that the denial of visa to the Indian techie is baseless. The employee had applied for Business System Analyst position at the company.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

INDIAN AMERICAN CRICKETER DIES AFTER COLLAPSING ON THE FIELD IN ATLANTA



Mondal, who hails from Kolkata, West Bengal, is survived by wife Rituparna and son Spandan

ATLANTA (TIP): An Indian America cricketer in Atlanta suddenly passed away on May 19th around 4pm while playing cricket. Subhabrata Mondal collapsed to the ground while playing cricket and became unconscious. Paramedics took him to Emergency and later declared he is no more. He represented Pyramid Green Wings team of Atlanta Cricket League.

Mondal, who hails from Kolkata, West Bengal, is survived by wife Rituparna and son Spandan who is about to step into the high school.

A GoFundMe campaign has been set up to help the dependent spouse and son to provide some financial support to get through this difficult phase for the future well being of the family and upbringing of Spandan.

Funds collected will help in settling down

1. Cremation expenses
2. Settling any local debt/expenses
3. Endowment for Spandan's education

INDIAN AMERICAN UCHICAGO STUDENT WINS PRESTIGIOUS BARRY GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIPS



Pandit plans to pursue a PhD in mathematics after graduation, with hopes of becoming a professor at a research institution.

CHICAGO (TIP): An Indian American is among three third year students at University of Chicago who has received prestigious Barry Goldwater Scholarships, awarded annually based on academic merit in the natural sciences, mathematics and engineering.

Nikhil Pandit, a mathematics major with a research interest in symplectic geometry-a type of geometry that stems from the Hamiltonian interpretation of classical mechanics, has been recognized for excellence in STEM.

Pandit is participating in a research project in systolic geometry with Prof. André Neves and also conducting an independent study with Prof. Shmuel Weinberger to explore Floer homology, a tool used in symplectic geometry that relates geometric properties of a surface to counts of certain loops in the surface.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Shankar Mahadevan to Enthrall Audience at AAPI's 37th Annual Convention in Atlanta

ATLANTA ,GA (TIP): Shankar Mahadevan, the popular award winning Bollywood playback singer is all set to take the delegates by storm during the 37th Annual AAPI Convention & Scientific Assembly to be held from July 3rd to July 7th, 2019 at the fabulous and world famous Omni Atlanta at CNN Center and Georgia World Congress Center. Dr. Naresh Parikh, President of the American Association of Physicians of Indian origin (AAPI) announced here. Shankar Mahadevan and his troupe will perform live at the much anticipated AAPI's annual convention enthralling over 2,000 delegates from across the nation, who are expected to attend the Convention.

"AAPI's Annual Convention & Scientific Assembly offers an exciting venue to interact with leading physicians, health professionals, academicians, and scientists of Indian origin," said Dr. Parikh. "Physicians and healthcare professionals from across the country will convene and participate in the scholarly exchange of medical advances, to develop health policy agendas, and to encourage legislative priorities in the coming year."

An accomplished musician in Bollywood world, Shankar is a part of the Shankar Ehsaan Loy trio team that provides music to Bollywood films. Though a software engineer by profession



Shankar Mahadevan will be star entertainer at AAPI Convention in Atlanta July 3 to 7, 2019

and having worked with Oracle Corporation, Shankar's interest in music made him venture into the field of music. He got his first award as a playback singer in Chennai film music, collaborating with A. R. Rahman and winning a National Film Award for his song in Kandukondain Kandukondain.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

MAKE A MAN FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU

Just like with all my dating and relationship advice, some of these tips on how to make a man fall in love with you may work better for you than others. You know yourself and what comes naturally, so apply the tips that make the most sense.

Make Him Feel Needed

Look, I know you're an independent woman that doesn't need a man, but the truth is...men like to feel needed. Chalk it up to our evolutionary past of being the provider and protector in the relationship. Sure, you can kill your own spiders and change your own tire, but that doesn't mean you have to.

If you've been single for a while and have become accustomed to doing everything that needs doing, this may take a little practice and letting go, but the next time you have something that you know your man would excel at, ask for help.

That's all. Just ask for help.

Not only will you give him purpose (after all, he's trying to win your heart too, so doing something for you is huge), but you'll also see how nice it is to lean on someone else, to rely on him to help you. It takes the load off of you for sure.

Let Him Miss You

I know if you're falling for this guy, you want to spend every waking moment with him. And maybe he wants that too. But let's ease into that 24/7 type of relationship, shall we? Or better yet...never get to it.

Having time apart is healthy for couples. It gives you each time to do things on your own or spend time with friends (don't be that chick who abandons her friends whenever she's in a relationship). It gives you something to talk about when you are together. Having time apart provides balance in the relationship, and it gives you both the opportunity to miss one another.

Let Your True Nature Shine

I've heard some so-called dating gurus tell women to dumb down their intellect or put a damper on their exuberant personalities. This is utter crap. If you do that, then the guy has one impression



of who you are that is entirely inaccurate. Once you get to know each other and you start being real, he might be thrown off when he discovers that, whoa, you're actually intelligent or opinionated.

Admire His Masculinity

Just like men like to be needed, they also like it when you admire how masculine they are. But again, I'm not saying you need to squeeze his muscles and faint every time you see him!

Masculinity isn't just about testosterone and muscles. It's about treating people well, being chivalrous, and acting with honor. Like the Norman Mailer quote above says.

Real masculinity is being vulnerable and empathetic. It's being a good partner. So whatever it means to you, let him know that you admire these qualities. If nothing else, it will start an interesting dialogue on what it means to be a man in this day and age.

Be Patient

I talked about the importance of being patient as part of the process of learning how to make a man fall in love with you, but I can't say enough about it.

If you feel like you'll explode if you

don't profess your love for him, heed this advice. Tell a friend how you feel. She'll support you but also help you analyze whether your lovegush will be reciprocated or not. If she doesn't feel like he's exhibiting the signs of being in love with you yet, she'll tell you and you can save yourself from the embarrassment of a one-sided love profession (the worst!).

I'm not saying the man always has to be the one to say "I love you" first, but you do want to give him time to process his feelings on the subject. Just think how much better it would be if, when the pronouncement does happen, regardless of who says it first, you both say it.

Let Him Know You're Thinking of Him

I know in the early days of dating a new guy, you might try to have a poker face. After all, you aren't sure if this is going to turn into a relationship, so you might be hesitant to tell him that you're thinking of him. Well, the rules have changed now that things are progressing, and it's actually in your favor to tell him he's on your mind. Just like with compliments, if you like it, he will too. You blush from your head to your toe whenever he tells you that he's thinking of you, so why not reciprocate?

