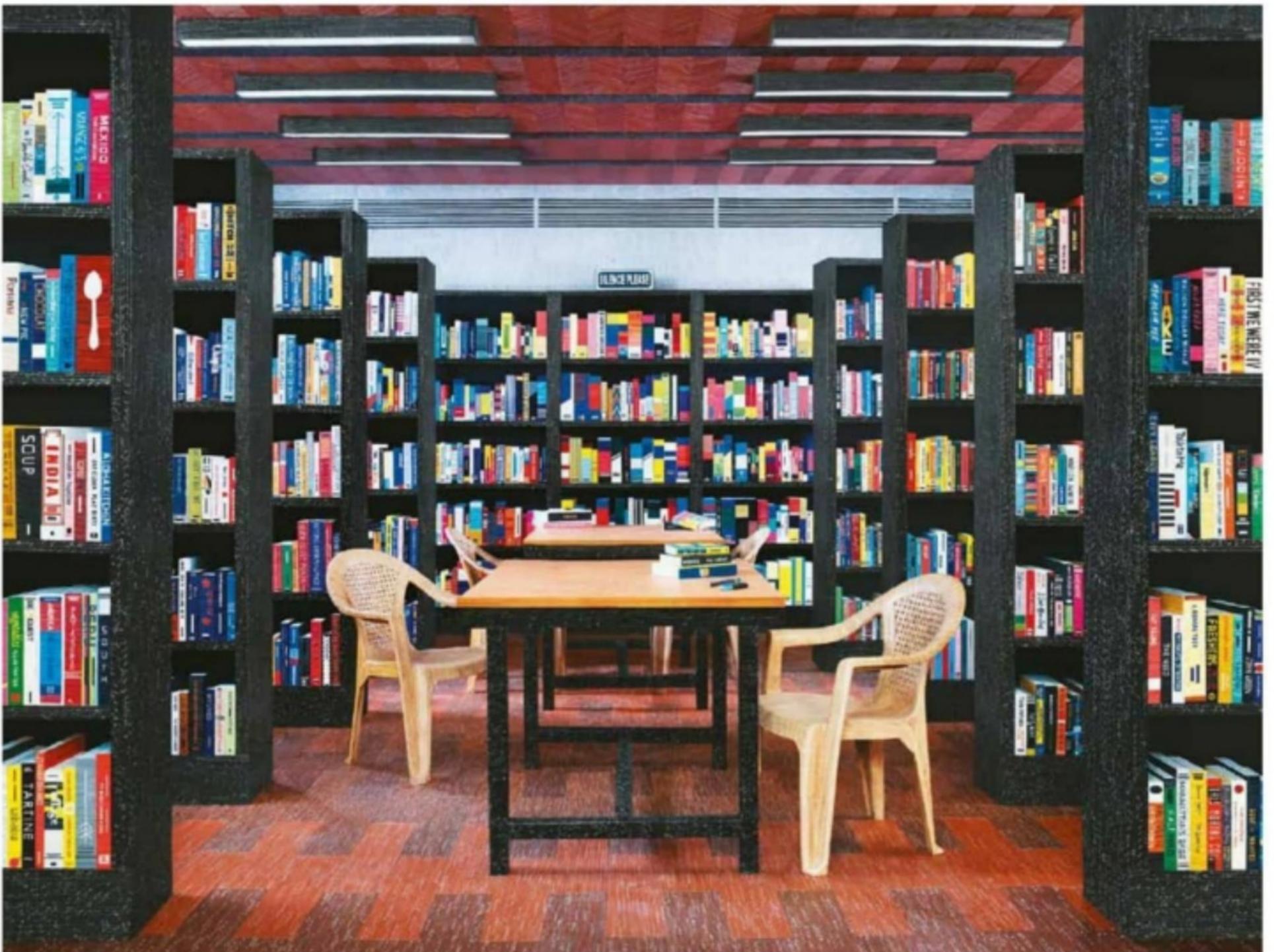


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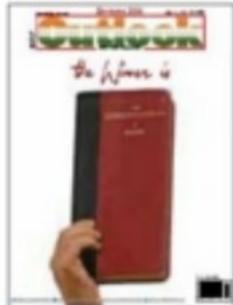
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## 'Ideology is for the Library'



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Outlook issue  
June 21, 2024

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#### ON THE COVER

'Library' (2022) Artwork  
by Dia Mehhta Bhupal;  
constructed in paper  
& cardboard, then  
photographed.

In 'Library', Bhupal  
contemplates the deeper  
meanings of shared  
public spaces. A library, a  
supermarket, a gym, and  
a cinema are all familiar  
landscapes. Bhupal  
presents to us what we  
know to be real, but with a  
particular tension: spaces  
that brim with bodies,  
here, are left empty. This  
topography of absence  
instantly catches the  
viewer's attention. Bhupal  
extends the narrative by  
using hyper-real images,  
displayed as large, and  
almost iridescent, diasec  
prints.

Courtesy: GALLERYSKE

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Dia Mehhta Bhupal is an  
artist and photographer who  
combines sustainability with  
meticulously photographed  
'constructed images'

*During Election 2024, when  
asked about the various  
coalitions, Telangana Chief  
Minister Revanth Reddy told  
a group of journalists that  
ideology is for the library.*



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## INTRODUCTION



# Library is for the Public

Chinki Sinha

**O**UTLOOK magazine started its election coverage with an issue dedicated to the exploration of the different ideologies of various political parties and how they have expanded, changed or even diffused over the years to hold many contradictions resulting from the diversity of the country in terms of caste, colour, religion and class. Voters are known to vote for parties that echo their own ideological viewpoints.

In the recent elections, we witnessed a battle of ideologies. The people gave a mixed verdict. Hindutva as an ideology hasn't been rejected completely. Other ideologies have also been voted in. Information and misinformation were both in abundance in the digital wipeout age. Coalition politics is back. Arrogance has been punished.

At *Outlook*, we decided to close our election coverage with an issue that is a summary of what happened.

The little red book, a version of the Constitution of India, became a symbol of the pushback from the people.

This led us to contemplate the cover image for this issue.

The image on the cover is a replication of a library made of paper and cardboard, by architect and artist Dia Mehhta Bhupal. It is empty, with two unoccupied chairs. There is an absence. There is also a presence of books in a space we are accustomed to, but perhaps do not engage with, in the digital age.

A library is a political space that has resisted supermarket sheen and gloss. The monopolistic power of big supermarkets perpetuates wealth inequality and social and political isolation, the two big challenges of our time.

A library, presented like this, is also a topography of absence, as the artist says.

Libraries cross curricular lines. In times where syllabus changes are being made to promote a specific set of ideologies, an altered version of history, a selective interpretation and representation of facts and beliefs and people, libraries are even more important because of their commitment to inclusivity, to resist social and political isolation. A public library is a resistive space and a space for the preservation of different ideological frameworks and their relevance in political life.

Books are a tangible experience. A library isn't a fleeting space. We have seen our own bookshelves transform, become splashy and perhaps the title itself speaks about the life and times of the book covers, which once had an element of art, but have now become solicitors in garish costumes against the night sky. To stand out, to be bought, to survive. Like the night walkers.

Bhupal uses paper as her medium to make the ordinary seem a little extraordinary. Familiar and yet, strange. Libraries are those spaces now. It is a reminder that libraries are fast becoming obsolete because of the "changing use" pattern ushered in by the digital shift, which has also led to an information gap, fake news, and reconstructed and repurposed histories.

A public library is a democratic space that challenges existing power dynamics by providing equal access to knowledge.

It is a place for congregations of readers, ideas, stories and visitors. The internet can't replicate the sense of a place.

A public library unites.

The cover features what we take for granted, the spaces that go unnoticed. It is in these spaces that ideas live.

Ideology is for the library, said a politician recently.

But the library is for the people. Like democracy. Like ideologies. 

# The Resistance has Just Begun

The 2024 election turned out to be a battle between vested interests and unorganised masses

## SEVEN

decades ago, the eminent American political scientist, Professor Seymour Martin Lipset, published a seminal research paper, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy' in the authoritative *American Political Science Review* in 1959. His thesis was that advanced levels of literacy, industrialisation and urbanisation were required for democracy to succeed. It became an influential argument in those contentious days of the Cold War, and provided the Western policy elite a rationalisation for Washington's support and patronage for military regimes in various continents.

Indian voters had neither heard of nor cared for Lipset. They definitely proved the Harvard professor repeatedly wrong, but most emphatically in 1977. Nonetheless, the voters reserved their most resounding refutation for the Lipset thesis till 2024 as for the first time, democracy as an ideology triumphed over fancy notions of strong-leader-led-autocracy.

The last 10 years have seen a very determined ideological assault on the idea of democracy, anchored in constitutional legitimacy. A tiny elite—a dozen favoured business houses, a band of technocratic bureaucrats, and a corrupt and corrupting media mafia—had enlisted the upper castes and upper classes in a Project Limited Democracy to install an anti-people policy regime. The 2024 vote came down to whether the masses wanted to lend their imprimatur to an all-powerful, unaccountable, and omnipresent State, which provides a shield to the power-hungry elite to carry on its greedy business.

This elite was prescient enough to realise that it would need a *mukhota*, someone like Narendra Modi, an effective and energetic demagogue, a man of relative humble origin who would remain in awe of people of wealth, a man of immense self-belief, who could be easily manipulated to stand up for crony capitalism dressed up as *vikas*. These last 10 years have been characterised by many as the "billionaire's raj".

In 2024, the ruling elite was super confident that its political *mukhota*, Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), would effortlessly secure a thumping endorsement from the masses for its loot-and-greed axis. Corporate India was the most boisterous cheerleader



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JOURNALIST AND PUBLIC  
COMMENTATOR



ILLUSTRATION: VIKAS THAKUR

of this Modi-led sleight of hand.

The masses saw through the ideological trick. The Congress Party's sharp focus on the Ambani-Adani shadow over the Modi regime was helpful in building a democratic case against the bogus "vikas." Earlier, the masses got an idea of collusion at the core of the Modi regime when the Supreme Court ordered the dismantling and disclosure of the Electoral Bonds scheme.

Journalists who travelled in the scorching heat in the crucial state of Uttar Pradesh (UP) were, at first astounded, and then, amazed as to how clearly the voters saw the 2024 election. The voters had altogether different issues and ideas on their mind than the ones favoured by the New Delhi-based *darbari* reporters. And, as a continuing refutation to Lipset, the voters knew that the battle was all about democracy *qua* democracy.

For more than 10 years, Corporate India has cleverly but unobtrusively encouraged Hindutva as a natural national choice. The idea was simple: use the Hindutva energy and its intractable mobs to control the streets. "Hindutva" was the great cause, the Holy Grail, which was to be prioritised over everything else. Human rights, civil liberties, notions of accountability, civil society space, a robust judiciary, and an independent media were all tamed into working within the framework of a Hindu *chetna*. Anyone who questioned the massive diversion of national resources in favour of corporate barons was shunted out of town as an "urban Naxal".

The idea of democracy acquired an ideological sharpness as the campaign questioned the Modi-led narrative and ambitions of "*ab ki baar, 400 paar*". And much before the opposition parties and leaders were able to get their talking points together, hundreds and hundreds of activists and citizens were spelling out the stark ideological choices in 2024.

The travelling journalists felt humbled as the ordinary voter talked of the Constitution, and the potential threat posed by the retrograde forces to the Constitutional values and guarantees—like reservations. For the first time in a long time, the voter found himself having to evaluate the need for fairness in our collective arrangements.

As Modi talked incessantly of the Muslims and the dangers posed by them to Hindu well-being and security, the voters in Uttar Pradesh began questioning the exaggerated unfairness being sought to be dished out on the minorities. A regime or a leader or a political party that seeks to trade in unfairness towards one group can easily turn unfair and mean towards others in society. By turning its back on the Modi-led venom, the voters in Uttar Pradesh were affirming that the ideology of democracy was essentially anchored in fairness towards all.

Not just Modi, all other big guns from the BJP corner—Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Yogi Adityanath—were trying to frame the 2024 vote as a contest between Ram *bhaktis* and Ram *virodhis* (enemies). The voter saw through this excessive invocation of a revered Holy figure for a partisan

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## THE IDEOLOGICAL TUG OF WAR WILL CONTINUE IN THE TIMES TO COME AS THE CORRUPT AND THE POWER-HUNGRY WILL HAVE TO BE TAUGHT ANOTHER LESSON IN HUMILITY.

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cause; ironically enough, this partisan exploitation of religious faith retrospectively diminished Modi's self-proclaimed achievement of a "*bhavya* mandir in Ayodhya". Nothing could be more delicious or symbolic than the defeat suffered by the BJP in Ayodhya.

That UP would not adequately reward the BJP with electoral dividends should suggest that the Hindi-heartland is no longer in ideological awe of or suffering from an emotional infatuation with the Hindutva ideology. The shabby politics of expediency and opportunism that the new Chanakyas have inflicted on the body politic in the last 10 years has depleted Hindutva of its spiritual capital.

The 2024 verdict also carries a message for the opposition: summon the maturity and wisdom to highlight people's issues, without allowing the mobs and provocateurs to run away with the ball. The voters have saved many opposition parties from slipping into political irrelevance; it is now the opposition's turn to return the favour by imaginatively making the Modi establishment understand that it no longer enjoys the nation's confidence. Democracy and its rigours demand an ideological commitment from the opposition as well.

Because the 2024 vote is an ideological affirmation of the Constitution and its scheme of things, it also follows that those who are entrusted with the task of interpreting and upholding the Constitution—namely, the higher judiciary—have now the duty to protect the voter's faith. For too long the judiciary has under-performed in discharging its sacred task. The judge has the electorate's mandate to protect and preserve the Constitution.

However, it is no surprise that many sections of the ruling elite are seeing the return of a truncated Modi to the seat of power as a licence for continuity of the old, soiled order. During these 10 years, a cottage industry of sycophancy and surrender has mushroomed. Most of its beneficiaries have a vested interest in pretending as if the voters have not inflicted an ideological defeat on the Modi regime.

This ideological tug of war will continue in the times to come as the corrupt and the power-hungry will have to be taught another lesson in humility. The political and ideological resistance has just begun. 

(Views expressed are personal)

# Redefining Paradigms of Cardiac Care with Exceptional Skills

Dr Dhiren Shah, Director of Marengo CIMS Hospital pioneered the first bloodless heart transplant in Asia

**D**r Dhiren Shah has etched a high niche for himself, as one in the forefront of transforming Gujarat into a centre of excellence in cardiac care comparable to the best of international standards. Known as one with magical surgical skills, his expertise in interventions such as full spectrum of cases in heart transplantation from Pediatric to elderly patients, redo Surgeries, idiopathic DCM, Valvular dilated cardiomyopathy, viral myocarditis, etc., are legendary and attracting patients from beyond the boundaries of Gujarat. For one who pioneered Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery (MICS) in Western India, Dr Dhiren has many firsts to his credit. He is the first cardiac surgeon to do Trans aortic TAVR in India and was the first heart transplant surgeon in Ahmedabad to complete a successful heart transplant in Gujarat, and also set a record of doing 3 transplants in just 6 days. The outcomes measured in overall one-year survival is 87.65%, with patients having crossed 5 years of survival and enjoying normal life after the transplant surgery.

Dr Dhiren is credited for pioneering India's bloodless heart transplant technique where patients do not need external blood transfusions. Instead, the medical team transfuses the patient's own blood, continuously monitoring and assessing blood loss in real time. This innovative technique has been introduced for the first time in the realm of heart transplants, not just in India, but across Asia. At one point the hospital's cardiac department led by Dr Dhiren was the only centre for heart transplants in Gujarat for almost 5 years. His special areas of

interests are heart failure surgery, stem cell implementation, LVADs, valve repair surgeries and new technologies coming into cardiac care.