FOOD CORNER



CHICKEN WITH SWEET POTATOES AND CAULIFLOWER

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup nonfat plain yogurt
- 1 teaspoon Madras-style curry powder
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced-
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, (about 1 1/2 pounds), trimmed
- 1 sweet potato, (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 3 cups cauliflower florets, (1 small head) or broccoli florets, 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, Freshly ground pepper, to taste, 1/4 cup chopped unsalted dry-roasted peanuts, or cashews, 1/4 cup loosely packed cilantro leaves

Method

- Combine yogurt, curry powder, coriander, ginger, garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt and cayenne in a shallow glass dish; mix to blend. Reserve 1/4 cup of this mixture; cover and refrigerate. Add chicken to the remaining yogurt mixture and turn to coat. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or overnight.
- Preheat oven to 230°C. Lightly coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
- Remove the chicken from the marinade and place on the prepared baking sheet. Toss sweet potato with the reserved yogurt mixture in a medium bowl and place on the baking sheet.
- Toss cauliflower with oil in a medium bowl and add to the baking sheet. Season vegetables with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Roast chicken and vegetables, uncovered, for 15 minutes.
- Carefully turn the chicken over and stir the vegetables. Roast until the vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes more.
- Arrange chicken and vegetables on a platter or individual plates and garnish with peanuts (or cashews) and cilantro.

The Golden Rule

Do: Make sure you always (and we mean always) remove your makeup before hitting the sheets. The skin needs to breathe overnight. And makeup prevents that, as leaving it on overnight clogs the pores which may cause blemishes and/or blackheads. Don't possess a makeup remover? Just put some olive oil on a cotton pad and gently massage the oil onto your face to get rid of the makeup and dirt.

Don't: Forget that exfoliation is indispensable. At least once or twice a week, exfoliate your skin to remove the layers of dead skin, sure to leave you with a more healthy glow and brighter skin. You can also apply a paste of walnut in powder form with yogurt to exfoliate your skin, as the antioxidants present in walnuts help remove dirt and promote radiant skin.

Sun and Skin

Do: Apply sunscreen with SPF of at least 15

DOS AND DON'TS FOR BEAUTIFUL SKIN

that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Since a lifetime of sun exposure can cause wrinkles, age spots and other skin problems, you have to protect your skin from the sun. Make sure the label reads 'noncomedogenic' or 'nonacnegenic' so that the product does not tend to block pores.

Don't: Skip the sunscreen, whether it's cloudy or cold outside (no excuses). If you're heading to a beach or around reflective surfaces like snow or ice, lather your skin up with some more sunscreen with SPF of at least 30.

You are What You Eat

Do: Keep a note of what you put on your plate. Eat fresh fruits, greens, sufficient protein and vitamins. A diet rich in vitamin C



and low in fats and sugar promotes radiant skin. Consider a low-sugar diet, which can keep insulin levels down, allowing cells to maintain a healthy balance.

"Don't: Eat spicy and fermented foods, salt, citrus fruits, fried food. Instead favour

blander foods such as rice, oatmeal and applesauce", advises American author and Ayurvedic physician, Vasant Lad, in The Complete Book of Ayurvedic Home Remedies.

Sweat It Out!

Do: Exercise regularly. Running, jogging and yoga will give your body the necessary blood circulation, and also accelerate the cleansing process of your entire body. You will notice a glow on your face after working out. Racing against time? Just take a brisk walk around the block.

Don't: Skip skincare before and after a workout. Apply a toner to help minimize oil production before heading out. Exfoliate after, and then apply shea butter or olive oil to moisturize the skin.

HAVE PLENTY OF CURD DAILY TO REDUCE ANXIETY

Having probiotics can not only regulate gut bacteria—trillions of microorganisms in the gut which perform key functions in the immune system and metabolism—but also improve brain function and, thus, reduce anxiety, find researchers.

Probiotics are living organisms found naturally in some foods that are also known as "good" or "friendly" bacteria because they fight against harmful bacteria and prevent them from settling in the gut.

Recent research also suggests that mental disorders could be treated by regulating the intestinal microbiota, but there was no specific evidence to support this.

"Gut microbiota can help regulate brain function through something called the 'gut-brain axis,'" found the researchers from the Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine.

To reach this conclusion, the researchers reviewed 21 studies that had looked at 1,503 people collectively.

The team found that probiotic supplements in seven studies within their analysis contained only one kind of probiotic, two studies used a product that contained two kinds of probiotics, and the supplements used in the other five studies included at least three kinds.

Overall, 11 of the 21 studies showed a positive effect on anxiety symptoms by regulating intestinal microbiota, meaning that more than half (52 per cent) of the studies showed this



approach to be effective.

Of the 14 studies that had used probiotics as the intervention, more than a third (36 per cent) found them to be effective in reducing anxiety symptoms, while six of the remaining seven studies that had used non-probiotics as interventions found those to be effective—a 86 per cent rate of effectiveness.

Non-probiotic interventions were also more effective.

Most of the studies did not report serious adverse events, and only four studies reported mild adverse effects

such as dry mouth and diarrhoea.

"People who experience anxiety symptoms might be helped by taking steps to regulate the microorganisms in their gut using probiotic and non-probiotic food and supplements," suggested the review of studies published in the journal General Psychiatry.

In addition to the use of psychiatric drugs for treatment, "we can also consider regulating intestinal flora to alleviate anxiety symptoms," said researchers.

Source: IANS



HEART ATTACKS MORE SEVERE IN MORNING THAN NIGHT: RESEARCHERS

Heart attacks that mostly happen in the morning tend to be more severe than cardiac arrests at night, warn researchers.

The study, published in the journal Trends in Immunology, discusses how time of the day affects severity of afflictions, ranging from allergies to heart attacks. For example, studies showed that adaptive immune responses—in which highly specialised, pathogen-fighting cells develop over weeks—are under circadian control.

Researchers compiled studies, predominantly in mice, that looked at the connection between circadian rhythms and immune responses. "This is 'striking' and should have relevance for clinical applications, from transplants to vaccinations," said study senior author Christoph Scheiermann, Professor at the University of Geneva in Switzerland.

According to researchers, in both humans and mice, the numbers of white blood cells also oscillate in a circadian manner, raising the question whether it might be possible one day to optimise immune response through awareness and utilisation of the circadian clock.

Source: IANS

FAST-ACTING NASAL SPRAY CAN HELP TREAT DEPRESSION

An antidepressant nasal-spray can be a safe and effective way to treat depression in patients who do not respond to existing treatments, a study has found.

Being common and treatment resistant, individuals with depression are often unable to relieve their symptoms despite trying anti-depressants, researchers said.

According to the study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, esketamine nasal spray, in conjunction with an oral antidepressant, offers a new fast-acting treatment for people that have not responded to other depression treatments.

"Not only was adjunctive esketamine therapy effective, the improvement was evident within the first 24 hours," said Michael Thase from the University of Pennsylvania in the US. "The novel mechanism of action of esketamine, coupled with the rapidity of benefit, underpin just how important this development is for patients with difficult to treat depression," said Thase.

The study was conducted on nearly 200 adults with moderate to severe depression and a history of not responding to at least two antidepressants.

Common chemicals can increase risk of metabolic disorders

Do you know that your everyday exposure to everyday harmful chemicals can land you into serious trouble?

A recent study has found that people exposed to chemicals called Phthalates, increasing the risk of metabolic disorders. The study was discussed in the meeting, 'ECE 2019'. Researchers found a correlation between levels of phthalate exposure and markers of impaired liver function, which are indicators of increased risk of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

These findings suggest that more actions may need to be taken to reduce people's exposure to these potentially harmful, yet commonly used chemicals. Phthalates are common additives used in manufacturing to produce plastics and they can be found in numerous everyday items including milk, bottled water, instant coffee, perfume, makeup, shampoo, toys and food packaging.

Exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals has previously been implicated in causing serious harm to fertility and development, as well as increased obesity risk in rodents and people. However, no studies have directly investigated how Phthalate exposure is associated with obesity and metabolism. In this study, Professor Milica Medi Stojanoska, one of the researchers correlated the levels of Phthalate



absorbed by people with their body weight, type 2 diabetes incidence and markers of impaired liver and metabolic function.

Higher exposure to the chemical was associated with increased markers of liver damage, insulin resistance and cholesterol in people with obesity and diabetes. Prof Stojanoska says, "Although a small association study, these findings suggest that not only do phthalates alter metabolism to increase

the risk of obesity and diabetes but that they are also causing toxic damage to the liver."

Prof Stojanoska's research is now looking at the effects of endocrine-disrupting chemicals on human health in adults, adolescents and babies.

"We need to inform people about the potential adverse effects of endocrine disruptors on their health and look at ways to minimise our contact with these harmful chemicals," adds the professor.

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SCIENTISTS 'PAINT' MICROSCOPIC MONA LISA ON QUANTUM CANVAS

Scientists have created microscopic replicas of iconic masterpieces, including Italian polymath Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa and Van Gogh's Starry Night, on a quantum 'canvas' the width of a human hair.

The images were projected and photographed on a blob of gaseous quantum matter known as Bose-Einstein condensate.

According to Tyler Neely from University of Queensland in Australia, the artworks were originally a fun side project alongside their more serious research.

"We never aimed to do this—we were originally looking to better understand the unsolved mysteries of how fluids flow," Neely said.

"We were hoping to gain new insights into how our everyday world arises out of the microscopic quantum world, helping us create new quantum-enhanced technologies," he said. "But, while we were at it, we just happened to create some of the world's smallest masterpieces," he added.

The team cooled a gas made of rubidium atoms down to a few billionths of a degree Celsius above absolute zero, which at minus 273.15 degrees Celsius is the coldest temperature possible.

"The gas doesn't freeze since it is too diluted, instead behaving as a blob of gaseous quantum matter," Neely said.

"We then put the image on a projector illuminated by a laser, but instead of projecting it to be large, we send it backwards through a microscope to make the image tiny," he said. This light 'stamps' the image on an area around about 100 microns wide—more or less the width of human hair, which can range from between 17 to 181 microns wide.

"We can then take the image, which is only in black and white, and produce colour shots by producing a 'red', 'blue', and 'green' image, and then combine them on a computer," Neely said.

The resulting image is barely visible to the human eye, with each pixel representing only about 50 atoms.

"One of the first images we developed was Van Gogh's Starry Night, but we were soon recreating other works of art, famous photos, as well as photos of ourselves," Neely said.

The researchers believe these initial images are an impressive demonstration of quantum matter as a brand new material for producing art. *Source: PTI*

Android gets Adobe's 1st cross-device video editing app

Software major Adobe on Wednesday announced that it is rolling out its first cross-device video editing app "Premiere Rush" to Android phones.

Adobe has packed its professional editing tools like Premiere Pro and Audition as part of the all-in-one app for Android devices, the company said in a statement.

The app integrates intuitive editing, simplified colour correction, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered audio clean up, customisable Motion Graphics templates and works across desktop and mobile.

"Premiere Rush" also automatically syncs all projects and edits to the cloud, so users could access the most up-to-date version and work from anywhere, on any device.

The app is available for download through the Google Play Store and Samsung Galaxy Store.

The trial "Premiere Rush Starter Plan" that gives users access to app features, use of desktop and mobile apps and the ability to create an unlimited number of projects and export up to three projects—is available for free.

Otherwise, the app is available for \$9.99 (Rs 696.24) per month to individuals, \$19.99 (Rs 1,392.57) per month to teams and \$29.99 (Rs 2,089.21) per month to enterprise customers.

Adobe is bringing the app first to Android smartphones including Samsung Galaxy S10, 10+, S9, S9+, Note9, Note8, S10e, Google Pixel 3, 3XL, 2, 2XL and OnePlus 6T.

FORMATION OF MOON BROUGHT WATER TO EARTH: STUDY

A cosmic body that hit the Earth and led to the formation of the Moon about 4.4 billion years ago may have also delivered large quantities of water to our home planet, making it habitable, scientists have found.

The Earth is the only terrestrial planet with a large amount of water and a relatively large moon, which stabilises the Earth's axis. Both were essential for Earth to develop life.

The Moon was formed when Earth was hit by a body about the size of Mars, also called Theia.

Until now, scientists had assumed that Theia originated in the inner solar system near the Earth.

The study, published in the journal Nature Astronomy, showed that Theia comes from the outer solar system, and it delivered large quantities of water to Earth. "Our approach is unique because, for the first time, it allows us to associate the origin of water on Earth with the formation of the Moon. To put it simply, without the Moon there probably would be no life on Earth," said Thorsten Kleine, Professor of Planetology at the University of Munster in Germany.



The Earth formed in the 'dry' inner solar system, and so it is somewhat surprising that there is water on Earth.

From earlier studies, it is known that the solar system became structured such that the 'dry' materials were separated from the 'wet' materials.

The 'carbonaceous' meteorites, which are relatively rich in water, come from the outer solar system, whereas the drier 'non-carbonaceous' meteorites come from the inner solar system.

While previous studies have shown that carbonaceous materials were likely responsible for delivering the water to Earth, it was unknown when and how

this carbonaceous material—and thus the water—came to Earth.

"We have used molybdenum isotopes to answer this question. The molybdenum isotopes allow us to clearly distinguish carbonaceous and non-carbonaceous material, and as such represent a 'genetic fingerprint' of material from the outer and inner solar system," said Gerrit Budde, from University of Munster.

The measurements show that the molybdenum isotopic composition of the Earth lies between those of the carbonaceous and non-carbonaceous meteorites, demonstrating that some of Earth's molybdenum originated in the outer solar system.

The chemical properties of molybdenum play a key role because, as it is an iron-loving element, most of the Earth's molybdenum is located in the core.

"The molybdenum which is accessible today in the Earth's mantle, therefore, originates from the late stages of Earth's formation, while the molybdenum from earlier phases is entirely in the core," said Christoph Burkhardt, second author of the study.

This novel robotic drone can fly, drive



Scientists have developed the first robot drone that can fly like a quadcopter, drive on tough terrain and squeeze into tight spaces using the same motors.

The hybrid FSTAR (flying sprawl-tuned autonomous robot), created by researchers at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) in Israel, can fly over obstacles or run underneath them.

The sprawl, which adjusts from a flat configuration to 55 degrees allows the robot to transform its movement from a flying quadcopter to a car-like robot, researchers said.

It also adjusts its width to crawl or run on flat surfaces, climb over large obstacles and up closely-spaced walls, or squeeze through a tunnel, pipe or narrow gaps, they said.

"We plan to develop larger and smaller versions to expand this family of sprawling robots for different applications, as well as algorithms that will help exploit speed and cost of transport for these flying/driving robots," said David Zarrouk, a senior lecturer at BGU.

It can run on the ground at a speed of up to 2.6 metres per second. That combined with low energy consumption using the same motors makes FSTAR ideal for a broad range of applications that may require longer work time.

Possible commercial uses are package deliveries since it can quickly fly to a target zone and then drive using its wheels safely and quietly to reach the recipient's doorstep.

FACEBOOK SHARING USERS' DATA WITH TELECOM FIRMS, PHONE MAKERS: REPORT

A confidential Facebook document reviewed by The Intercept has revealed that the social networking giant is offering private data of its users without their knowledge or consent to 100 different telecom companies and phone makers in 50 countries.

Confidential documents seen by the website showed late Monday that Facebook is helping operators and phone makers "create targeted advertising by supplying them with surveillance data slurped directly from users' smartphones".

Not only that, the social networking giant is also collecting data from its main iOS and Android apps, Messenger and Instagram apps -- even snooping into the phones of children as young as 13. Through a tool called "Actionable Insights", Facebook is allegedly collecting data including technical details about smartphones, cellular and Wi-Fi networks used by Facebook users, locations visited social groups and interests.

Facebook reacted in a statement late Monday: "We do not, nor have we ever, rated people's credit worthiness for Actionable Insights or across ads, and Facebook does not use people's credit information in how we show ads".



Worries of US-China trade war hits markets

Sign up for Next China, a weekly email on where the nation stands now and where it's going next.

Expectations that \$200 billion of foreign money would flow into China's capital markets this year are looking nothing short of optimistic.

For overseas investors, a weaker currency is the latest factor making yuan-denominated assets less attractive. They've been selling mainland-listed stocks at a record pace and their demand for Chinese bonds has been relatively tepid: monthly inflows have averaged at just 6.8 billion yuan (\$984 million) this year, versus the 44.4 billion yuan seen in 2018, ChinaBond data show.

What had started as a promising year in China's markets is quickly turning sour as the country's trade stand-off with the US takes a toll on sentiment. The swift correction in stocks and concern that the yuan could tumble to dangerous levels is creating volatility in a market that -- for foreign investors -- remains difficult to hedge. It comes at a sensitive time for policy makers, who have been accelerating efforts to open the country's financial sector to the world.

Sydney-based Nader Naeimi, who started selling China equities in April, said he won't be lured back until China's economic data significantly improves or the government announces large fiscal stimulus.

"There are a lot of options outside China," said Naeimi, who oversees about \$1 billion at AMP Capital Investors Ltd., adding that foreigners remember last year's rout and the current volatility might keep them away. "It's two years in a row we've seen that -- starting well and then a big crash."

The Shanghai Composite Index, which was up more than 30% for the year at its peak in April, has given up about a third of those gains and trading volume keeps dwindling. More than 42 billion yuan of A shares have been sold through trading links with Hong Kong in May, more than double the monthly



record set in April.

The offshore yuan has declined about 3% against the dollar this month and investors are debating whether it will weaken past 7 for the first time since the financial crisis. A breach of that level could result in consequences from financial instability to a deterioration in China's balance of payments and derail efforts to open capital markets, according to Citigroup Inc. Investors should be cautious about capital outflows given expectations the yuan will fall more, Jianghai Securities said in a note dated Monday.

While risk-off environment in China has helped government debt rebound since April, foreign flows into the nation's bond market are lagging expectations. Overseas investors bought just \$2.7 billion worth of Chinese notes last month even as sovereign debt was included in a major global index for the first time. Inflows would need to pick up significantly to reach Societe Generale

SA's forecast of as much as \$100 billion in the 12 months after inclusion.

Foreigners have increasingly opted to buy dollar-denominated Chinese and emerging-market debt rather than onshore bonds, according to Paul Sandhu, BNP Paribas Asset Management's head of multi-asset quantitative solutions for Asia-Pacific.

"The premium of going into China bonds over getting the hard currency outside of China is not enough to outweigh the risks of, for example, currency depreciation," he said.

Tuan Huynh, Deutsche Bank Wealth's chief investment officer for Asia Pacific who called the China stocks rally late last year, is also staying put for now. "In the short term we would rather be more cautious," he said.

The offshore yuan fell 0.06% to 6.9441 a dollar as of 4:40 p.m. in Hong Kong after gaining as much as 0.28% earlier. The Shanghai Composite Index added 1.2%.

Source: Bloomberg

PNB LIKELY TO TAKE CONTROL OF 2-3 SMALL STATE-RUN BANKS: REPORT

India's Punjab National Bank is looking to merge with two or three government owned banks that could include Oriental Bank Of Commerce, Andhra Bank and Allahabad Bank, two sources familiar with the situation told Reuters, as New Delhi tries to cut the number of state-owned lenders.

This could be the one of the first decisions to be taken by the new government after election results to be announced on May 23. Exit polls showed that the alliance led by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi could win with a big majority.

Banking sector reform is unfinished business from the last five year term of Modi's government as banks struggle under a huge debt pile than of more than 9 trillion Indian rupees (\$130 billion), or nearly 5% of the nation's gross domestic output.

The proposal to merge PNB with 2-3 other banks would be put before the cabinet for its nod, according to a government source.

Currently, there are 20 state-run banks following mergers of small banks with State Bank of India and Bank of Baroda, and with IDBI Bank taken over by state-run Life Insurance Corporation.

PNB could start the process of taking control of the banks in the next three months, according to the sources, who declined to be named, as they are not authorised to speak to the media.

PNB shares fell as much as 4% after Reuters reported the news. Its shares ended down 2.55% at 86.10 rupees on India's National Stock Exchange on Tuesday.

Allahabad Bank fell 2.6% to close at 45.15 rupees a share, while Oriental Bank of Commerce ended down nearly 1% at 95.20 rupees per share.

PNB declined to comment, while the other banks did not immediately reply to an email from Reuters seeking further information.



Sony Mobile to exit India

NEW DELHI (TIP): Facing stiff competition from Chinese and South Korean players, Japanese conglomerate Sony Corporation has announced to quit the Indian smartphone market. Sony had less than 0.01 per cent of the total Indian smartphone market share in the first quarter of 2019, according to Counterpoint Research.

Sony Mobile, however, said that it would continue to monitor the market situations and business feasibility in the country.

"Our focus markets are Japan, Europe, Hong Kong and Taiwan to drive profitability and future prospects in the 5G era," Sony Mobile said on Wednesday. "We have ceased sales in Central and South America, the Middle East, South Asia, Oceania, etc. in FY 18," it added. The company assured that it would continue its customer support operations, including after sales support and software updates for existing customers in India.

Source: IANS



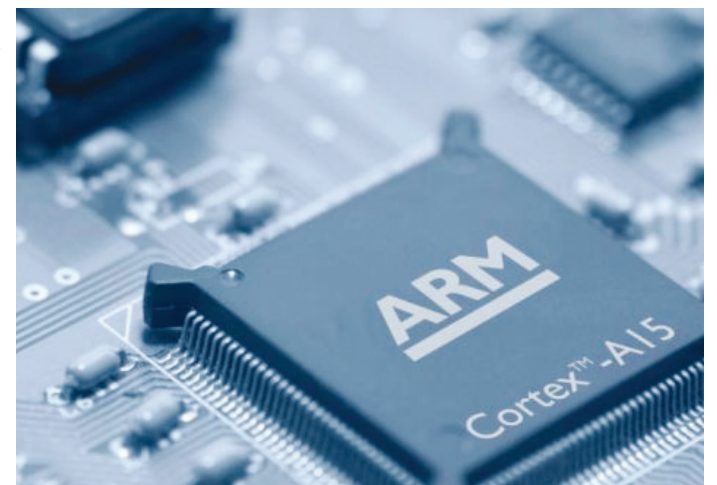
UK CHIP GIANT HALTS TIES WITH HUAWEI AFTER US BAN

British chip designer ARM has halted relations with Huawei in order to comply with a US blockade of the company, potentially crippling the Chinese company's ability to make new chips for its future smartphones.