At a time when the organ/cadaver donation was not heard of in Gujarat, Dr Dhiren Shah took the initiative of starting the program of heart transplantation by creating the 'green corridor', by establishing systems to accommodate seamless transitions, be it transporting the organ to a destination outside Gujarat or traveling to another city urgently to conduct a heart transplant in Gujarat. For this airports were opened and flights were operated during unholy hours in the night. The routes were cleared either ways to complete the transplantation within the critical/golden hours. This brought a new dimension to cardiac care in the state. Dr Dhiren was also part of the workforce committee of the Government of Gujarat in establishing SOTTO and Transplant Programs in Gujarat. As Founder, Director of this First GREEN Hospital of India, he initiated an unique blend of medicine and conservation of Mother Nature- earth and led CIMS hospital to rank among the best hospital in India in medical care and treatment.

**Dr Dhiren Shah, Offering a second chance at life to patients requiring heart and lung transplant**



**Dr Dhiren Shah**  
Director CVTS Department and  
Chair of Heart Transplant Unit  
Marengo CIMS Hospital

Having global exposure in his profession and a keen eye to discern and adapt the latest developments related to heart care, the idea of air ambulance caught Dr Dhiren's attention. It led him to play an instrumental role in designing and establishing Air Ambulance 108, which is one of the top success stories of the Gujarat Government. He continues to explore innovative means to strengthen the healthcare system of the state.

Acknowledged for his proactive role in his speciality and improving the healthcare services in Gujarat, Dr Dhiren, is presently the Executive and Founding member of the Indian Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation (INSHLT). He is also Member of the workforce committee of ICMR and Health Ministry of India for creating guidelines for Cardiac surgery and for Ayushman Bharat scheme, as well.

Guided by the philosophy 'Patient First', Dr Dhiren, epitomises the motto 'Humane by Practice' with his self-less dedication to help the needy by treating every patient with compassion. His endearing persona and skills as a cardiac surgeon reassures even the most critical patient with hope. His heart and vision is set on conquering new frontiers in cardiac care.

# Patient Safety Our Motto Our Goal

Dr Upasana Arora pioneering world class facilities in the healthcare sector

**D**r Upasana Arora stands as an inspiration among women leaders in healthcare. Acknowledged as a respected figure in the healthcare industry, her journey has been remarkable, marked by a commitment to patient safety and a persistent pursuit of excellence. Dr. Upasana has taken an oath to uphold the highest standards in healthcare from the time she embarked on her career at Yashoda Hospitals, Ghaziabad, in 2000. Her journey began with a profound understanding of the challenges faced by many, propelling her towards a commitment to enhance healthcare accessibility and inclusivity for those in need.

As Managing Director of the hospital, she has been contributing to the organisation from 2006 and provided leadership to her team to make it the First NABH Accredited Hospital in Ghaziabad in 2010. She also got her laboratories accredited by NABL in 2011. She had always believed in continuing education and hence has been continuously updating herself to the latest in the field of healthcare. She did a CII Assessor course in 2011 and then a Certificate in Lean management course in association with Cardiff University, U.K. in 2012. Subsequently she did a Lean deployment across challenging work processes in her organisation. It had a significant impact on improving the supply chain management of medicines for patients in her pharmacy.

She did her NABH Assessor course in 2012 and management courses from IIM Ahmedabad from 2013-2015 and also a Fellowship in Health Technology Assessment from WHO-Anglia Ruskin University. She became the First Indian to be working in India to be awarded



the prestigious Fellowship of ISQua (International Society for Quality and Accreditation) in 2015. She did her Quality Leadership programme from Harvard University and subsequently did a practical learning implementation of Six Sigma in 2016 in NHS hospitals in U.K which impacted her thinking of streamlining processes.

She has always been a technological updated person and hence has been constantly upgrading her diagnostics, rehabilitative and therapeutic departments with the latest advancements, along with qualified manpower and infrastructure meeting patient expectations, which keeps her abreast with all her peers. She has focused on quality and safety of the patient and had kept the patient expectations as her first priority which led to the growth of the hospital. She started with a tertiary care hospital in 2006 and expanded the specialities in coherence to patient needs and transformed to a quaternary care hospital in 2017.

**“As the MD, Upasana has been contributing to the organisation from 2006 and under her leadership, the hospital became the first NABH Accredited hospital in Ghaziabad in 2010”**

She is continuously seeking improvement in quality of services and enhancing safety of her staff and patients for which the hospital was awarded Gold Level Recognition at the Fourth CII National Safety Practice Competition 2021 – “Excellence in Workplace Safety” held on 22nd April 2021.

The patient and their attendants are empowered and made part of their treatment and decision making processes. As soon as the patient goes for admission they are briefed generally on the hospital policies as part of general consent. Then they are made aware of their rights and responsibilities by the Admission desk in form of a bilingual form. The rights and responsibilities are displayed at prominent places in the hospital to make outpatient also aware of their rights and responsibilities. All patients are briefed on every invasive procedure by the treating team by means of Informed consent. The patients in critical settings are briefed twice daily by the treating team in the form of Patient family briefing record. The patients in noncritical settings are briefed once daily by the treating team in the form of Daily progress notes.

All vulnerable patients are screened daily and recorded in the Patient Safety Risk Assessment Record.

The hospital is a member of Pharmacovigilance programme of India and Materiovigilance programme of India which looks at safety of patients from Drugs and Medical devices.

The hospital has 2 Fire Officers who are present round the clock in the hospital and monitor the Fire Prevention equipments, conduct mock drills, provide training to the staff on protocols to follow to prevent fire besides training the staff in Firefighting in case of accidental fires. There are 7 Patient safety officers and 1 Safety officer who take daily rounds of the hospital and discuss their observations in the Safety Committee. All safety policies of the hospital are validated by the Safety committee before implementation and also monitored regularly.

The Infection Control Committee is also held every monthly and is chaired by the Director Clinical Services and is co-ordinated by the Infection Control officer. The Infection control officer again has a team of ICN and departmental ICN who monitor the infection control activities across the organisation. All protocols and policies of Infection Control are passed and monitored by the members of the Committee besides the ICN and ICO. The hospital has 19 departmental ICN's who

are in all the clinical areas monitoring the Infection practices in their respective areas.

The hospital has Clinical Safety co-ordinators, 19 in number who are in every clinical department and Departmental safety co-ordinators, 10 in number who are in every non-clinical department. These people look after the safety of staff and patients in their respective department and discuss their observations in the Safety Committee which is held every month. The meeting is chaired by the Director Clinical Services of the hospital and the Chief Medical Supdt is the Secretary of the Safety Committee. There are a host of committees in the hospital which monitor the various processes and protocols of the hospital like the Drug and Therapeutic Committee which is held quarterly, the Blood Transfusion Committee which is held half yearly and the Safety Committee which is held monthly.

It is pertinent to mention that Yashoda Super Speciality Hospital-Kaushambi is now on the board of NABH for patient safety and quality care. Our Managing

Director, Dr Upasana Arora is now on the Governing, Advisory and Accreditation Committee of the NABH and NABH considers us as an ambassador hospital. Our hospital is a patient safe hospital where there have been no instances of Needle-stick injury or Blood body fluid exposure to any of our patients this year. Also we have a zero patient fall-rate and zero pressure ulcer rate. We keep a nursing patient ratio of 1:1 for our Ventilated ICU patients and 1:2 for our Non-ventilated ICU patients to ensure seamless nursing care.

With a world class seamless operation theatre complex with HEPA filters and laminar flow maintaining international standards of engineering, operational safety and infection control we provide patients and their families a sense of safety unmatched by others. The hospital have specifically designated well equipped critical care units like PICU for paediatric patients (children between the age group of 1 to 12), NICU for new born babies till 1 yrs of age and CCU for cardiac patients, SICU for surgical patient and MICU for serious patients of medicine respectively. The hospital has Isolation rooms in all ICU's for the very infected patients with state of art AHU to ensure minimal infections to the patients during the stay. This is one of the major reasons that our patients coming for the operations have an ALOS of 1-3 days as they have minimal infections. There was no case of catheter-associated urinary tract infection and ventilator-associated pneumonia till date in this year.

The organization is setting up of Yashoda Medicentres at various locations in Delhi and UP serving as secondary centres of care and referring patients to our 300 bedded Yashoda Super Speciality Hospital, Kaushambi and our upcoming 1200 bedded quaternary care centre, Yashoda Medicity, Indirapuram constituting a hub and spoke model for our patients in India.

We would also be setting international offices under our brand Yashoda Mediworld at USA, Africa, South-east Asia, Middle-east and other parts of Europe besides London to guide international patients seeking quality care at affordable prices.

**To ensure patient safety, the hospital upholds the six International Patient Safety Goals (IPSG) that were established by The Joint Commission International (JCAI) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) which is also a part of the NABH 5th edition standards. The hospital is accredited by NABH which again is accredited by ISQua. In NABH 5th edition the hospital and its workforce are adhering to 651 Objective elements which focus on patient safety and quality. The hospital workforce is also diligently following the 6 IPSGs which are as under:**

- Identify patient correctly using two identifiers i.e. patient Regn. number and OP/IP number before providing consultation and treatment
- Imbibe effective communication wherein Handover communication by staff during shift handovers and patient transfer is done regularly, Read Back to confirm and record the Critical results of diagnostic tests is followed and recording the Verbal/ telephonic Orders given by the treating doctors team is done in all cases
- Maintain the safety of High- Alert Medications which includes Identification, labelling, storage and proper use, using standardised colour coding of High Alert Medications, Concentrated Electrolytes and Look Alike & Sound Alike medications is followed besides regular training of all staff to adhere by safety standards
- Ensure Correct- Site, Correct Procedure, Correct – Patient for all invasive procedures by Site marking (with involvement of Patient) along with using WHO-Surgical safety checklist
- Reduce the risk of Health Care Associated Infections by using the four pillars of Compliance to hand hygiene guidelines, Evidence based practices to prevent HAI's, Follow VAP, Central line and Catheter care Bundles and Compliance to Antibiotic Policy
- Reduce the risk of patient harm risk resulting from fall by Fall risk assessment (All inpatients, Outpatient, Adult & Paediatric) and Implementation and monitoring of fall risk reduction measures.



Rahul Verma

IS FELLOW AT THE CENTRE  
FOR POLICY RESEARCH  
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## Return of Ideology

The 2024 election campaign highlighted the ideological divide at the heart of Indian politics

### THERE

is an overwhelming consensus that the campaign for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections compared to the

previous two was a more humdrum affair—issues that could raise the emotive quotient nationally were missing. This sentiment was reflected in the results declared on June 4, with most states having one clear winner, but different ones. There is no single overarching factor that can explain all of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) setbacks in this election and the gains made by the INDIA bloc, especially the Congress party.

However, despite the consensus that state-level dynamics played a greater role in shaping the verdict, the 2024 election campaign also highlighted the ideological divide at the heart of Indian politics. Comparing the campaign narrative of the Congress party and the BJP, political scientist Suhas Palshikar wrote: "The two registers are speaking about two very different ideas of India." And, the leaders of India's two main national parties, Narendra Modi and Rahul Gandhi, were the

principal interlocutors of the two contrasting ideological images.

### Ideology and Voter Mobilisation

The two very different ideas of India, as Pradeep Chhibber and I have outlined in *Ideology and Identity: The Changing Party Systems of India*, are rooted in the process of state formation in India that involved two simultaneous challenges of regulating social norms and redistributing property (the politics of statism) and giving marginalised castes, which had faced significant discrimination, their just place in the state-building process (the politics of recognition).

These ideological divisions on the appropriate role of the state, we have argued, have influenced party politics in India since Independence. And, the movement of political parties in the ideological space marked the transition from the Congress-dominant system to a multi-party competition to a party system centred on the BJP now.

The BJP, under PM Modi, consolidated the social and economic 'right,' that is, citizens

who do not want the state intervening in social norms, redistributing property, recognising religious minorities, and equating democracy with majoritarian values. The BJP benefitted from the structural changes in Indian society, which created an urban middle class that leans right on social and economic issues.

This vision is opposed by many parties on the Centre-Left, including the Congress party. During the Nehru years, the Congress party began as an umbrella coalition representing those from the Left and Right. The main opposition to the Congress in the 1950s and 1960s came from the socialists. Indira Gandhi's ascension to power changed India's electoral landscape. She centred the state as the solution to economic inequalities in India, nationalised financial institutions, and banned corporate donations.

These policies led to the replacement of class politics on the left by the identity politics of caste as backward class parties morphed into backward caste parties. The economic right splintered, and for self-preservation, some industrialists and businesses began supporting the Congress while others migrated to supporting the BJP.

With the failure of the state-led development model in the 1990s, the Congress party became bereft of any deep ideological commitment, reflected in the narrowing of its social base. Rahul Gandhi, in the past two years with the two Bharat Jodo Yatras, and the 2024 campaign, has made efforts to stake out a clearer vision for the Congress, a vision based on economic and social justice that opposes the BJP's ideology.

### Ideological Issues in 2024

The Congress campaign in 2024 focused on counting castes and religions to provide social and economic justice, with some undertones of the redistribution of wealth. The BJP argued sharply against any idea of redistributing wealth or pursuing a caste census as a means of providing social justice while simultaneously attacking the Congress platforms as coloured in religious overtones, sharpening the Hindu-Muslim divide.

Why did the 2024 elections witness sharper polarisation on ideological axes compared to the previous two elections? The routine ideological platforms sometimes can gain greater salience in a normal election than in a critical one. These two types of elections differ in multiple ways, but more importantly, the social basis of political power gets realigned in a critical election. This means that the party which eventually comes out on top after winning the critical election manages to add a significant number of new voters to its base. These new voters comprise those who have voted for other parties in the past, and also those who were hitherto not mobilised in the electoral arena.

The 2014 Lok Sabha elections were critical in that sense, and 2019 consolidated the patterns of the BJP's national dominance. The 2014 elections contained a profound anti-incumbency sentiment, reflected in public opinion surveys capturing greater dissatisfaction with the incumbent UPA government's performance.

In the aftermath of Pulwama and Balakot, the national security pitch drove the 2019 election campaign. The 'rally around the flag' effect was visible in that the everyday economic issues lost their salience among many voters, who viewed

bread-and-butter issues through the lens of nationalism.

The BJP in these two elections transformed as a political party from a limited social base among upper castes, middle classes, and urban voters to a broader base representative of Hindu society. The Congress, on the other hand, shrank both geographically as well as socially.

### Increasing Polarisation?

Some have argued that the combined effect of economic anxieties at the bottom of the social pyramid, and the counter-offensive of the Opposition's "*samvidhaan khatre mein hai*" against the BJP's clarion call of "*abki baar 400 paar*" played an important role in shaping the election outcome. The former may have led a sizeable section of the non-general castes to believe that they may lose their reservation status.

While it may not be easy to quantify the effect of these narratives on the final outcome, the outsized role leaders such as Modi and Gandhi played in shaping their party platforms indicates their role as representatives of particular ideologies. Through their speeches and actions, they inspire the core voters to become vote mobilisers for the party, a fence-sitter to move closer to their party and enthuse a larger swathe of the population to participate in the electoral arena.