Huawei uses ARM blueprints to design the processors that power its smartphones. It also licenses graphics technology from the Cambridge-based company. "ARM is complying with all of the latest regulations set forth by the US government," an ARM spokesman said.

Huawei said it valued its close relationships with its partners, but it recognised the pressure some of them are under "as a result of politically motivated decisions". "We are confident this regrettable situation can be resolved and our priority remains to continue to deliver world-class technology and products to our customers around the world." The US blocked Huawei from buying US goods last week, jeopardising ties with Google.

Source: Reuters



contd from page 1
A Historic Win for BJP: Modi...

and that he will take all together in building a stronger nation- a reassurance to the fearing minorities who have been uneasy because of the hardliners in BJP openly speaking in favor of Hindutva and a Hindu nation.

Mr. Modi said the mandate laid the foundation for the 21st century India, where there would be only two castes. "The first of these castes would be the poor, and the second those who want to fight poverty," he said. The emergence of these two castes in this election was the reason for the defeat of parties that espoused casteism. In an impassioned speech, he said that in his second term, he wanted to make three vows to the people. "My first vow is that I will not do anything out of ill-will or bad intentions. I could make mistakes but never do anything out of malice. My second vow is that I shall never do anything for myself in order to garner profit for myself, and my third vow is that every minute of my life and myself I shall devote to the country. Whenever you want to evaluate me, you must do so on these parameters," he said.

Mr. Modi thanked "130 crore" people of India for their faith in Bharatiya Janata Party and for handing down a historic mandate. He said it was their victory; it was the victory of the common people of India. "It is not Modi's victory. It is the victory of honest people, of youth, of mothers, of hardworking farmers, of honest middle-class people who paid taxes. He said he dedicated the BJP victory to the people of India.

Wells Fargo, TD Bank turn over...

NBC News first reported that Wells Fargo turned over a few thousand documents to the committee, and TD Bank provided a handful. The banks are two of the nine financial institutions with which congressional Democrats are seeking cooperation. The push has led to an escalating legal battle on multiple fronts.

On Wednesday, May 22, a federal judge in New York ruled that two other banks, Deutsche Bank and Capitol One, were required to comply with congressional subpoenas seeking access to Trump's financial records. The House Financial Services Committee and the House Intelligence Committee both have requested the documents from Deutsche Bank and Capitol One in their investigations of possible "foreign influence in the U.S. political process."

"We remain committed to providing appropriate information to all authorized investigations and will abide by a court order regarding such investigations," Deutsche Bank said in a statement to Fox News after the ruling. Meanwhile, the House Ways and Means Committee is seeking the president's tax returns and has issued subpoenas for the files. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said he would not comply with the subpoena for the president's tax returns last week, but this week, a confidential draft IRS memo was revealed calling the disclosure "mandatory" unless the president asserts executive privilege over the financial documents.

The Washington Post first reported on the 10-page memo, which does not mention Trump by name, but appears to add a new level of pressure to the White House. Mnuchin, though, has maintained that the Democrats' requests for Trump's tax returns "lacks a legitimate legislative purpose" and said his department will not "disclose the requested returns and return information." The IRS on Wednesday, May 22, pushed back on that report, stating the memo does not represent an official position for the agency.

The standoff between the congressional Democrats and the administration is likely to lead to a court battle, with Trump reportedly indicating he's prepared to fight all the

way to the Supreme Court.

Trump declined to reveal his tax returns during the 2016 presidential election, claiming he was under audit. Political candidates aren't required to disclose their tax returns, though traditionally all candidates do.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump's fight to stop the release of his financial records is on the fast track for a key court decision after a three-judge appellate panel agreed Thursday to hear oral arguments later this summer, according to a May 23 Politico report.

In a two-page order, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals' judges scheduled oral arguments for July 12 in the case that pits the president's attorneys against House Democrats, who issued a subpoena to the accounting firm Mazars USA for eight years of Trump's financial records. The court date will come several weeks after a lower court rejected the president's attempts to block the subpoena, arguing that the request was politically motivated. Trump's lawyers immediately appealed the ruling, and the president called the opinion "ridiculous" and "totally wrong," and noted Judge Amit Mehta was an appointee of President Barack Obama.

In the next round of legal sparring, Trump will go before a panel of judges that includes another Obama appointee, Patricia Millett, as well David Tatel, a Bill Clinton appointee, and Neomi Rao, who joined the D.C. Circuit in March as a Trump appointee.

Under the order approved Thursday, Trump's first round of legal briefs spelling out its arguments are due June 10, followed by a response from lawyers for the House committee and Mazars by July 1. A final reply brief from the Trump attorneys is due July 9.

Democrats have said they will suspend the deadlines in their subpoena for production of the Trump financial documents while the president's appeal works its way through the courts. Mazars, meantime, has said it will still keep working to collect and prepare the documents but won't turn over any until the judges' render an opinion.

The panel's focus has been on trying to corroborate claims made by Trump's former personal attorney Michael Cohen, who earlier this year gave the committee documents purporting to show Trump artificially inflated and deflated the value of his assets for his personal financial benefit. (Source: FOX News / Politico / News Agencies)

Mayor de Blasio Directs Ad...

the City has increased its advertisement spending in community and ethnic media by over 220 percent from \$850,000 in FY13 to \$2.74 million in FY18. New York City is the most diverse city in the country with New Yorkers speaking over 200 languages. Community and ethnic media provides an important way for the City to connect with all residents and ensure services reach all communities. This executive order is part of the de Blasio Administration's plan to provide equal access to City services to all communities citywide, and strengthening its commitment to community and ethnic media. "We can't be the fairest big city in America if only some people know how to receive city services," said Mayor de Blasio. "Community and ethnic media outlets are critical for delivering news across the city. This Executive Order will help us reach more New Yorkers, ensuring that more people can benefit from all the City has to offer."

"The City is further enshrining our commitment to reaching all New Yorkers-including through the media they read-no matter the languages they speak," said Bitta Mostofi, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. "A healthy democracy cannot exist without a thriving press, and community and ethnic media are trusted sources of valuable information for the communities they serve. I am proud to join the Mayor today in further demonstrating through this Executive

Order the City's commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive city for all."

"Community and ethnic media outlets are vital to ensuring the rich diversity of New York City's media landscape," said Anne del Castillo, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment. "We are proud to be a part of the City's efforts to support these critical resources by facilitating increased advertising revenue and visibility for local print and digital outlets." "City government best serves all New Yorkers when it includes all New Yorkers," said Lisette Camilo, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services. "Community and ethnic media outlets play a special role in giving voice to everyone in our diverse city. The executive order announced today will make sure City government is reaching the people it serves, both in the neighborhoods they live and in the languages they speak." "This executive order will increase fairness and accountability, and the Office of Operations is proud to support and coordinate this ongoing work with Immigrant Affairs and our agency partners," said Jeff Thamkittikasem, Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations.