The articulation of the respective party platforms by these two leaders, in some ways, has led to the hardening of ideological stances in recent years. While it is natural that there will be areas of disagreement between the two ideological camps, the success of Indian democracy is contingent on both sides extending the maximum possible cooperation to find political solutions to emerging problems. And a developing country like India has plenty of such problems. Accommodating the aspirations of millions of young Indians is contingent upon the realisation that the emerging ideological fractures are likely to engulf everyone involved.

Should we expect a moderation in ideological stances of both camps from here on? It has become evidently clear from the 2024 election campaign that the increasing political polarisation has led to an irreversible trust deficit between political parties, and, in turn, putting democratic norms and informal power-sharing arrangements under deep strain. Both sides feel that they are under siege.

The BJP believes that the Opposition (Khan-Market cabal in its lingo) continuously schemes and attacks it, while the Opposition is convinced that the BJP has used all the might of the state machinery to squeeze it further. The resultant effect has been that the formal and informal mechanisms of power-sharing have completely broken down. And the object of political discourse is now reduced to delegitimising your political opponent. Both sides have now resorted to creating a web of misinformation and frequently indulge in whataboutery.

Can the compulsions of a coalitional arrangement at the centre necessitated by verdict 2024 help in minimising the ideological distance and trust deficit? While it would be tempting, and perhaps desirable, to argue that India urgently needs a bi-partisan consensus on solution to its present and future challenges, the signals from both camps post-verdict suggest that ideological divide is only likely to get widened in the coming years. 

*(Views expressed are personal)*



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# Coalition Compulsions

The BJP has little scope to win allies from the INDIA bloc or those outside any alliance, making the party heavily dependent on the current NDA partners

**Snigdhendu Bhattacharya and Abhik Bhattacharya**

**I**N 2008, when the Left parties, led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), threatened to pull the plug on the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government on the issue of the Indo-US nuclear deal, the Left thought they could prevent the government from going ahead with the agreement.

The Manmohan Singh-led UPA-I came to power in 2004 after the rather unexpected defeat of Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government. As India gave a split verdict, the UPA's tally of 225 seats fell 47 short of the majority mark. The NDA lagged further behind with 189 seats.

The Left bloc, which had 61 MPs, helped the UPA form the government by extending external support—without joining the government. They wanted to keep the BJP at bay.

But there were still a few more crucial players—parties that were not part of any alliance had another 74 seats. These parties, including the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), had 36 and 19 seats, respectively. The SP and the BSP had a rather acrimonious relationship with the Congress.

However, when the Left parties decided to withdraw support, the then SP Chief Mulayam Singh Yadav came to the government's

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rescue. A trust vote saw the government winning with the support of the SP, some cross-voting from the NDA, with a few MPs abstaining.

In Parliament, PM Singh alleged that the Left parties wanted him “to behave as their bonded slave”. He was evidently relieved to find a new ally, one less troublesome than the Left.

However, in 2024, the NDA lacks additional options to let go of an ally. When Narendra Modi was sworn in as PM, the BJP’s tally stood at 240—32 seats short of a majority. With another 53 seats from the allies, the NDA’s strength stood at 293.

Neither its largest ally, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu’s Telugu Desam Party (TDP), nor the second-largest ally, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar’s Janata Dal (United) JD(U) can topple the government on its own. The TDP has 16 MPs and the JD(U) has 12. However, any of them quitting and joining the opposition camp would put the government’s survival in jeopardy.

The four largest parties after the BJP belong to the opposition alliance, the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, popularly called the INDIA bloc. They are the Congress with 99 seats, the SP with 33, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) with 29 seats and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) with 22 seats.

Other INDIA bloc members include the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), with nine and eight seats, respectively, the Left parties with nine seats and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) with four seats. The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) have three seats each. Tamil Nadu-based Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi and the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference have two seats each. The INDIA bloc has the backing of six other parties with 1 MP each.

### **Tightrope Walk**

As of June 2024, the NDA government has a slim chance of gaining support from the opposition camp. The very composition of the INDIA bloc makes it difficult for the BJP to win allies. The components of the INDIA bloc have their own internal competition at the regional level. Keeping that aside, they came under a unified banner at the national level

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**THE VERY COMPOSITION OF THE INDIA BLOC MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR THE BJP TO WIN ALLIES. THE COMPONENTS OF THE INDIA BLOC HAVE THEIR OWN INTERNAL COMPETITION AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL.**

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essentially to fight the BJP. For almost all of them, joining hands with the BJP could be suicidal.

At the same time, there is very little strength outside the NDA and the INDIA bloc—only 15 MPs. Of them, four are from the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSR Congress Party, which may join the NDA only if Naidu’s TDP withdraws support.

Of the remaining parties, Telangana-based All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), Punjab-based Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Meghalaya-based Voice of the People Party (VPP) and Mizoram-based Zoram People’s Movement (ZPM) have one MP each. Their support base makes it difficult for them to back the BJP.

Of the seven independents, Bihar’s Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav won due to a consolidation of Muslim votes in his favour and is unlikely to support the BJP. Maharashtra’s Vishal Patil was a Congress leader who contested as an independent after his Sangli constituency fell in the Shiv Sena (UBT)’s quota. After winning, he promptly declared his allegiance to the Congress. The independent winners from Kashmir’s Baramulla and Ladakh—Sheikh Abdul Rashid and Mohmad Haneefa, respectively—are considered unlikely to come to the BJP’s aid.

Two independents who won from Punjab—Amritpal Singh and Sarabjeet Singh Khalsa—are known as Sikh radicals. Their moves might be unpredictable. Only Daman & Diu’s independent MP, Umeshbhai Babubhai Patel, has made it clear he can support any camp, depending on what he can extract for his voters.

While the BJP’s chances of gaining strength appear low, INDIA bloc members believe they have a chance of winning over NDA members in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, especially on issues like conducting a caste census or revoking the Agnipath Scheme of temporary recruitment in the Army.

The BJP is opposed to both demands, but these issues are sensitive to Bihar and UP-based NDA members like JD(U), the Chirag Paswan-led Lok Janshakti Party (LJP), the Jayant Chaudhary-led Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), Anupriya Patel’s Apna Dal (Soneylal) and the Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustan Awam Morcha (Secular). The LJP has five MPs, the RLD has two, and Patel and Manjhi are the sole MPs of their parties.

“A strong movement by INDIA bloc parties on these two issues, especially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, can make these allies feel uncomfortable,” says a TMC leader, who does not want to be named.

The TMC leader says, “The INDIA bloc partners should aggressively try to reduce the NDA and the BJP’s strength.” Once the INDIA bloc parties start pushing these issues, along with the farmers’ protest, the BJP will have to offer its allies some incentives to stand their ground, says the leader.

BJP leaders, however, argue that pulling the plug on the government without a polarising issue would be difficult for its allies, as none would like to take the blame for triggering a mid-term election. “Everyone is aware how the Vajpayee government’s defeat by one vote in the 1999 no-confidence

motion led to our return to power with a bigger majority in the election that ensued,” says a BJP MP.

The BJP MP feels that equations that are at present unimaginable may once again emerge in the future. “Don’t be surprised if one fine morning or night, the BJP reaches out to Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray’s doors, offering him the leadership of the NDA in Maharashtra and facilitating a reunion of the two factions,” he says. “It may sound crazy now, but politics keeps bringing new shocks and surprises.”

The opposition parties, on the other hand, hope that the Maharashtra election results may encourage some Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena MPs to return to Thackeray’s fold.

### Mixed Experiences

India’s experience with coalition governments has been mixed. The first seven coalition governments collapsed—the Janata Party’s Morarji Desai government (1977-79), the Janata Party (Secular)’s Charan Singh government (1979), the V P Singh-led Janata Dal government (1989-90), Chandra Shekhar’s Janata Dal (Socialist) government (1990-91), H D Deve Gowda and I K Gujral’s Janata Dal (Secular) governments (1996-97 and 1997-98, respectively) and Vajpayee’s NDA government (1998-99).

However, the three following coalition governments survived—Vajpayee’s NDA government (1999-2004) and Singh’s UPA I (2004-09) and UPA II (2009-14) governments.

Now, after 10 years of the BJP’s majority government when alliance partners had little scope to bargain, India is back to coalition politics.

One big difference in this coalition government is that the person at the helm of affairs, Modi, has never had to run a government dependent on allies since he assumed charge as Gujarat chief minister in October 2001. His first two terms as PM were backed by a strong mandate in favour of the BJP—282 seats in 2014 and 303 in 2019. Allies had little scope to influence policy decisions. The loss of allies did not cost the BJP much at the national level.

However, at the state level, the BJP has time and again failed to keep coalitions intact—be it the conflict with Shiv Sena’s Uddhav Thackeray in Maharashtra in 2019 or Nitish Kumar’s flip-flops.

During the protests in 2020 against the three farm laws—which were ultimately revoked—the BJP lost its old ally, SAD, which feared it could lose its own base should they continue with the BJP. Their exit did not have much of an impact on the Modi government, as they only had two MPs, but it impacted the party’s prospects in Punjab. Besides, the SAD was the BJP’s oldest ally and the late SAD patriarch, Parkash Singh Badal, had described the SAD-BJP relations as *‘nau-maas da rishta* (ties like nails and flesh).

However, instead of trying to win them over, the BJP’s then Punjab unit president, Ashwani Sharma, said that BJP workers in the state had long been demanding snapping ties with the SAD. In 2024, the BJP party failed to clinch a deal with the SAD and both of them performed poorly in Punjab.

## ONE BIG DIFFERENCE IN THIS COALITION GOVERNMENT IS THAT MODI HAS NEVER HAD TO RUN A GOVERNMENT DEPENDENT ON ALLIES SINCE HE BECAME GUJARAT’S CHIEF MINISTER IN OCTOBER 2001.

The BJP’s relations with Naidu’s TDP have not been smooth either. In 2018, ahead of the Andhra Pradesh assembly elections, Naidu left the NDA, accusing the Modi government of not keeping its promise of granting special status to the state. He has been demanding this since the bifurcation of undivided Andhra Pradesh in 2014. It continues to be a key demand of the TDP.

Notably, within days of Naidu leaving the NDA in 2018, the federal investigation agency, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), reached his doorstep. Naidu had then taken potshots at the Modi government. Both sides are likely to remember these bitter experiences.

In Haryana, the BJP’s alliance with Dushyant Chautala’s Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) has been strained over the past five years. In the 2019 assembly election, the BJP was able to form the government due to the support of 10 JJP MLAs. However, their alliance came to an end in March 2024. After the BJP government faced a crisis with three independent MLAs withdrawing support, the BJP targeted the JJP for allegedly poaching to get the required numbers.

Political observers believe that all regional parties remember how the BJP tries to harm its allies when they decide to part ways. Apart from the high-profile conflict with the Shiv Sena, the BJP made a similar attempt with the JD(U) in 2022. The Bihar chief minister had then taken potshots at the BJP for trying to break his and every other party. Now, the BJP needs Kumar desperately, but does Kumar need the BJP?

Thus, the reduced numbers of the BJP have put the NDA government at the Centre in a spot of bother and opened new opportunities for its coalition partners, feel political observers.

“The result has been a big setback for Modi. It has given a new lease of life to the regional parties after a decade. The regionalisation of Indian politics, which was temporarily halted, has returned with a bang,” says political scientist Satish K Jha.

Jha says the election has “sent out a clear message that Indian society is a rainbow coalition in itself”. He says, “Any attempt at homogenisation and steamrolling its diversity is bound to face resistance.” He, however, warns that it would be premature to write off Modi and his brand of politics. 

# Outlook

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## Alliance Anxieties



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**One man, many roles** (Clockwise from top left) Nitish Kumar with Lalu Yadav and Sushil Modi; with Ram Vilas Paswan; with Sonia Gandhi; with Prime Minister Narendra Modi

PTI



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# Nitish, Un-interrupted

Despite the many flip-flops, Nitish Kumar has been an influential leader. He, however, has not been able to build a second-tier leadership, something that may impact his party whenever he calls it quits

**I**n recent times, states have emerged as arenas where politics has unfolded in varying forms within the federal polity of India. Also, states have increasingly become important political units. Political developments at the state level impact national politics.

Both these factors have prompted analysts to call states “mini democracies”. Heightened attention on state politics brings focus on state-level leaders as well. Also, the fact, that when in power, state leaders have access to massive political resources, organisation, money and votes. Consider the size of the territory and the population of some of the states.

Studying the life and times of a state-level leader can be helpful in many aspects. First, it helps in understanding the political and economic changes and developments during their career, especially if the leader has been in a position of power and influence for a considerable period. Second, profiling the leadership helps in analysing the social composition of the political elite and also discerning the shift, if any, in the nature of political representation at the state level. Third, given the fluid and weakly institutionalised nature of state parties, leadership study also helps in understanding the process of party formation, policy agenda and symbolism. Fourth, focusing on the political career of a successful political leader and his leadership style/model not only captures and explains the way his political life has shaped up but also brings into focus the shifting political and economic realities of the state during his time and space.

### **Political Career: A Brief Sketch**

A study of the political life of Nitish Kumar, the chief minister of Bihar since 2005, except for a few months when he nominated Jitan Ram Manjhi in his place, is helpful in these aspects.

A powerful state-level leader who has national recognition, Kumar has had an abiding presence in state politics since the late seventies when he participated in the *sampoorna kranti* movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan along with other Patna University student leaders like Lalu Yadav, Sushil Modi, and Ravi Shankar Prasad.

Between them, Lalu Yadav and Kumar, both belonging to upper backward agricultural castes, have ruled Bihar for the last thirty-four years, more so in the case of the former. The rise of both leaders, who were inspired by socialist leaders Ram Manohar Lohia and Karpoori Thakur coincided with the emergence of Mandal politics.

Bihar, like other Hindi-speaking states of north India, witnessed the consolidation and assertion of the backward castes in the wake of Mandal, a process that had already been initiated in the state when Karpoori Thakur, as the state chief minister, introduced caste-based quotas in 1978.

The two leaders were initially in the Janata Party and then joined the Janata Dal, which was led by V P Singh. Kumar, who was initially considered a close advisor to Lalu Yadav and became the chief minister in 1990, soon fell out with him.

Kumar, along with George Fernandes, left the Janata Dal, formed the Samata Party in 1994 and joined the BJP-led NDA in the 1996 General Election. Lalu Yadav, too, formed

the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in 1997 after foisting his apolitical wife on the state as the chief minister when forced to resign on corruption charges in a fodder case.

Later, Kumar got the Samata Party merged with the Sharad Yadav-led Janata Dal faction and the Ram Vilas Paswan-led Lok Shakti Party. The new party was called Janata Dal (United), led by Fernandes in 2003. Very soon, the JD (U) came to be controlled by Kumar, as both Paswan and Sharad Yadav parted ways in due course.

Lalu Yadav and Kumar, both unchallenged leaders of their respective parties, have come together twice again in recent times to share power, both times at the initiative of the latter.

Kumar left the NDA alliance in 2013 and contested the 2014 parliamentary election, banking on his personal popularity as was visible in the 2010 Assembly elections. His party got merely two seats. Realising the critical need to stitch alliances and not venturing out alone, in the 2015 Assembly election, the JD (U), the RJD and the Congress, along with the other smaller parties, contested as alliance partners. The alliance called Mahagathbandhan, however, broke in 2017 as Kumar went back to the BJP. The second time the two leaders came together was in 2022 when the RJD-JD (U) government was formed.

In 2024, Kumar made a somersault and went back, once again, to the BJP. While Lalu Yadav has remained steadfast in his opposition to the BJP and has been part of the Congress-led UPA (now INDIA) since the alliance formation, Kumar has switched his partners at his convenience.