Agency representatives that are responsible for purchasing print and digital publication advertisements will be required to participate in annual trainings held by the Mayor's Office of Operations and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. Beginning in fiscal year 2020 and for every fiscal year thereafter, agencies will submit a year-end data report to the Mayor's Office of Operations regarding the agency's annual print and digital publication advertising spending. Data on each agency's annual print and digital publication advertising will be made available to the public through the Open Data portal at the beginning of each fiscal year beginning in Fiscal Year 2021. Senator James Sanders Jr. said, "This is an important step in ensuring that more New Yorkers of all ethnic backgrounds receive information about the city's many resources and services. It is also a good way to support these diverse media outlets so they can continue to grow and report the news that is most essential to the demographics of their particular audience."

"Smaller-scale media outlets play an integral role in Queens-the most diverse borough-and throughout the entire city," said Senator Leroy Comrie. "Immigrant communities, non-English speakers, low income communities, and others that rely on these community-specific and ethnic publications will gain greater exposure to critical information from our city government because of this executive order. Our city's strength lies in our diversity." "Many New Yorkers rely on ethnic media for their news. I support the Mayor's effort to publish city advertising in non-English media outlets. More people will be reached and become better aware of government actions and services. This will improve the quality of life and delivery of services in many neighborhoods," said Assistant Speaker Felix W. Ortiz.

"A free, independent press is essential for democracy. I commend Mayor de Blasio's initiative that will increase transparency, promote local media outlets, and support small businesses which are the backbone of our communities," said Assembly Member Rebecca A. Seawright. The Mayor's Director of Community and Ethnic Media will develop and maintain a list of community and ethnic media outlets from which city agencies will select outlets for advertising. The list can be found here. According to the U.S. Census population estimates for 2017, approximately 37 percent of New York City residents are foreign-born, and approximately 23 percent of City residents do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

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MOKSHA OR LIBERATION

Moksha is the most popular word used in Hinduism to denote the final or the ultimate liberation. It is not only the highest goal of all spiritual paths and practices but also the highest state (parandhama) to which a mortal being (jiva) can ascend. Other Sanskrit words which are used to describe it are Mukti, Kaivalya, Laya, Moksha, Nirvana, Sayujya, Jnanodaya, Siddhi and Samadhi. Liberation is not the freedom of the mind or body but freedom of the soul. It is also its natural state (sahaja). In liberation the soul does not gain anything or lose anything, nor does it undergo any transformation. It simply returns to its natural and original state and shines in its own light when the impurities of the mind and body that surround it are completely dissolved.

According to Hinduism, neither dying nor going to heaven constitute true liberation. Death is a simple release from the body but not from the hold of Nature. Upon death, a soul may wander upon earth, temporarily become stuck in the middle planes or in one of the heavens, or attain liberation. We have many heavens and hells. We have the ancestral heaven, Indra's heaven, Brahma's heaven, Vishnu's heaven, Shiva's heaven, and the highest, immortal heaven of Brahman. Then, according to some accounts we have a series of seven bright worlds above the earth and seven dark worlds below the earth. Our Puranas also speak of Yamalok (underworld), to which sinners go upon death where they face extreme suffering and cleansing before taking another birth. They also speak of several other worlds, and worlds (trsankus) that cannot be categorized as a heaven or a hell.

People may go to any of them upon their death according to their deeds and devotion. Those who worship Vishnu and Shiva and attain liberation go to their respective heavens namely Vaikuntah and Kailasa. Devotees of both gods, who worship them as the Lords of the universe, claim them to be the highest worlds, just as the world of Brahman which is located in the Sun. They believe that those who enter them will not return to take birth again. According to Srimad Bhagavatam (10.14.21), the world of Vaikuntah is infinite. There are innumerable Vaikuntahs. None can fathom their length and breadth.

The Vedas state that those who engage in righteous actions but have not attained final liberation, go to the ancestral world (pitr-lok) upon departing from here. They leave the mortal world with their subtle, casual bodies and stay there until their karmas are exhausted. Life in the ancestral world is better than the earthly life. However, it is not the final destiny of human souls, nor is it an ideal solution to lasting peace because it does not liberate the souls from the cycle of deaths and rebirths. Those who go there return again to take another birth and continue their existence upon earth. They will keep repeating this cycle birth after birth, until they are completely free from karma. Therefore, the Upanishads caution people not to become too involved with the world or with rites and rituals, since they lead to the ancestral world rather than to the immortal heaven.

Liberation is achieved only when one renounces desires and attachments and engages the mind in spiritual practice by stabilizing it in the contemplation of God to attain oneness with him or become dissolved in him. Thus, in Hinduism liberation means the deliverance of individual souls (atman) from Samsara or the cycle of births and deaths. It is a complex, transformative process which requires the cleansing of the mind and



body, the overcoming of duality, delusion and egoism and achieving oneness with the Self or Brahman. Sometimes, words such as self-realization, awakening, enlightenment, salvation, etc., are also used to denote liberation.

The concept of liberation is unique to the religious and renunciant traditions of India. You do not hear about it in other religions, although they may refer to the possibility of an eternal life earned by the grace of God or an allegiance to a particular faith. Hinduism does not believe that anyone can ascend to the immortal heaven with a physical body or an ethereal body. Only pure souls can go there, which are godlike in every aspect. For that, they have to be completely pure and free from all forms of impurity, materiality, duality and delusion.

The concept of Moksha is also difficult to understand, unless one is very familiar with related terms such as bondage, rebirth, attachments, karma, binding actions and liberating actions, yoga, maya or concealment, moha or delusion, anava or egoism and prakriti or nature. They refer to various forces or obstacles which keep the soul bound to the earth as a part of God's creation to ensure the order and regularity of the worlds. Souls cannot easily escape from the mortal life. It is God's will and Nature's design to keep them bound, so that creation can progress in an orderly manner as ordained.

According to Hindu theories of creation, souls become bound when they come under the deluding influence of Nature. She keeps them bound through its instruments of delusion, duality, desires, attachments, egoism and ignorance. They attain liberation when they are completely free from them, removing all traces of materiality and impurities which accumulate around them like a cloud. When the individual souls become aware of their eternal and indestructible nature and transcend the limitations which are imposed upon them by Nature through yoga or self-transformation, they gain freedom and return to their divine

state. Upon discarding their mortal bodies, they ascend to the highest heaven from where they will never return. However, it does not happen instantly. It takes several births and a disciplined and organized effort by the souls to regain their freedom and return to their original state. From the scriptures we can discern a few important stages in the journey of liberation. It begins with the realization that one is not the mind and body, but an eternal Self and culminates in the experience of that State. It is facilitated by physical and mental purity, mental stability, discernment, faith, contemplative practices, and absorption of the mind in the Self or in God.

The journey of souls from one birth to another is known as transmigration of souls. Their final and permanent release from the cycle of births and deaths is referred to as the state of liberation. Karma plays an important role in it. Depending upon their potential to achieve liberation, souls are of different kinds. For example, some souls are forever free and do not require liberation. Some never attain liberation because they are meant to inhabit the lower worlds. Some may attain it over

several lives or over two or more cycles of creation. Others may become stuck in the higher or lower worlds for a long time. For the souls, life on earth is a perilous existence during which they face the prospect of prolonged bondage, pain and suffering, while their chances of attaining liberation are excruciatingly limited.

Who can pursue liberation?

Liberation is the chief aim of all human beings. It is not only an essential purpose of human life (purushartha,) but also the highest of all aims (paramartha), which can be pursued by both young and old and men and women. The Vedas recommend it for both householders and renunciants. Householders have to pursue it as a part of their obligatory duties, which are ordained by God and which are meant for the order and regularity of the world and the upholding of Dharma. Renunciants have to pursue it as a part of their vows and according to the path or the teacher tradition they follow. In both cases, devotees have to practice renunciation, detachment, restraint of the mind and senses, virtue and purity.

Source: hinduwebsite.com

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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."

Dhoni best suited at No 5 for India, says Sachin Tendulkar

NEW DELHI (TIP): India need to space out their experienced batsmen at the World Cup in England and veteran MS Dhoni is best suited at number five, according to batting great Sachin Tendulkar.

Skipper Virat Kohli joins openers Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma to complete India's stable top three while all-rounder Vijay Shankar is set to bat at number four in the earlier games.

Having Dhoni, whose 341 ODI appearances makes him the most experienced player at this year's World Cup, at number five would ensure the former India captain could nudge along before exploding in the final overs, believes Tendulkar.

"My personal opinion is Dhoni should be batting (at) five," Tendulkar, part of the Dhoni-led squad who won the 2011 World Cup on home soil, told ESPNcricinfo.

"I still don't know what the team combination would be, but if you are going Rohit and Shikhar as openers, to Virat at No. 3 and whoever at No. 4 then Dhoni could be No. 5. Then Hardik Pandya, an explosive player, follows them.

"That way the experienced batsmen are well spaced out and Dhoni can stretch the game towards the end where he himself can be explosive along with Hardik.

"From No 5-8 you are looking at finishers, who stay till the end and soak in that pressure. I feel we are well



equipped to do that."

Dhawan is the lone left-hander in India's strong batting lineup and Tendulkar said the opener must bat deep into the matches to help dominate the bowlers, especially the leg-spinners.

"A left-right combination always helps because that means the bowler has to adjust his line every now and then and the (bowling) captain has also to keep thinking," said Tendulkar, who remains the only cricketer with 100 international centuries against his name.

"And if there is a partnership the job becomes even more tougher. So, yes, it is important for a left-hander to be there to

put pressure on the legspinner or for that matter any bowler."

England's home series against Pakistan has convinced Tendulkar that it would be a high-scoring World Cup played on flat tracks and with two new balls which negate reverse swing.

"I believe if you have quality spinners to bowl in the middle overs they would end up picking wickets.

"It is all about bowling in partnerships - if quality bowlers could bowl in tandem and create pressure on the batting line-up, that is one way of countering all these factors (that) I feel are not in favour of the bowlers."

Ajinkya Rahane scores hundred for Hampshire on County debut



NEWPORT (TIP): India's Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane had a memorable English County debut, scoring a hundred for Hampshire against Nottinghamshire in a Division One game in Newport Wednesday.

Rahane thus became the third Indian to score a hundred on county debut after Piyush Chawla, for Sussex against Worcestershire and Murali Vijay for Essex against Nottinghamshire.

Rahane, who had scored just 10 in the first innings, struck a patient 119 off 260 balls, hit 14 boundaries and shared a 257-run stand for the third wicket with Sam Northeast, who was unbeaten on 131 at tea on the third day.

Rahane came in at No 3 in the fifth over of the innings and was dismissed by off-spinner Matthew Carter at the stroke of tea in the 70th over.

In between, he saw off England seamer Stuart Broad's testing first spell and showed a lot of patience waiting for the loose deliveries at the Newport ground. In fact, Rahane reached his hundred with a cover drive off Carter that fetched him two runs. The celebration was muted. This was his 30th first-class hundred.

Apart from Rahane, Cheteshwar Pujara and Ravichandran Ashwin will also be playing in the Division One of the Championship for Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire respectively. The BCCI wants the Test specialists to have enough game time before they embark on tour of West Indies, where they will play two Tests as a part of World Test Championship.

Source: PTI

WORLD CUP WARM-UP: AUSTRALIA CRUSH WEST INDIES BY SEVEN WICKETS

LONDON (TIP): Australia's Steve Smith was back in the groove on Wednesday with 76 on his return to cricket in England, but team-mate Usman Khawaja suffered an injury scare during the unofficial World Cup warm-up match against the West Indies.

Smith and David Warner returned to international duty earlier this month after completing one-year international bans for their roles in a ball-tampering scandal in South Africa.

Both top-order batsmen took part in three warm-up matches at home to a New Zealand XI, but Wednesday's hastily arranged match in Southampton was their first in England since completing their suspensions.

Wednesday's match saw Smith lead the way as he guided Australia to a modest target of 230 in a seven-wicket win for the reigning world champions.

But there were two concerning moments for the Aussies, whose World Cup campaign starts against Afghanistan in Bristol on June 1.

Khawaja lasted just two overs before he was struck on the jaw by an Andre Russell bouncer and retired hurt following on-field treatment.

He was later sent to hospital for a precautionary X-ray.

Warner, who replaced Khawaja at the crease, had made just 12 when was undone by a fearsome bouncer from Oshane Thomas that he could only fend



Batting first, West Indies scored 229 in 49.2 overs after being reduced to 104 for 6 at one stage.

to the wicket-keeper.

Earlier, Evin Lewis and Carlos Brathwaite made fifties for the West Indies.

The lack of advance notice meant there were only a handful of spectators watching a match played on the Nursery Ground at Hampshire's headquarters.

With Australia in England for both

the World Cup and a subsequent Ashes series, concerns have been expressed over possible barracking that Smith and Warner might receive from partisan crowds.

That was not an issue on Wednesday - although they could get a more hostile reception when Australia play England in a World Cup warm-up in Southampton on Saturday.

PROTEAS CAN SPOIL TEAM INDIA'S PARTY IN OPENER

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Indian cricket team will look to get off to a flier when they lock horns against South Africa in their blockbuster ICC World Cup 2019 opener at the Rose Bowl in Southampton on June 5. All 10 teams are scheduled to play against each other in the group stage before the tournament moves into the semi-finals.

Number two ranked Team India will open their campaign against third ranked South Africa, who will come into this clash after featuring in the tournament opener against hosts England on May 30.

Despite being better placed in the ICC ODI Rankings, complacency will be India's biggest enemy against South Africa as record suggests India haven't done well against the Proteas in previous World Cups.

Of all the teams that are taking part in the tournament, India's win/loss record is the worst against South Africa. The two teams have clashed four times in the showpiece event previously, with India coming out victorious in just one.

The 'Men in Blue' have performed admirably with the bat against their African rivals, however, with the bowl they have struggled immensely. In four matches, the Indian batsmen have scored 971 runs at a healthy strike-rate of almost 90.