As the JD (U) wins twelve seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, it is just another illustration that the alliances have always helped Kumar and his party more than the BJP or the RJD. The 2022 elections were an exception as the Lok Janshakti Party rebel faction, led by Chirag Paswan, put up candidates against the JD (U), inflicting damage to it, reportedly as part of the BJP strategy to weaken its alliance partner. Chirag did not put up candidates against the BJP.

### **The Importance of being Nitish Kumar**

Kumar switching sides but remaining acceptable to both the RJD and the BJP shows his importance as a leader. Despite having fewer seats in the legislative assembly than both the BJP and the RJD after the 2022 Assembly elections, he has remained the chief minister in all the coalition governments his party has been part of. The simple explanation is that either the RJD-Congress alliance or the BJP in alliance with the smaller parties do not fancy their chances of winning an election on their own and so have always been willing to go with him, whenever he calls.

The caste-ridden politics of the state, which results in the fragmentation of votes in a multi-party contest, underlines the importance of the “Nitish Kumar factor”. The BJP is handicapped by having only upper castes as its core social constituency, but upper castes are merely 12 per cent of the state’s population, as per the 2024 caste survey report, and

then there are internal differences in the areas where they compete, like in eastern Bihar.

Kumar, who comes from a numerically small Kurmi caste, as the chief minister, sought to broaden his support base among the non-Yadav backward castes and the Scheduled Castes, including the most deprived ones. Taking a leaf from Thakur, he did it by introducing separate quotas for jobs for the most backward castes among the backward and Scheduled Castes. His steadfast refusal to take a communal line has also given him a secular image and earned him significant Muslim support. This is despite him being in the BJP-led NDA government as a minister or forming the long-term coalition government in alliance with the BJP.

This is how he checkmated Lalu Yadav, who belongs to the numerically significant Yadav community, and who, very early in his career, stitched a formidable Muslim-Yadav combination as his personalised social support base. This has continued till the day, irrespective of his party membership.

What brings the upper castes' support, in addition to Kumar's own social constituency of Kumar, is his widely publicised and accepted image as an able administrator (*vikas purush*). For long, he has been widely credited for bringing about a turnaround in a state that was almost given up not so long ago as a 'failed state' when Lalu Yadav was in power.

As a state leader, he has been credited with invoking a sense of regional pride and resurrecting the image of a changing Bihar, much appreciated especially by the people of the state working all over India, given the much-maligned image the state and its people got during the RJD regime. Bihar was then considered India's "cesspool" with its abject poverty, caste wars, messy politics, corruption and lawlessness.

### Looking Ahead

What lies in the future for Kumar, who is in his seventies, and is apparently in frail health? Has he been able to bring a turnaround in the plight of the state? Has he retained his ability to run the administration with an iron hand? Does his position as undisputed leader of the coalition government remain intact, like in earlier cases? Would he continue to have Muslim support, given his association with the BJP? The answers to all these questions seem to be negative.

Bihar remains one of the most underdeveloped states in India, with no hope of bringing investment. Despite the repeated demands by Kumar to declare Bihar a special category state, the Centre has not moved. Of late, the law-and-order situation has also worsened, and the administration has slackened.

With the emergence of Tejashwi Yadav and Chirag Paswan, two young leaders from numerically strong communities and political families and the love-hate relationship Kumar has shared with the Modi-led BJP, there is all the possibility that he may be pushed to the margins in the near future. He has had strained relations with many leaders from the BJP and other party leaders who are now in his coalition government or in the NDA.

## NITISH KUMAR, AS OF NOW, IS SEEN AS A COMPROMISED LEADER, PANDERING TO THE BJP'S TOP LEADERSHIP TO REMAIN IN POWER RATHER THAN ASKING FOR CENTRAL GRANTS TO HELP THE STATE.

Mention may be made of Samrat Choudhary, the deputy chief minister; Jitan Ram Manjhi, the HAM leader, and Upendra Kushwaha, the RLSP leader. All these leaders belong to the castes (Koeri and Mushar, respectively) that traditionally supported Kumar in central Bihar.

As of now, JD (U)'s crucial support for the NDA has ensured Kumar's continuation as the chief minister. However, his political survival would very much depend on the 2025 Assembly election results.

Apart from his advancing age, which shows in his erratic public appearances/utterances, what is not going to help Kumar is his person-centred leadership, which has meant that he has not been able to build an effective party organisation or second-tier leadership. The JD (U), like the BJD in Odisha, is likely to founder once Kumar calls it a day. Never a charismatic leader like Lalu Yadav who practiced caste-based populist politics, Kumar was always seen as a developmental leader with sound administrative acumen, whose calling card was to build infrastructure, provide electricity and drinking water to the villages and bring in government projects to create employment opportunities.

With the central government taking all these initiatives and also the credit and Bihar not receiving the Centre's support, Kumar's aura has certainly diminished. Even Tejashwi Yadav is taking credit for employment generation during his 18-month stint as deputy chief minister.

Another potential leader is Prashant Kishor, who under the banner of the Jan Suraj has been doing *padayatra* across the state, reminding everyone of the failures of Kumar to make a decisive turnaround in the fate of the state, which remains afflicted with both low income and human poverty.

Kumar, as of now, is seen as a compromised leader, pandering to the BJP's top leadership to remain in power rather than asking for central grants or projects to help the state. A leader who resigned as a railway minister after an accident, and who has always had his way despite heading a coalition government, Kumar appears as a poor caricature of himself. But then, every leader has an expiry date. The issue is, does Bihar have an alternative leader who can enjoy statewide support across castes and regions? 

(Views expressed are personal)

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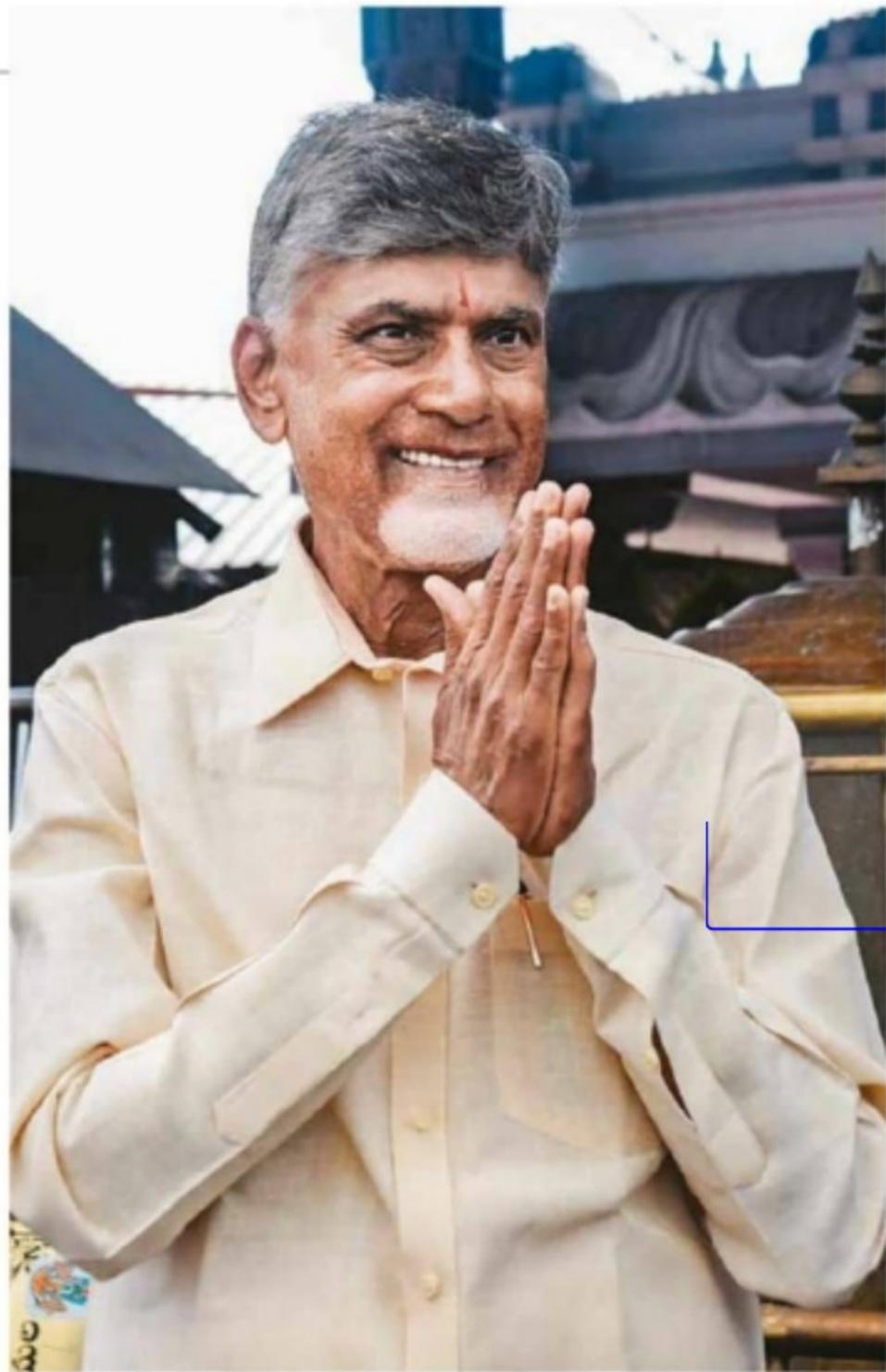
**Eventful Journey**

(Clockwise from top) Naidu on a fast, protesting against the formation of Telangana on October 9, 2013; offering prayers at the Sri Venkateswara Swami Temple in Tirumala on June 13, 2024; arriving at a meeting to select the prime ministerial candidate in New Delhi on May 14, 1996; Naidu with N T Rama Rao



FILE PHOTO





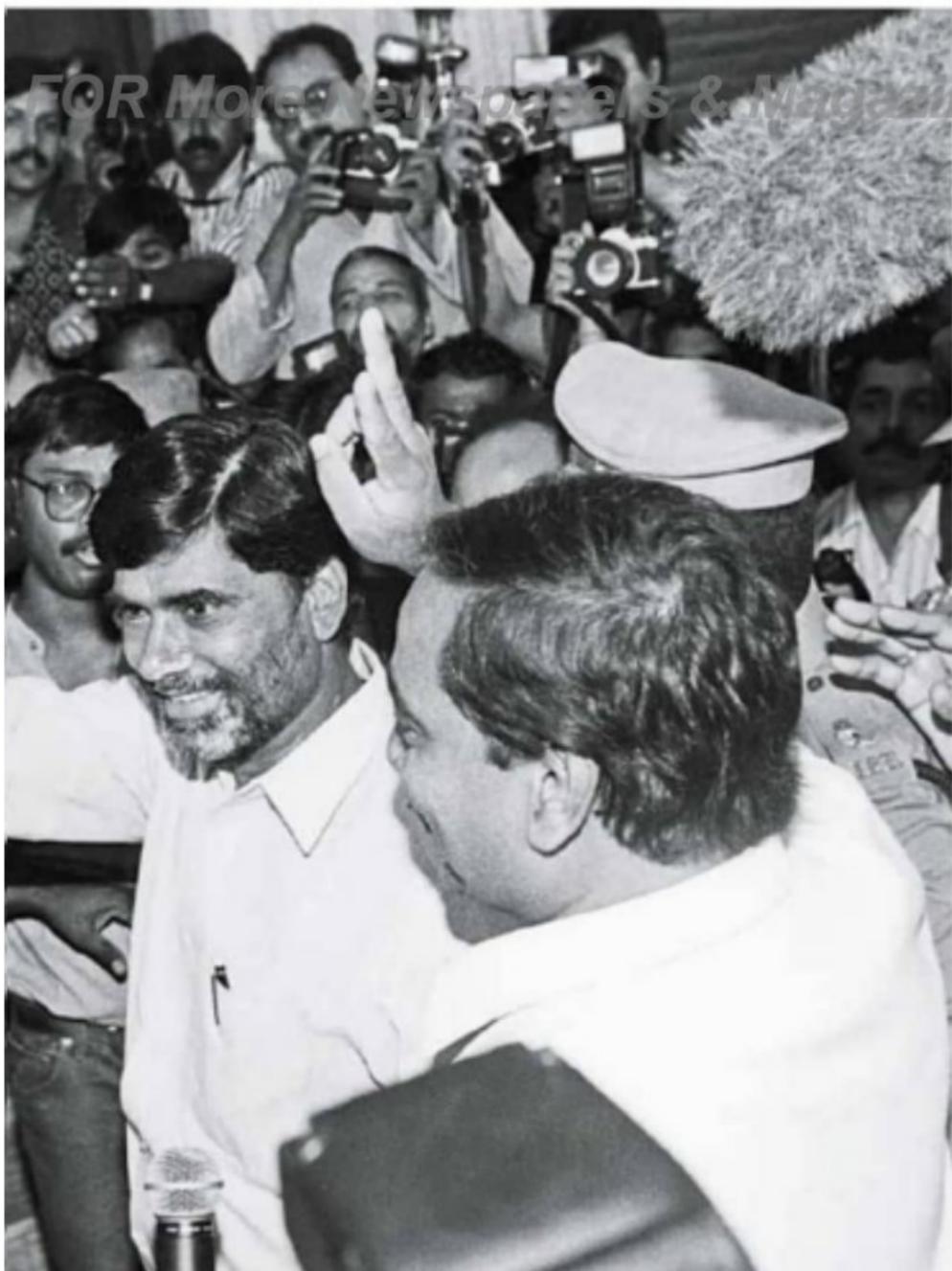
PTI



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# Neo-liberal Mascot

Naidu's success mantra is that one must effectively use the given opportunity and convert every adversity into an advantage



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## N CHANDRABABU

Naidu is the son of a landowning farmer from Naravaripalle of Chandragiri Mandal

in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh (AP). However, he is well-known today not only in the Telugu states, and in India, but beyond the boundaries of the country. As a first-generation politician, known for converting a crisis into an opportunity, Naidu is a pragmatist in using those opportunities for self-elevation. A deep analysis of his track record for more than four decades reveals that he has been a mastermind in political-cum-electoral strategies, mobilisation of resources and managing coalition politics at both the state and national levels.

While assessing a successful politician, one needs to also locate the historical perspective of the changing political economy and electoral politics of the state and nation. Retrospectively, Naidu's political career began when he attracted the attention of Indira Gandhi in the 1970s, when he was a research scholar at Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupati. Hailing from the skilful Kamma community, he is said to have become close to N G Ranga and Rajagopala Naidu, both of whom were Congress

MPs belonging to the Kammas caste. With the help of Ranga, Naidu got a chance to contest as an MLA from Chandragiri constituency on a Congress ticket and won the election in 1978.

As first-time MLAs, Naidu—along with Y S Rajasekhara Reddy (YSR), the former chief minister (CM) of AP and father of Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, and K E Krishnamurthy (KEK), the deputy CM in Naidu's cabinet during 2014-19—became ministers in the jumbo cabinet of T Anjaiah, who was CM of AP in the 1980s. After getting a ministerial berth, he got married to matinee idol N T Rama Rao's (NTR) daughter in 1981. In informal discussions, close circles disclose that it was YSR and KEK who convinced Naidu to marry NTR's daughter so that he would get financial support for the next election.

However, by 1982, NTR himself launched the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and contested against the Congress. In the 1983 assembly election, Naidu was the Congress candidate, but was defeated due to the NTR wave. Naidu never thought that the TDP would create a tsunami in state politics by challenging the single-party domination of the Congress since the 1950s.

Naidu was in a dilemma for a short span of time after his defeat in 1983. However, in the Indian Hindu tradition, the words of the daughter with specific reference to her husband are mandatory directions to be followed by the girl's parents. In the case of Naidu, it was the opening of the TDP's doors. NTR was kind enough to make Naidu a member of the TDP family, without anticipating that he would one day be dethroned by his son-in-law.

### **From Populism to Neo-liberalism**

During the regime of NTR, the focus of policy was on populist schemes like subsidised rice, clothes and housing for the poor, electricity to the farmers, and prohibition. However, when Naidu became CM in 1995, he provided a new direction to the state—the neo-liberal model of development. Neo-liberalism was gaining ground in India

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**HAVING LEARNED FROM THE GLOBALISATION PROCESS, NAIDU WANTED TO CONVERT AP INTO A LABORATORY FOR EXPERIMENTING WITH NEO-LIBERALISM UNDER THE PROJECT TITLED 'RESTRUCTURING OF AP ECONOMY'.**

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from the 1990s due to structural adjustments, liberalisation and globalisation, which was introduced during the reign of PM P V Narasimha Rao. Neo-liberalism emphasised the economy, efficiency and effectiveness (3Es) by creating institutional choices like markets and companies, while making information technology the instrument for globalisation of the capital.

Naidu, having learned from the globalisation process, wanted to capture the financial resources from the World Bank and information technology (IT) to convert AP into a laboratory for experimenting with neo-liberalism under the project titled 'Restructuring of AP economy'. He claimed that he was the Chief Executive Officer of the state government. As part of the economic and governance reforms, he withdrew prohibition, hiked the rates of state government subsidies and introduced user charges on basic services like health and water. In terms of governance reforms, parallel institutions to local bodies such as water users, parent-teacher associations and hospital management committees were created.

In the process of implementing the economic reforms, Hyderabad, on the one hand, got visibility at the global level, and on the other, rural distress was aggravated. With the establishment of the International Institute of Information Technology, Hi-Tech City, and the Centre for Good Governance in Hyderabad, Naidu gained attention at both the national and international levels. It was no surprise then that US President Bill Clinton and Bill Gates of Microsoft visited and promised to support the state government. Information technology and the jargon of good governance and global capital spread the image of Naidu to every nook and corner of the country. He also emerged as the architect of coalition politics. His political and reformist activities elevated him as the 'kingmaker' at the national level in terms of deciding the candidates for the PM and the President of India.

However, at the state level, economic and governance reforms could not address the rural and agrarian distress. That resulted in the suicides of rural artisans and farmers, and a rapid increase in unemployment. Therefore, by the beginning of the New Millennium, the rich-poor contradiction emerged in AP. The rich opted for the multifold increase in wealth to become crony capitalists through real estate, IT, communications, making movies, privatisation of health and education and civil and liquor contracts. In this process, certain social groups had accumulated humongous wealth and invested in diversified fields. The process continued even during the YSR regime.

### **Bifurcation of AP**

The neo-liberal model of development reinforced by Naidu and YSR had generated prosperity for the rich and pauperised the poor, more specifically, in backward regions like Telangana and Rayalaseema. However, the

growing crisis in the backward regions like Telangana resulted in the rise of organised protests that led to the political agitation for a separate state. There were other developments too—the floating of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi in 2001 (now Bharat Rashtra Samithi) by K Chandrasekhar Rao, the landmine attack on Naidu by the then People's War Group (also known as Maoists) at Alipiri of Tirupati and subsequently, the *padayatra* by YSR. These three events were significant factors in defeating the TDP in the assembly elections in 2004.

As a result, Naidu was out of power for 10 years, from 2004 to 2014. During this period, YSR died in a helicopter accident in 2009 and the demand for a separate state of Telangana intensified. The response of the TDP to the Telangana agitation was the 'Two Eyes' theory—one Telugu language and two Telugu states. But this strategy proved unsuccessful as the party was uprooted even from Hyderabad. This was also reflected in the defeat of the Congress in the 2018 assembly election, when it contested in alliance with the TDP.

### Fan of SWOT Analysis

I was part of a team, constituted by Naidu and headed by K Srinivasulu Naidu, to select MLA and MP candidates for the 2004 election. I observed closely that Naidu expected the team to look at the profiles of candidates from the perspective of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) to get an objective assessment. From 2004 to 2014, I used to get requests from the TDP office to draft speeches for public meetings, which I did.

In fact, I was one of the academicians who drafted the Backward Classes Sub-Plan just before the 2014 election and submitted it to Naidu. The slogan of '100 seats and 10,000/crore budget for the Backward Classes' was my brainchild and it fetched Naidu a lot of dividends. Of course, during the 10 years of my service, I did not get any return gift from Naidu.

### Naidu in Residual AP

In 2014, elections for the assembly and the Lok Sabha were held at an unusual time—the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government had announced the formation of Telangana. While the state's bifurcation process was going on, Naidu launched a *padayatra* covering about 2,735 km. During the course of the *padayatra*, he announced the Backward Classes Sub-Plan and forged an alliance with the BJP and the Jana Sena Party (JSP). The TDP-led alliance won 106 assembly seats with a vote share of 44.43 per cent and formed the government.

From 2014 onwards, Naidu's priorities had changed—the state was in a financial crisis even as preparations were on, not only to build the new capital that would require more than 30,000 acres of land, but also the construction of the Polavaram irrigation project. Meanwhile, the opposition party leader, Jagan, started a *padayatra* as part

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## FROM THE IDEOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW, NAIDU HAS BEEN FLEXIBLE AND IS A PRAGMATIST. ELECTORAL DATA SUGGESTS THAT WITHOUT AN ALLIANCE, THE TDP HAS NEVER WON AN ELECTION.

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of mobilising the people for the 2019 elections. In this election, the TDP was defeated. Again, it took five years for the TDP to recover. In the 2024 election, by reviving its broken alliance with the BJP and the JSP, the TDP won the state.

The 2024 election is a boon for the TDP, the BJP and the JSP—winning 164 assembly and 21 Lok Sabha seats with more than 50 per cent vote share. With this victory, Naidu has once again come into the national limelight. With the revival of coalition government in Indian politics, the bargaining power of the TDP has been strengthened.

However, there are a series of challenges before Naidu, such as building of the new capital, Polavaram, four per cent reservation for Muslims, Backward Class Atrocities Act, regional balance in development and the unemployment crisis. But he has become another voice for south India, especially on the issues of delimitation and disproportionate distribution of Central taxes. Therefore, the attention of the country is on Naidu to design the new developmental model, which is supposed to be different from the highly centralised model and must include all social groups. The new model of development of AP and India in general must focus on social welfare and inclusiveness of all segments of society.

Naidu has experimented with various electoral alliances—with the Left parties, the Centrist parties and the Right-wing parties. Therefore, from the ideological point of view, he has been flexible and is a pragmatist. Electoral data suggests that without an alliance, the TDP has never won an election. The Backward Classes have always been the backbone of Naidu due to NTR's legacy and his own efforts. Since 2014, Naidu has been grooming his son, Nara Lokesh.

Finally, as a politician, Naidu has been successful for more than four decades—as CM for two terms in composite AP and two terms in residual AP. The success mantra from his longstanding political experience is that one must effectively use the given opportunity and convert every adversity into an advantage. 

(Views expressed are personal)



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# The Rise of 'Ravan'

Chandrashekhar Azad 'Ravan', 'The son of Saharanpur', is raring to bring a new brand of Dalit-Bahujan politics to Parliament

Rakhi Bose

**I**T was in 2015, in the tiny village of Chhutmalpur, in Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur district, that Chandrashekhar Azad 'Ravan' first unveiled his might.

Dalit boys, studying at the local AHP Inter College, knocked on his doors to complain about getting assaulted by Thakur students. The Thakurs forcefully made them clean classrooms, they claimed.

"They would abuse Scheduled Caste (SC) students and assault us when they saw us sitting on benches or drinking water from common sources," recalls Ankit Kumar, a former student of the college. "That's when Dalit students decided to approach Chandrashekhar."

A college alumna, Chandrashekhar Azad was gaining a reputation as a local lawyer and Dalit leader.

A dominant caste in western Uttar Pradesh, the Thakurs, (Rajputs) owned the college and despite attempts at dialogue, college authorities and upper caste students remained hostile towards the Dalits.

"In those days, he had gathered a small group of followers and had started wearing his blue sash," Kumar said. "The Bhim Army he used to lead, helped us with muscle power." After the Bhim Army's intervention, locals claimed that such caste atrocities stopped in the college.

The 'Ravan' had revealed himself.

Thus began the cult of Chandrashekhar Azad, co-founder of the 'rebel' band Bhim Army. Azad eventually consolidated his growing cadre into a political outfit, the Azad Samaj Party (ASP). In 2024, he has just been elected as a Member of Parliament after running an impressive independent campaign for the Nagina seat, winning against heftier opponents, including the Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) by a significant margin.

On the walls of Azad's home, several posters of Ambedkar,

Kanshi Ram, Jyotirao Phule and the Buddha have now begun competing for space with his own posters. "Even in 2017, they tried to malign him and blame him for the violence in Saharanpur. He even got arrested, but we never stopped believing in his principles," states one of his brothers.

Azad's reputation as a firebrand leader fighting for Dalit dignity was solidified after the AHP Inter College incident. In the summer of 2016, a blue signboard with 'The Great Chamar Welcomes You' appeared outside Ghadkoli village on Dalit-owned land, infuriating the Rajputs. Local cops desecrated the sign and a nearby Ambedkar statue was smeared with ink. Dalits, 22 per cent of Saharanpur's population, rallied under Bhim Army for justice.

Azad's Army responded swiftly to incidents like the breaking of a Ravidas statue in Ghasoti village and the harassment of a Dalit youth by upper caste neighbours. Led by Azad, the large protests empowered locals and asserted Dalit identity. The Bhim Army also established Bhim Shalas to educate Dalit youth. In 2017, Azad gained national attention, cementing his role as the 'Son of Saharanpur'.

To understand the import of the 2017 events, *Outlook* visited Shabbirpur, the epicentre of caste violence in Saharanpur. On May 5, Thakur and Dalit residents clashed after Dalits and Bhim Army members objected to a procession honouring Rajput king Maharana Pratap passing through Dalit areas and playing loud music near the local Ravidas temple. Tensions had previously flared when Rajputs objected to a Dalit-installed Ambedkar statue in the temple.

The clash resulted in one Rajput youngster's death and 25 Dalit homes being burned. Azad's Bhim Army convened a *mahapanchayat* to raise money for the victims on May 9, which turned violent after police lathi-charged the peaceful protesters, sparking days of clashes that had long-term impact on local politics.

Azad was accused of circulating messages on WhatsApp and social media, urging Dalits to join the protests. Arrested for instigating protests from Dalhousie, Himachal Pradesh,



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**Standing Tall**  
Chandrashekhar Azad, the newly-elected MP from Nagina, addressing party workers in Delhi

he remained in prison until September 2018. He was arrested again in 2020 for protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act–National Register of Citizens in Delhi. The Saharanpur violence marked a turning point in his trajectory and a new chapter in subaltern political assertion in Saharanpur, previously Kanshi Ram and the BSP's stronghold. Disillusioned youth who were previously with 'Behenji' Mayawati, rallied to Azad's Bhim Army, responding to his call for a somewhat aggressive and initially apolitical assertion.

### Contrarian to Parliamentarian

Arriving in Delhi as the new MP of Nagina following the 2024 Lok Sabha election results, Azad remained in his element, addressing party workers standing in the shadow of a 20-foot Ambedkar statue in the heart of the capital. "This win is for the Constitution and for Babasaheb, who wrote the Constitution," he said, while brandishing a copy of the book, before showering his followers gathered at the foot of the statue with rose petals.

"When *Time* magazine featured me in its annual list of 100 Emerging Leaders Shaping the Future in 2021, Indian media and politicians made a lot of fun of me. This victory is therefore more special. It shows that if a leader perseveres and works with responsibility and consistency, people (voters) will notice," Azad said.

In Nagina, where the majority are Muslim and Dalit, the ASP candidate won by a margin of 1.5 lakh votes, nearly the same as Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Varanasi. Azad, left out of the INDIA bloc allegedly over a seat distribution disagreement, stated: "Despite all the money, MPs, MLAs and infrastructure my rival parties had an independent son of the soil has won the seat. People have given the mandate." He added that his late father, Govardhan Das, a government schoolteacher, who taught him about Ambedkar, Periyar and Phule, would have been proud.

"He always believed in Dalit emancipation through the democratic channel," Azad said. Those close to the leader claim his father's stories of facing discrimination from colleagues and students and his own experience as a Dalit student sparked his initial anger against the caste phenomenon. The anger intensified after losing his father to cancer in 2013. "He felt that if he had been privileged, he could have saved his father by getting him better treatment," an aide of Azad and member of Bhim Army said.

Since the win, the 37-year-old leader has been hailed by the media as the new face of Dalit-Bahujan leadership and the future of subaltern politics. Azad, however, claims that it is the people who will lead the movement. His victory in Nagina is nevertheless symbolic since the seat, before 2009, fell under the Bijnor constituency, which has sent Mayawati to Parliament. Azad, however, claims he is not in competition with the BSP.

"Kanshi Ram has been our *netaji*, Behenji has been our leader, and they have all done a lot for the community. I cannot become like them. But I can work towards finishing or furthering the work that they started," Azad said. Azad's victory, when seen in conjunction with the way

## IN SAHARANPUR VILLAGES, WHICH HAVE WITNESSED THE RISE & FALL OF THE BSP AND NOW THE RISE OF AZAD, THE MOOD IS CELEBRATORY, BUT ALSO RETICENT.

Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi and Muslim residents of the nation voted in this election, underscores a churning among the subaltern, which seems to be looking for alternate leadership and representation.

### One Nation, Many Minorities

Udit Raj, Congress leader and Dalit academic, admitted that there was a deep "void" in independent Dalit leadership, blaming the BSP for festering the rot.

"The first stage of the BSP was to create political awareness and train cadres on the ground to make way for political awakening. But once these people were awakened, they needed direction. Which was given to some extent, but eventually, Mayawati lost the game. The BSP started indulging in bribery, flattery and casteism," Raj, a former MP, told *Outlook*.

He further added that Kanshi Ram had started with a big umbrella that included SC/ST, OBC and even minorities.

"But slowly, the party became narrower and eventually became the party of one particular sub-caste—the Jatav Chamars, to which Mayawati belonged. One sub-caste cannot fight the fight against the caste system," Raj asserted.

He emphasised that no single caste could come to power alone; a coalition is necessary. In UP, the INDIA bloc benefited from the consolidation of *pichda* (backward), Dalit, and *alpasankhyak* (minority) communities. In contrast, Bihar's lack of such a coalition led EBCs to support the BJP, rendering the Muslim-Yadav combine ineffective. He noted that expecting any caste or community to independently win mass elections is unrealistic in today's democracy. Even in UP, the BSP usually formed coalitions, with a single majority government being a rare exception. This coalition strategy reflects the broader reality of India's political landscape, Raj observed.

Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani, who emerged as a young, independent Dalit leader alongside Azad following the 2016 Una flogging incident, stated that while the Dalit-Bahujan community is becoming more aware, it still lacks the ability to form its own electoral organisation or strategies. He emphasised the need for alignment with mainstream parties to survive at a national level. Mevani added that the community is now looking towards Congress and Rahul Gandhi for leadership, as both have shown a genuine commitment to working for the marginalised and upholding the Constitution.