But the Indian bowlers cannot boast of the same as they have leaked runs at an economy rate of 5.34, which is the highest in comparison to the others. To make matters worse, out of 40 wickets up for grabs, Indian bowlers have scalped only 22 wickets at a meagre average of 40.

The two-time World Cup winner, however, will take heart from the fact that they have enjoyed a good run of form against the Proteas after the 2015 World Cup. Post the multi-national event Down Under, India have beaten South Africa eight times in 12 outings.

If the 'Blue Brigade' are to get off to a winning start in the tournament, they will have to forget about the past and start afresh against their bogey team in Southampton.

Populists looking to cause upsets as EU poll begins

LONDON (TIP): Populists are hoping to cause upsets across the EU as the European Parliament elections got under way on May 23 in polls that could challenge the Brussels consensus.

Britain and the Netherlands kicked off four days of voting across the continent in a contest in which rising populist forces are hoping to make significant gains, threatening closer EU integration.

Polls opened within half an hour of each other in the two countries early Thursday, with the first results not announced until late Sunday once voting in all 28 EU members has been completed. More than 400 million voters across the bloc are eligible to elect 751 MEPs -- with Britain unexpectedly included. Having voted to leave the EU in a seismic referendum in 2016, Britain was originally meant to depart on March 29 and therefore not take part in these elections. But its MPs have not been able to agree on a divorce deal and Britain now finds itself in the absurd situation of electing lawmakers to an institution it is planning to leave. The Brexit Party, formed only this year by eurosceptic figurehead Nigel Farage, is leading the latest British opinion polls by a solid margin. "We are attempting a peaceful political revolution in this country," he told the party's final rally on Tuesday. "The establishment: they're not frightened —they're absolutely terrified!" Farage said of his new party's rise.

In the Netherlands, flamboyant populist Thierry Baudet, a classics-quoting climate sceptic, is on course to



Theresa May clings to power as Brexit gambit backfires

Prime Minister Theresa May was clinging on to power on Thursday after her final Brexit gambit backfired, overshadowing a European election that has shown a United Kingdom still riven by division over its EU divorce

May's departure will deepen the Brexit crisis as a new leader is likely to want a more decisive split with the European Union, raising the chances of a confrontation with the bloc

beat Prime Minister Mark Rutte's Liberals. Once best known for controversial comments about women, Baudet (36), stunned Europe in March when his Forum for Democracy became the biggest party in the Dutch senate. Around the continent, national leaders are scrambling to mobilise their supporters to resist the populist surge.

These are the ninth European parliament elections since they began in 1979 and voter turnout has dropped each time, hitting 43 per cent in 2014. European governments fear a good showing for eurosceptics will disrupt Brussels decision-making. Opinion polls predict a significant advance for nationalist and populist forces. — AFP

50 children saved after police bust paedophile website: Interpol

LYON (FRANCE) (TIP): International police group Interpol said on May 23 that nine people had been arrested in Thailand, Australia and the US and 50 children had been rescued after investigators took down an online paedophilia ring.

More arrests were expected as police in nearly 60 countries pursue investigations stemming from an Interpol operation launched two years ago into a hidden "dark web" site with 63,000 users worldwide.

Fifty children were rescued following the arrests. Police are trying to identify an additional 100 in images that had been shared on the internet's uncharted corners.

Interpol said its Operation Blackwrist began after it found material that was traced back to a subscription-based site on the dark web, where people can use encrypted software to hide behind layers of secrecy. Dark web sites can't be found through search engines, and users need to have the specific URL address to land on a site.

Interpol enlisted help from national

agencies worldwide, with the US Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) department eventually tracking the site's IP address, where new photos and videos were posted weekly.

The first arrests came in early 2018, when the site's main administrator, Montri Salangam, was detained in Thailand, and another administrator, Ruecha Tokputza, was captured in Australia. Salangam, whose victims included one of his nephews, was sentenced in June last year to 146 years in prison by Thai courts, while an associate, a pre-school teacher, got 36 years. Tokputza was handed a 40-year prison term at his trial in Australia last Friday, the longest ever for child sex offences in the country.

The Australian Associated Press reported that Tokputza, 31, pleaded guilty to 50 counts of abuse of 11 babies and children—one just 15 months old—between 2011 and 2018.

"You are a child's worst nightmare, you are every parent's horror, you are a menace to the community," Judge Liesl Chapman said in Adelaide. (AFP)

6 BRAZILIAN TOURISTS DIE OF CARBON MONOXIDE IN CHILE

SANTIAGO (CHILE) (TIP): Chilean authorities say six Brazilian tourists died of carbon monoxide poisoning while staying in an old apartment in central Santiago.

Authorities said on May 22 that police had been alerted by the Brazilian Embassy, which was called by one of the victims when she became ill.

Police commander Rodrigo Soto said officers found four adults and two children dead at the six-story building Wednesday. The fire department said a high concentration of carbon monoxide was measured in the apartment, which it said was completely closed.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas produced by fuel combustion in gas stoves and heating systems. A heavy accumulation can cause death.

Santiago registered its coldest day of the South American autumn early Wednesday, with the temperature dropping to zero Celsius (32 Fahrenheit). — AP

Chinese man guilty of defrauding Apple out of 1,500 iPhones

SALEM (OREGON) (TIP): Over the span of two years, a Chinese national in Oregon sent devices that looked like iPhones to Apple, saying they wouldn't turn on and should be replaced under warranty. He didn't just submit a couple of the devices—he delivered in person or shipped to Apple around 3,000 of them.

Apple responded by sending almost 1,500 replacement iPhones, each with an approximate resale value of USD600.

But the devices that Quan Jiang sent Apple were fake.

Jiang, 30, a former engineering student at a community college in Albany, Oregon, pleaded guilty in federal court Wednesday to trafficking in counterfeit goods, the US Attorney's office in Portland announced.

The presence of fake iPhones and other high-tech gadgets has become an issue in global resale markets, with some counterfeit versions operating so well it's hard for users to tell the difference between them and the genuine products. But in the Oregon case, the makers of the thousands of fake phones apparently didn't even have to bother with having working operating systems.

An Apple official quoted by Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Thomas Duffy in a court document exposed a vulnerability that Jiang exploited.

And Jiang must forfeit his black 2015 Mercedes-Benz CLA 250 coupe. — AP

BRAZIL'S PRESIDENT WINS, JUSTICE MINISTER LOSES IN CONGRESS

BRASILIA (TIP): Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro surmounted a crucial hurdle for his young government on May 22 by winning approval from disgruntled lower house lawmakers for his move to reorganize the country's executive branch.

But lawmakers voted against putting the Council for Financial Activities Control (COAF), a key tool for flagging suspicious funds moving through the banking system, under the control of Justice Minister Sergio Moro, a former judge who jailed many politicians in the sweeping corruption probe known as Car Wash. "I lament what happened," Moro said, according to newspaper O Globo. "It's part of the democratic debate." The vote on the first decree Bolsonaro issued the day he took office in January was a test of his ability to govern without courting traditional parties in Congress, which is threatening to derail his agenda after months of mutual antagonism. The decree that reduced the number of ministries to 20, from 29 previously, was due to expire on June 3. (Reuters)

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