**High Hopes**

Sonu, who was arrested along with Azad in 2017, died by suicide in 2019. Seen in the picture is his widow Rachana, along with their children

“Dalits identify with the Constitution at a very personal level. Our father wrote it. It has to be protected at all costs and the Congress’ commitment to preserving the Constitution as opposed to the BJP’s, which wanted to change, it has resonated deeply with the community,” Jignesh Mevani states.

The Vadgam MLA from Gujarat, who won the 2017 elections as an independent before joining Congress in 2021 and winning again in 2022, believes that while many independent players may achieve success and their efforts are commendable, they still face significant challenges. “At a national level, only the Congress has the potential and ability to bring forth a consolidation among Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi voters,” he said.

Azad, who was snubbed by the INDIA bloc, said that Dalit-Bahujan society is an “enlightened one, thanks to the awakening brought by Babasaheb and we have seen their political aspirations shift in this election. But that is not because of the INDIA bloc, as they claim.”

“The parties (that are) part of INDIA have been fighting elections for a long time. We (ASP) have been politically active for just the past few years and in the last 1.5 years, we have worked specifically on ground issues like education, empowerment of Dalit-Bahujan youth and cultivation of analytical thought and mental prowess,” Azad asserts.

Meanwhile, in the villages of Saharanpur, which have witnessed the rise and decline of the BSP and now the rise of Azad, the mood is celebratory, but also reticent.

“We hope he works for the community and the people whose

contributions sent him to Parliament,” Rachna, 31, the widow of Sonu in Shabbirpur, stated.

Sonu was arrested along with Azad in 2017 and slapped with the stringent National Security Act (NSA) for allegedly causing unrest. He was out on bail when he died by suicide in 2019. His family claims he cracked under false allegations and persistent pressure to attend hearings and defend himself in court for something he did not do.

“Some others in this village still have FIRs against them for supporting Bhim Army-led protests. The Bhim Army was active initially, but they (have) stopped coming. The FIR against my husband was false, but it was not dropped,” Rachna claimed.

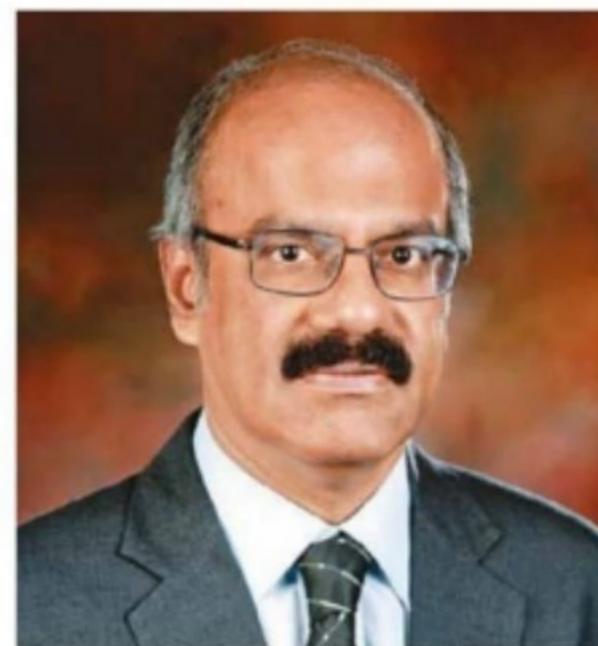
Not far from her home, on the premises of the Ravi Das temple, the epicentre of the conflict, a now-defunct school of the Bhim Army houses the statue of Ambedkar, which became the core of discontent.

Local Ambedkarites now hope that with a Congress MP (Imran Masood) in power in Saharanpur and leaders like Azad and others from UP in Parliament, the villagers will now have the freedom to bring the statue out of lock and key and display it on the school’s campus. A local Ambedkarite activist, Paltu Ram, said that the leaders would soon get an opportunity to prove their allegiance to Babasaheb’s legacy on April 14, 2025, the Father of the Indian Constitution’s birth anniversary.

“The coming years will be a test for the new Dalit leadership as well as the INDIA bloc to prove its commitment towards Dalit assertion,” he said. 📌

# Bringing Awareness to Gastroenterology in India

Dr Nageshwar Reddy shares with *Outlook* the benefits of advanced technology, affordable healthcare, and tips for staying healthy



**Padma Bhushan  
Dr D Nageshwar Reddy**

Founder, Chairman & Chief of Gastroenterology, Asian Institute of Gastroenterology & AIG Hospitals

**Q How did the Asian Institute of Gastroenterology (AIG) come to be recognised as one of the 17 hospitals in the world as a Centre of Excellence for Gastroenterology?**

The World Endoscopy Organization recognised AIG as a Centre of Excellence for starting advanced endoscopic surgical procedures on an outpatient basis at a daycare unit without hospitalisation. In terms of advanced therapeutic endoscopy procedures like ERCP, EUS, Third Space, we are the largest referral centre in Asia for Therapeutic Endoscopy. We provide affordable service to the marginalised section of society, which makes up 30% of our patient base. Ours is the largest translational research lab in India, and we work with government bodies like the Department of Biotechnology, CSIR, etc. AIG's 100 peer-reviewed COVID research papers contributed to framing policies. We provide super specialised medical education and training to doctors globally.

**Q How does the use of advanced technology in terms of medical equipment and AI-aided procedures assist in better patient care?**

GI endoscopy evolved with advancements in imaging technology, enabling us to treat complex diseases without invasive surgeries, reducing cost and the need for hospitalisation. AIG is the first Indian hospital to introduce Rapid AI-based Biopsy - histopathology and cytology findings on tumour samples within 5 minutes. EndoBrain, a technology used in our therapeutic endoscopy practice, recognises

cancerous lesions in real time, helping to treat them without taking out samples and sending them for testing. As a member of the leadership team of Artificial Intelligence Institute for Gastroenterology, a division of the American Society for GI Endoscopy, we promote, educate, and find patient-centric solutions based on AI.

**Q While companies claim that the secret to maintaining a healthy gut involves knowing what the microbiome within looks like, what is your opinion about it?**

The gut comprises a diverse set of microorganisms that impact overall health. There is an improved understanding of the role of these bacterial phyla, mainly Bacteroidetes and Firmicutes, which constitute 90% of the gut microbiota. There are several factors that impact the gut microbiota, like, type of delivery during childbirth, environmental factors, diet, obesity, age, exposure to antibiotics, and chronic diseases, including affecting brain functions. Gut microbiome testing helps in specific scenarios, like patients with chronic gastrointestinal issues, persistent digestive symptoms, or unexplained health conditions that might be linked to gut health.

**Q How can affordable and equitable healthcare for all be achieved in the current scenario?**

With increased public healthcare spending on improving facilities and services, leveraging technologies can enhance accessibility. Public-private partnerships provide subsidised care

to lower-income patients. Flexible health insurance coverage can benefit healthcare costs. Addressing the shortage of healthcare professionals by increasing medical education opportunities, incentivising rural service, empowering communities with trained health workers, and promoting health awareness through self-help groups will lead to sustainable improvement. Focus on preventive healthcare, awareness campaigns, and vaccination programmes can reduce the overall disease burden.

**Q What are the basic tips that you would like to share for remaining healthy?**

We can follow the five blue zones in the world, which have a large population of healthy 80+ and even 100+ residents. These are Ikaria (Greece), Okinawa (Japan), Ogliastra Region (Sardinia, Italy), Loma Linda (California, USA), and Nicoya Peninsula (Costa Rica). Their secrets to a healthy, long life include plant-based diets rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes; natural physical activity incorporated into daily life; strong social connections; a sense of purpose; stress reduction practices like meditation; and having a routine that promotes relaxation and leisure.



# Transforming Healthcare with Excellence and Innovation

KIMSHEALTH has grown exponentially, now encompassing over 2000 beds in major Indian cities such as Trivandrum, Kollam, Kottayam, and Perinthalmanna, as well as international locations including Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE

**K**imshealth, A Pioneering Quaternary Care Hospital Network, Has Been Revolutionizing Healthcare Across India And The Middle East Since Its Inception In 2002. From Its Flagship Hospital In Trivandrum, Kerala, Kimshealth Has Grown Exponentially, Now Encompassing Over 2000 Beds In Major Indian Cities Such As Trivandrum, Kollam, Kottayam, And Perinthalmanna, As Well As International Locations Including Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, And The Uae.

**Pioneering Quality Healthcare**  
KIMSHEALTH has led a quality revolution in Indian healthcare, ensuring that high-quality medical services are accessible and affordable. It holds the distinction of being the first hospital in India accredited by both the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals (NABH) and the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards International (ACHSI). This dual accreditation underscores KIMSHEALTH's unwavering commitment to maintaining superior standards of care.

**Accolades and Accreditations**  
KIMSHEALTH's dedication to quality and patient safety is reflected in its numerous accolades and accreditations. The hospital holds eight NABH accreditations across various departments such as nursing, medical imaging services, blood bank, and emergency department. KIMSHEALTH has been honored with the Patient Safety Award in 2009, the Golden Peacock Award for Quality in Health Services in 2013, and the AHPI Award for Quality Beyond Accreditation. Dr. M.I. Sahadulla, the chairman, is the only Asian healthcare

leader to receive the prestigious ACHSI Gold Medallion for his contributions to quality and patient safety.

**Commitment to Continuous Improvement and Patient-Centric Approach**

KIMSHEALTH's quality management system includes regular audits of clinical outcomes, with results disseminated among staff to foster a culture of continuous improvement. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are meticulously monitored to ensure patient outcomes align with international standards. The hospital also employs a robust grievance redressal system to address patient complaints promptly and effectively, reinforcing their "Patient First" motto.

**Academic Excellence**

In addition to providing exemplary healthcare, KIMSHEALTH is committed to



**Advanced Medical Facilities and Expertise**

The network's latest facility, KIMSHEALTH East, epitomizes cutting-edge medical technology with its advanced operation theatres, ICUs of international standards, and comprehensive transplant programs for kidney, liver, pancreas, heart, and lungs. It also excels in high-risk obstetrics, advanced perinatology, and neonatology. KIMSHEALTH's specialized services cover a wide range of medical needs, including:

- Electrophysiology
- Advanced Epilepsy Center
- Joint Replacement Robotics Surgery
- Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI/TVR)
- Metabolic Clinic
- These facilities ensure that patients receive top-notch care, tailored to their specific medical requirements.

advancing medical education through 23 academic programs. This emphasis on education ensures the continuous enhancement of medical knowledge and skills among healthcare professionals, contributing to the overall improvement of healthcare standards.

**Exceptional International Patient Care**

KIMSHEALTH's International Patient Relations Department offers comprehensive support to international patients, ensuring a seamless and comfortable healthcare experience. Services include visa assistance, multilingual translators, and diverse cuisine options, catering to the varied needs of international guests.

**Vision and Values**

Guided by values of compassion, affordability, ethics, quality, excellence,

transparency, innovation, and trust, KIMSHEALTH aspires to transform lives through exceptional care. The institution's mission is to deliver high-quality, cost-effective care with courtesy, compassion, and competence, setting new benchmarks in the healthcare industry.

In conclusion, KIMSHEALTH stands at the forefront of healthcare excellence, continuously innovating and setting new standards. Its holistic approach to healthcare, combined with an unwavering focus on quality and patient safety, ensures that KIMSHEALTH remains a trusted provider of world-class medical services, enriching lives and fostering well-being for all. With its dedicated team of professionals and advanced medical technologies, KIMSHEALTH is committed to delivering comprehensive and compassionate care, making a positive impact on communities worldwide.



# How *Didi* Took on Modi

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Mamata Banerjee attacked Narendra Modi with the same intensity as in the past elections, but this time she introduced ridicule as part of her strategy

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## TAKING JIBES AT MODI FOR HIS ALLEGED USE OF THE TELEPROMPTER WHILE DELIVERING SPEECHES HAS BEEN ONE OF BANERJEE'S FAVOURITES SINCE THE 2019 ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN.

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**Snigdhendu Bhattacharya**

**T**HERE was a family where the man used to lie a lot, which made his wife feel ashamed. Before a train journey, as the wife was feeling uncomfortable, the husband said, "Alright, if I lie too much, pretend to cough. I will get the signal."

During the journey, a fellow passenger asked the man where he was going. He said he was going tiger hunting. The fellow passenger, surprised, asked if he had been tiger hunting before. The husband said, yes. The other man asked how big the tiger was. The husband said its tail itself was of the length of 12 arms.

The wife coughed. The husband corrected himself, saying it could also be 10 arms' length, as he did not measure it. The wife coughed. The husband corrected himself again, saying the tail could also be eight arms long since he had not measured the animal. The wife coughed again. Now, the husband was livid. He shouted, "You may die coughing, I am not going to reduce the length anymore."

*That's Modi for you!*

This is from a Bengali joke retold by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee during an election rally in Raidighi, South 24 Parganas district, on May 24.

That day, she was in the mood to ridicule Prime Minister Narendra Modi. She started by referring to Odisha's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Sambit Patra's May 20 remark that Lord Jagannath is Modi's devotee. Though

Patra later clarified that it was "a slip of the tongue", and that he intended to say Modi is Lord Jagannath's devotee, opposition politicians picked up the issue.

Patra's statement, incidentally, was followed by Modi's own claim that he was convinced his birth was not biological, and God had sent him with a purpose.

At the Raidighi rally, Banerjee offered to build a temple for Modi. "Modi and his workers are saying Lord Jagannath is his devotee. My God! Shouldn't such a Gurudev, a God greater than our Gods, have a temple for himself?" she said. "We will build a temple, keep your (his) photo, offer sweets, flowers and basil leaves, apply sandalwood paste on it, and even employ a priest. Do one mercy for us, stop bringing all this into politics."

Mocking Modi for his 'biological' remark, she said, "Today, he is saying his birth is not biological. This means he has no parents. He came from the sky. He claims to be God-sent. Good heavens! There should be a limit for telling lies!" She then narrated the aforementioned joke about the man lying about killing a tiger. The audience burst into laughter.

Throughout the campaign, Banerjee brought up many issues to make fun of the man running India with an iron hand since 2014. Taking jibes at Modi for his alleged use of the teleprompter while delivering speeches has been one of Banerjee's favourites since the 2019 electoral campaign. She loves contrasting her 'impromptu speeches' with Modi's 'assisted speech'.

This time, she pointed out that the PM had not faced a press conference in a decade and dared Modi to hold a joint press conference with her. She said Modi may have his



**Refined Attack** Mamata Banerjee at a campaign rally in Kolkata on July 21, 2023

teleprompter and as many officers as required to assist him. She will be alone. “Journalists will freely ask their questions. You (Modi) will give your answers, I’ll give mine,” she said.

After the BJP alleged in an advertisement that she utters Hindu mantras wrongly, she dared Modi to compete with her in chanting mantras. Modi neither knows any mantra nor understands Hinduism, she said. “Let him come on the same dais with me. I will explain to him who Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are.”

Banerjee also took digs at Modi for his criticism of eating non-vegetarian dishes during Hindu religious festivals. Food is a sensitive issue. In West Bengal, the overwhelming majority of Hindus are fish and meat eaters and non-vegetarian food is an integral part of major festive occasions, including Durga Puja and Kali Puja, the biggest ones. Criticising non-vegetarianism was likely to elicit negative responses.

Banerjee was referring to a speech Modi had delivered in Udhampur of Jammu and Kashmir in April. He must have tried to cater to the northern and northwest Indian Hindu upper caste and trader caste population, many of whom are either pure vegetarians or consume vegetarian food during religious festivals. But this gave Banerjee an opportunity to depict Modi as a man having conflicting interests with Bengalis.

“These days, he has been telling people not to have fish, meat and eggs. What should people eat then? Mushrooms? Tell him to gather those,” she said at a rally on May 14.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief insisted that food

was everyone’s individual choice. “This land belongs to everyone,” she said and quoted the early 20<sup>th</sup> century songwriter-music composer Atul Prasad Sen’s legendary song, “*Nana Bhasha Nana Mowt Nana Poridhan, Bibidher Majhe Dekho Milon Mohan*” (India is a huge melting pot of different languages, faiths and clothes).

“Some love *dhokla*, some *dosa* and *idli*. Between *roti*, *paratha*, rice and biriyani, each has her/his favourite,” she said. She then started naming non-vegetarian dishes and invited Modi—a vegetarian—to taste any of them. “Some love prawn curry with pointed gourd, some love prawn curry with sponge gourd and some prefer the dish prawn *malaikari*. I urge Modi to taste one of these. Should I cook for you? I am giving my word, I’ll cook myself,” she said. The audience laughed.

At another rally the following day, she alleged that non-vegetarian food was not only essential for nutrition, especially for pregnant women, but cooking non-vegetarian dishes also takes less time in the kitchen than preparing vegetarian *thalis*.

“In a non-vegetarian meal, you only need one fish, meat or egg curry (to have with rice). But in a vegetarian meal, you need lentil soup, vegetarian curries and fries and so on. Does he want women to survive on barley and mushrooms?” she asked. When she loves the Gujarati dish *dhokla*, why can’t Modi love Bengal’s fish, she asked. She alleged that non-vegetarian food was being disallowed in parts of Gujarat.

Calling the PM a liar was at the core of her electoral campaign in 2024. She targeted the BJP’s key campaign slogan ‘*Modi ki Guarantee*’. “He pretends to be a saint. He

speaks of recovering black money every time the elections are round the corner. Even Yamraj has a status!" she said, while addressing a rally in south Kolkata ahead of the last phase of polling.

According to a senior television journalist who closely followed Banerjee's campaign, her aggression against Modi was of the same intensity as in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections and the 2021 assembly polls, but the approach had changed. "There was less use of harsh words and more of ridicule in 2024. She tried to bring down Modi's larger-than-life image by making fun of him," says the journalist.

According to a senior TMC leader, it would be wrong to say that Banerjee had any plan in particular to ridicule Modi. "Of course, certain strategies are developed ahead of the campaign, issues to highlight and traps to be avoided. But she has always been impulsive. Her speeches are impromptu. She raises issues spontaneously," says the leader.

Udayan Bandyopadhyay, a political scientist at Bangabasi College in Kolkata, says the biggest change in 2024 was how it turned the TMC's campaign into a Bengal-centric one. "Banerjee mostly focused on her government's welfare schemes. She turned the election into one on which the state government's survival and the fate of its welfare schemes depended," says Bandyopadhyay.

He adds that Banerjee spoke less on Modi and his government, but when she did refer to him and the Centre to criticise it, the anger of 2019 was no longer visible. "This time, she tried more to turn Modi into a laughing stock."

However, since Banerjee's speeches are, after all, impromptu, they are not always under the control of any pre-determined strategy. During the early phase of the campaign in April, she used the swear word 'sala' while criticising Modi for having his photos on ration bags. She corrected herself instantly, withdrew the word and apologised. "Sorry, I got angry. Anger should be controlled," she said.

This, though, was not the first time she used 'sala' during her speeches. She did it while criticising the BJP leaders during an event in Kolkata in November 2014; she said it in 2019 while chasing a group of BJP supporters taunting her with Jai Shree Ram chants at Bhatpara in North 24-Parganas; and, she said it while addressing an election rally in Patharpratima in South 24 Parganas district in March 2021. She apologised in 2014, but not on later occasions.

Similarly, such a spontaneous reaction led her to trigger one of the biggest controversies in the 2024 electoral campaign. Several TMC leaders were surprised and shocked when Banerjee targeted "a section of monks" involved with Hindu missionary organisations like the Ramakrishna Mission, the Bharat Sevashram Sangha and the ISKCON.

Politicians in Bengal dare not criticise these organisations in public, considering their huge following and global repute. Though Banerjee later clarified that she did not criticise the institutions, but only individuals in these organisations, hardly any other politician would have risked naming these organisations. In her attempt to strike a balance, she also gave a list of aid, or favours, that these

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## IT WOULD BE WRONG TO ATTRIBUTE THE TMC'S SUCCESS STORY ENTIRELY ON CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES. THE KEY WAS THE PARTY'S ABILITY TO MOBILISE THE BENEFICIARY BASE.

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institutions received from her government.

Multiple observers saw Banerjee's statement as a veiled threat to the institutions, warning their top leadership against allowing individuals to canvas for the BJP.

"I completely agree that no other politician would have taken this risk. Surprisingly, it did not hurt her electorally at all," says a leader of the West Bengal BJP.

The BJP had high hopes that Banerjee had handed them a potentially strong weapon by publicly criticising these institutions. Modi had urged voters to hand the TMC the harshest possible punishment for insulting Bengal's famed Hindu missionary institutions. However, despite a full-fledged attempt by the Sangh Parivar, the electoral results do not reflect any adverse impact on the TMC.

Banerjee targeted monks in a speech during a rally in Arambag, a constituency largely perceived to be tilting towards the BJP. In the end, the TMC managed to retain the seat. The Sangh Parivar had organised a protest march by saffron-clad monks in north Kolkata, but the TMC comfortably won the Kolkata Uttar Lok Sabha seat. The party's performance was quite impressive in the phases after she stirred the controversy.

According to Biswanath Chakraborty, a political scientist at Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata, it would be wrong to attribute the TMC's success story entirely to campaign strategies. The key was the party's ability to mobilise the beneficiary base.

"She was depending on three vote banks. First is the beneficiary vote bank. Her party, with the help of the political consultancy firm, I-PAC, managed to mobilise the beneficiaries of her government's welfare schemes and succeeded in drawing them to the polling booths. She supplements this core support base with Muslim polarisation and liberal Hindu consolidation," says Chakraborty.

He agrees that the 2024 campaign saw a reduced intensity of personal attacks between Modi and Banerjee as compared to past electoral campaigns. "Modi did not launch any personal attack on Banerjee, but labelled all sorts of blame on the TMC party and the government, particularly on corruption. However, Banerjee, apart from targeting the Modi government and the BJP for depriving Bengal and inducting corrupt politicians, also tried to ridicule Modi on different occasions," says Chakraborty. 

# Fostering Humanisation in the ICU

Prof Dr Rekha Das, an Intensive Care Expert writes for *Outlook*

The intensive care unit (ICU) is a place where patients with critical illnesses receive acute care and treatment. The staff working in the ICU are highly trained intensivists, nurses, and other specialists who provide constant critical care. Due to the vulnerable conditions of patients, a high level of sterility, intensive monitoring, and life support equipment are required.

Admission of a family member to the ICU is often met with dread, driven by fears of losing a loved one, apprehension about the delivery of right care for the money spent, and difficulties in comprehending the severity of the illness—as to most people their patients are seemed relatively healthy before admission.

Unfortunately, many times the primary focus is on treatment and preserving the life of the patient, leading to treating a patient as a case of sepsis, trauma, or stroke, rather than as a human being as a whole.

The intensive nature of the work, the criticality of illnesses, the expectations of family members and caregivers, and the denial to accept treatment failures can sometimes lead to burnout among clinicians. These factors can lead to a failure in delivering holistic care as per the expectations of patients or their attendants. The “Get to Know

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**Clinicians should undertake skilled training in handling ICU patients with their knowledge, wisdom, empathy and respect**

Me” board initiative by the Mayo Clinic aims to address these issues. ICUs can develop their individual modules to tackle these concerns.

Clinicians should undertake skilled training in handling ICU patients, not only with their knowledge and wisdom but also with empathy, respect, acknowledgment, and connectedness. These patients go through psychological and spiritual sufferings; many times cognitive functions suffer, and sleep cycles become erratic for various reasons such as anxiety, depression, unfamiliarity, pain, isolation, disturbances caused by monitors, ventilator beeps and alarms, surrounding activities, confinement, poor communication, and the occurrence of unpleasant events around them. Those who are intubated, unable to speak, or suffering from cognitive dysfunction are particularly affected. Many have long-term adverse effects, such as PTSD. Supportive counseling is helpful in alleviating these symptoms.

The design of the ICU should have a healing impact by incorporating visual and auditory stimulation to improve cognitive functions and orientation of patients. Optimal lighting, natural light where possible, and access to nature have been found to offset the intimidating and gloomy atmosphere of the ICU.

The noise generated in the ICU can be reduced by conscious efforts to lower sounds generated during morning activities, decreasing alarms, creating good sound absorption systems, and playing soft music for short periods.

Interacting with patients, individualizing family visits as per patients’ needs, allowing virtual visits where more interaction is necessary, and maintaining



privacy and dignity during nursing care are conducive to the recovery of patients.

In the restructuring of ICUs to make them patient-friendly, bed spaces must be optimized to prevent the cluttering of equipment, provide adequate space for nursing care, and ensure privacy. Intensivists and patients must be involved in the designing of ICUs, as their inputs can address potential solutions for making a patient-friendly ICU from multiple angles.

Continuous staff training on compassionate care, incorporation of patients and their family feedback into regular reviews of ICU practices will further improve delivery of holistic care which is humane, responsive and patient centered ICU environment.

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*Prof Dr Rekha Das, Medical supdt & in charge -ICU, Acharya Harihar PGI Cancer Hospital and Director- Shanti Memorial Hospital, Cuttack, Odisha, is an intensive care expert with an experience of thirty years. Past president of the Indian Society of Anaesthesiologists -Odisha & current governing council member ISA National, she is also the founder & past secretary for The Indian Society of Critical Care Medicine, Cuttack. She has several publications in indexed journals and books. She also has several awards and accolades to her credit, the most recent being honoured at the prestigious event- “Times Women Achievers of Odisha 2024*



**Dr Gopichand Mannam**

Managing Director of Star Group of Hospitals

## Getting to Know the 'Surgeon with Golden Hands' Introducing Dr Gopichand Mannam and Star Group of Hospitals, Hyderabad

In the heart of Hyderabad's vibrant healthcare landscape, the Star Group of Hospitals stands as a beacon of medical excellence. At the helm of this prestigious institution is Dr Gopichand

Mannam, a celebrated cardiac surgeon affectionately known as the 'Surgeon with Golden Hands.' As the Managing Director of Star Group of Hospitals, Dr Gopichand Mannam embodies a

blend of groundbreaking innovation, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to saving lives.

### **A Journey of Excellence**

Dr Gopichand Mannam's illustrious career in healthcare spans over 45 years. His journey began with rigorous training in the United Kingdom, where he mastered general surgery and later specialized in cardiac surgery under the mentorship of eminent experts. Returning to India in 1994, he embarked on a mission to revolutionize healthcare delivery. This vision culminated in the founding of Star Hospitals in Hyderabad in November 2006, with the aim of creating a center of excellence that combines cutting-edge medical care with compassion and collaboration.

### **Star Hospitals: Pioneering Excellence in Heart Care for 15 Years**

For the past fifteen years, Star Hospitals has been at the forefront of cardiac care in India, setting benchmarks in high-risk heart surgeries through a commitment to excellence, innovation, and patient-centric care. This institution has provided hope and healing to countless patients, ranging from newborns to the elderly, and has performed over 1,500 cardiac surgeries annually.

### **A Legacy of Remarkable Achievements**

Star Hospitals has addressed congenital heart disease cases with unmatched precision, completing 400 such surgeries each year, totaling 7,000 to date. The hospital's expertise in coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) and valve surgeries is evident, with 14,000 CABGs performed, averaging 100 per month. Additionally, the hospital excels in minimally invasive cardiac surgery (MICS), having conducted 1,100 MICS procedures to date.

One of the standout achievements is the performance of complex procedures like Bentall surgeries using minimally invasive techniques. The surgical team has conducted 50 minimally invasive Bentall surgeries with a survival rate exceeding 98%, ensuring minimal post-surgery complications and faster recovery times.

**Comprehensive Care for All Ages**

Star Hospitals' surgical prowess spans all age groups, from newborns weighing as little as 1.5 kilograms to elderly patients up to 90 years old. Their ability to manage a wide range of cases, including those involving overweight patients up to 150 kilograms, underscores their versatile expertise. Advanced procedures ensure shorter hospital stays, averaging 4.2 days for cardiology patients, reducing both financial burden and the need for extensive post-surgery medications.

**A Beacon of Learning and Innovation**

Every year, 10 to 15 Indian surgeons visit Star Hospitals to learn from their advanced surgical techniques. This exchange of knowledge elevates the standard of cardiac care across the country and reinforces Star Hospitals' position as a center of excellence and innovation.

**Patient-Centric Approach and Proactive Care**

At the core of Star Hospitals' success is a deep commitment to patient well-being. The medical team employs continuous monitoring and proactive measures to

detect and address complications early, ensuring faster recovery and better outcomes for patients. This patient-centric approach reflects the hospital's dedication to delivering compassionate, high-quality care.



Dr Gopichand Mannam was awarded the Padma Shri in 2016, India's fourth-highest civilian honor

**Our Achievements:**

**A Testament to Your Faith**

Our achievements are a testament to the faith you have placed in us. Star Hospitals has positively impacted the lives of over 30 lakh patients, with more than 90,000 surgeries successfully performed. We are proud to be a part of your extended team, offering tertiary and quaternary care that enhances the treatment and recovery of your patients.

Our dedicated Star family now comprises 600+ patient care beds and 150 clinicians, all committed not only to treatment but also to improving the post-treatment quality of life for our patients. We are honored to be recognized as a global destination for quaternary care, specializing in Cardiology & CTVS, Neurosurgery & Minimally Invasive Surgeries/Endoscopic Spine Surgeries, Orthopedics & Joint Replacements (Robotics), Nephrology & Renal Transplantation, Gastroenterology, Liver HPB & Transplantation, 24/7 Emergency Services, Cancer Care & Bone Marrow Transplantation, Diabetology & Endocrinology, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery, Pulmonology & Critical Care, and ENT services, supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure & technology.

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Dr Gopichand Mannam, Managing Director of Star Group of Hospitals

**Dr Gopichand Mannam:**

**A Visionary Leader**

Dr Gopichand Mannam's commitment to excellence extends beyond the operating room. His disciplined lifestyle, beginning with a dawn fitness regimen, embodies the adage "health is wealth." Inspired by luminaries like Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Dr Gopichand Mannam remains dedicated to making a difference through initiatives like the Hrudaya Foundation, impacting the lives of one patient at a time.

In recognition of his contributions to medical science, Dr Gopichand Mannam was awarded the Padma Shri in 2016, India's fourth-highest civilian honor. He also received an Award of Appreciation from the then Chief Minister Mr. Chandrababu Naidu in 2001-02.

Dr Gopichand Mannam and Star Group of Hospitals continue to illuminate the path of medical excellence, driven by a mission to deliver exceptional healthcare with a heart.



## A Babu, A Neta

He left the IAS to fight the BJP's ideology and won by a record margin

**Anisha Reddy**

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**O**NCE a seasoned IAS officer in Karnataka, Sasikanth Senthil was disillusioned with the Union government in 2019—the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had just been re-elected for its second term—over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA), which had just been passed in Parliament. Known for his no-nonsense attitude even within the service, he felt it necessary to quit amid the “framework of fascism” developing in the country and lack of “space for a rational debate”.

“I now have the moral and ethical responsibility to raise my voice against what is happening in the country. I could not do so while in service,” he said while resigning.

He participated in several protests against the abrogation of Article 370 and was also “able to contribute to the anti-CAA movement, which proved to me that the people of this country are ready to stand for one another”, he said in a statement on X.

At that time, Senthil had said he did not wish to join politics since he belonged to the academic community. But he subsequently joined the Congress party in 2020 after the Delhi riots to “continue the fight”. “I have been an activist trying to be a voice for the less privileged all through my life, and would

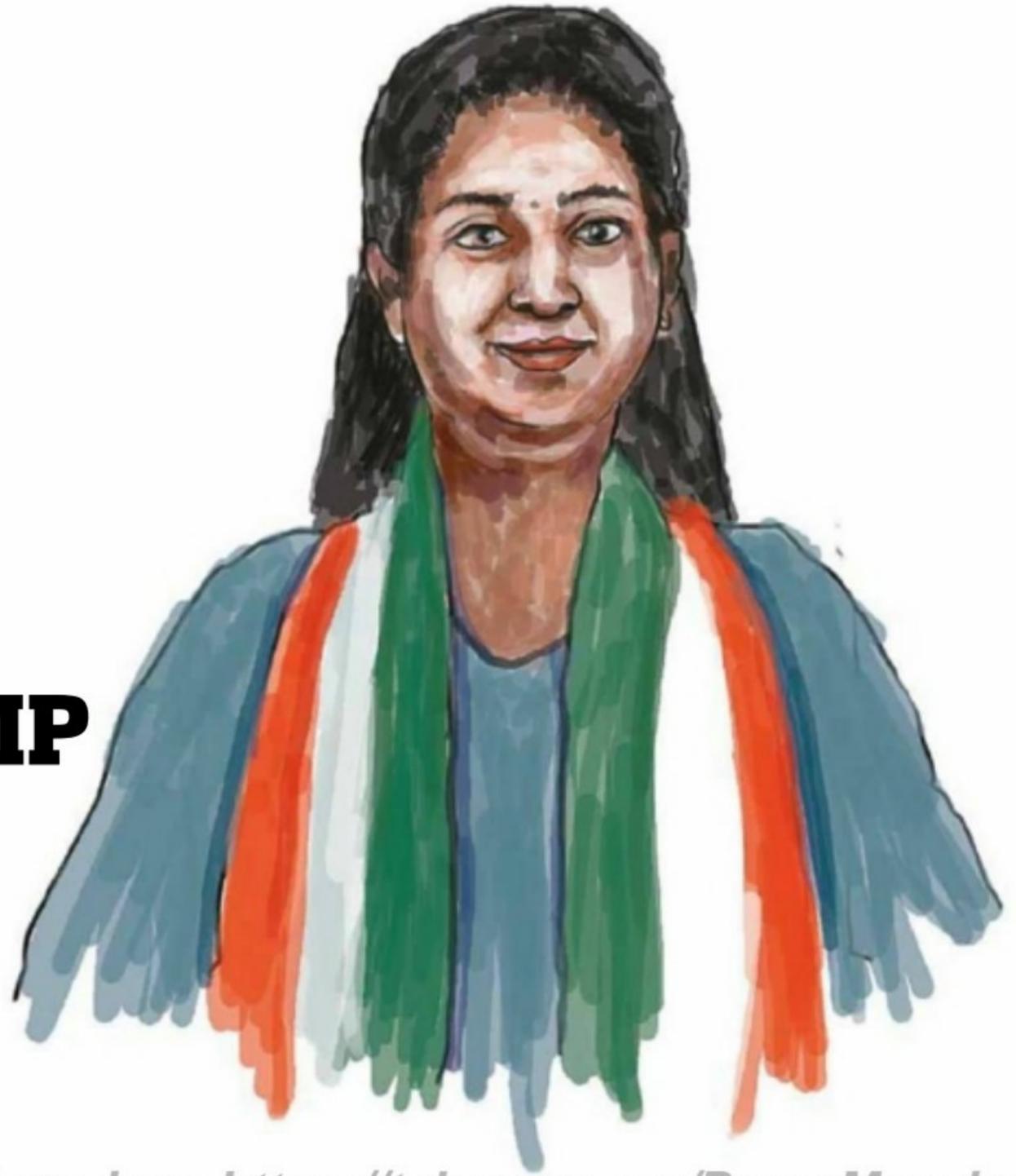
continue to do the same until my last breath,” he said.

Almost four years later, he won from the Tiruvallur constituency in Tamil Nadu with the highest margin of 5.72 lakh votes in the state. He chose to make his electoral debut from Tiruvallur, his mother’s hometown, and was up against the BJP, which was aggressively attempting to make inroads into the region, led by K Annamalai. A contest of contrasts, as many analysts had termed, saw the triumph of Senthil, who was rather soft-spoken but raised his voice against what he believed was wrong. His speeches, directly calling out the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), blaming it for communal politics, and criticising the BJP and its policies, are widely popular on social media.

Over the last few years, Senthil has worked behind the scenes to rebuild the Congress in Tamil Nadu and craft poll strategies for the party in Karnataka and Rajasthan. In Karnataka, he helped formulate the party’s five poll guarantees and led the “40 per cent commission” campaign targeting the then BJP-led government and Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai by posting attention-grabbing posters for the state assembly elections last year—both of which are hugely credited for the grand old party’s win in the state. “This is not an election... this is an ideological war,” Senthil said at one of his campaign stops. His ideology trumped the BJP in the Dravidian citadel. 

# The Millennial MP

Priyanka Jarkiholi is the first tribal woman to win from an unreserved constituency



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Anisha Reddy

**“S**OME people say women from political families tend to listen to the men of the family, rather than take independent decisions,” Priyanka Jarkiholi said in one of her interviews. She is the daughter of Satish Jarkiholi, the PWD minister and a political heavyweight in Karnataka. Priyanka is one of the three women elected to Parliament from Karnataka and the first tribal woman to win an election from an unreserved constituency, Chikkodi in Karnataka, as a Congress candidate. “But we must prove ourselves by our work,” she said.

Armed with an MBA degree from the K L S Gogte Institute of Technology in Belagavi, 26-year-old Priyanka did not have any political experience when she jumped into the electoral fray. She was taking on 61-year-old incumbent BJP MP Annasaheb Shankar Jolle. In the run-up to the elections, media channels and newspapers concentrated mostly on the stark age difference between the two candidates. “Old warhorse vs newbie”, “Youth takes on seasoned campaigner”—it seemed the media had almost decided the winner even before the polling.

Though Priyanka was not involved in political activities

earlier, she was active in social work for five years through the Satish Jarkiholi Foundation in Yemkanmardi constituency. She was also managing her family-owned sugar mills in Belagavi district and held directorial positions in numerous commercial ventures and charitable organisations.

From very early in life, Priyanka was keen to enter politics and serve the people in a better way. Her father played a pivotal role in pushing her into politics. Side by side with him, Priyanka led the electoral campaign with much gusto, banking on the Congress party’s guarantees for women in a constituency that has seen the dominance of Lingayat male MPs. She has, on multiple occasions, pressed for greater political representation of women.

While the incumbent BJP MP was rather inaccessible to the people on the ground, Priyanka reached out to most residents in her constituency over the past few months and assured them that she would work for their welfare if she were elected. Very conscious of her privilege, Priyanka said, “I have multiple identities—a young person; the daughter of a minister; and, a tribal girl who was fortunate to get a post-graduate education. I do not shy away from these identities.” She defeated the incumbent MP in Chikkodi by a margin of 90,834 votes. 🇮🇳

# Cultivating Self-esteem in Patients, is the Best Pain Management Ever

Dr Shovan Kumar Rath, Interventional Pain Specialist & Palliative Care Physician writes for *Outlook*

In an era where chronic pain affects millions worldwide, pain clinics have emerged as beacons of hope for individuals suffering from persistent discomfort. These specialized medical facilities not only provide relief but also serve as comprehensive centers for education, research, and community support. As society navigates the complexities of pain management, these clinics stand as invaluable assets, offering multifaceted solutions and improving the quality of life for countless individuals. Managing difficult chronic pain conditions through a non-surgical approach is their mission.

In a world where pain is pervasive, pain clinics emerge as beacons of hope and healing. Through their multidimensional approach to care, they offer relief, education, and empowerment to individuals grappling with chronic pain. As society continues to grapple with the complexities of pain management, these clinics stand as indispensable allies, enriching lives, advancing knowledge, and fostering a culture of compassion and understanding. Truly, they are a boon for society's well-being, embodying the ethos of care and resilience in the face of adversity.

The need for pain clinics in modern healthcare systems is significant and multifaceted, driven by various factors, from the growing prevalence of chronic pain, the complexity of pain management, the limitations of primary care, the opioid epidemic, the emphasis on patient-centered care, and advancements in pain research and technology. By addressing these needs, pain clinics play a vital role in improving the lives of individuals living with chronic

pain and promoting a more effective and compassionate approach to pain management within healthcare systems.

Pain Free Odisha, recognized to be the first interventional pain management center in Odisha, has been functioning since 2010 under my guidance. For the last 14 years it is trying at its level best to create a Pain Free society. Minimal-invasive techniques have helped patients with severe back pain, knee pain, different musculoskeletal pain as well as cancer pain to come back to their normal life within days.

Chronic pain, often debilitating and widespread, poses a significant challenge to individuals and healthcare systems alike. Back pain due to disc prolapse or age-related degeneration, osteoarthritis knee pain, frozen shoulder pain, elbow pain due to tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, spondyloarthropathy, headache & migraine, facial pain including trigeminal neuralgia, fibromyalgia, Rheumatism, musculoskeletal pain & cancer-related pain, for all these pain clinics offers a holistic approach to managing this complex issue, combining medical expertise with various therapeutic modalities. From medication management and

**Pain Free Odisha, recognized to be the first interventional pain management center in Odisha, has been functioning since 2010**



interventional procedures to physical therapy and psychological counseling, pain clinic offers a tailor treatment plan to address each patient's unique needs comprehensively. Basic aim is to improve the quality of life by reducing all kinds of pain non-surgically. Platelet-rich plasma (PRP) therapy for joint & ligament injury & sports injury, Radiofrequency ablation to nerve related pain, neurolytic injections for cancer pain, Spinalcord stimulator, Intrathecal pump placement and Endospine procedures and many more specialized therapies are available in plain clinic. These are non-surgical minimally invasive treatment modalities for chronic pain management.

*Dr Shovan Kumar Rath, Professor of Hi-Tech Medical College & Senior Consultant Pain Medicine, Pain Free Odisha, Health Village Hospital-Bhubaneswar, is a prominent figure in the medical field. He is a renowned name for his expertise and contributions to healthcare. With a distinguished career spanning of decades, Dr Rath has earned recognition for his work in various areas of medicine, particularly in pain management and rehabilitation. He stands as a beacon of excellence in the medical field, embodying the values of expertise, compassion, and dedication. His contributions have profoundly impacted countless patients' lives earning him a well-deserved reputation as a leader and innovator in healthcare.*

# Countering Cancer Deftly with Minimally Invasive Surgeries

A leading Onco-surgeon and expert, Dr Sujay Susikar, Consultant at Kauvery Hospital, Chennai, is raising the benchmark in the treatment of cancer with experience, knowledge, skill, commitment and compassion. Excerpt from the discussions with Dr Susikar, brought to you to read, mull and adopt a healthy lifestyle to keep cancer away

## Dr Sujay Susikar

Consultant at Kauvery Hospital, Chennai



### Q What is the standard of surgery in India, including highly advanced minimally invasive surgeries?

India is at par with any country in the world when it comes to advancements in surgery. Most of the developments are actually happening in India. Robotic and laparoscopic surgeries, which are part of minimally invasive surgeries, made its advent in India some 15-20 years ago. In fact, the latest version of robots, have permeated more in India, and the most experienced surgeons are today actually from India. Today, its availability and accessibility is manifold catering to a larger population as compared to 15 years ago. Surgery is now very standardised. For example for oncology, we know the principles of surgery are well-defined, and it's the same for any other speciality. Super specialty surgery facilities may not be available in every part of the country, but it is available in most part of the country such as in every metro city e.g., Chennai.

### Q At what stage is surgery recommend and done?

Onco-surgery is done for all solid organs except blood cancer. For all cancers, surgery is the best option to permanently remove the cancerous tissues and halt its progression, making it one of the most important aspect of curing a cancer. For cancer patients in stages 1 and 2, we do

surgery upfront and in stages 3 and 4, we try to downsize the tumour, which by then has affected other parts of the body, with the support of therapies like chemo or radiation. With advancements, stage 4 cancer has come under the purview of surgery even though the cancer has spread all over the body. Cancers of the breast, ovary, uterus and colon, however, can be controlled effectively with very good drugs, which are now available enabling us to operate precisely once rest of the tissues have been cured.

### Q What makes Kauvery Hospital a centre of excellence for onco surgery?

Today, Kauvery Hospital has all the advanced facilities, techniques and necessary equipment to treat all cancers, under one roof. The most advanced robots, state-of-the-art labs, radiation and chemo therapy units, and laparoscopic facility, are complete super speciality units in themselves.

At times, we practice as a group, where after a surgery, we use the help of specialists from other disciplines. The team is formed based on the organ and what cancer we are treating for better outcomes. For example, after removal of cancerous tissues of the breast, plastic surgeons, help in reconstruction of the breast, whereas oral-maxillofacial surgeons do the reconstruction of the soft tissues after head and neck onco surgery.

### Q What more can be done to improve the speciality of surgery?

I believe that there is always room for improvement in the speciality of surgery as in robotic, nano technology, finer advancements, and more of 3D reconstructions and simulations enabling us to access deep parts of the organs and reduce the damage of surrounding tissues while removing the tumour. These advancements will help us to approach the precise critical areas of cancer and help us to plan in advance using 3D simulation, raising the probability of success in the surgeries that we do.

### Q What is the scope of Onco surgery in context to the sharp surge in cancer patients?

The average ratio of cancer in India is 1:25, of which 1:20 are women. Because of lifestyle changes breast and endometrial cancers figure among the top cancers in women. The biggest impediment that we face is diagnoses of the exact cause of cancer and its unprecedented surge, which still remains elusive. But our hopes and efforts are pinned on early detection that can increase chances of quick recovery as compared for a relatively advanced case. For example, if breast cancer is detected early, chemo therapy can be avoided altogether, reduces morbidity, and mastectomy can be prevented. Also, patients get ample advantage of retaining

their organs, avoid exposure to toxic treatments and get away with less of every side effect in the entire treatment.

To tackle spread of cancer raising awareness and to know what can be the earliest signs and symptoms of cancer and identifying the needy who are in pre-cancerous stage is critical. For example, smokers, tobacco chewers with predisposition for oral cancer can be prevented from turning cancerous with early detection. While, in the insitu stage of cervix or the uterus, we are able to treat and prevent them from becoming full-blown cancers. Because we now know that cervical cancer is caused by human papilloma virus, there are vaccines for the female gender against this virus, which also prevents oral cancers.

#### **Q What are the reasons for rise in cancer cases and its prevention?**

A major factor is lifestyle changes, which is observed to be different in each generation and it also holds true for the present generation. Also, longevity poses a challenge with people living to a ripe old age making them susceptible to cancer. Fat content in the body i.e., abnormal BMI or obesity is also a major trigger for cancer in the present generation as compared to their predecessors. Increase in environmental pollution, use of plastic, which has increased sharply in the last 20-30 years, can also be carcinogens leading to malignant tumours.

My advise is to try to go back to nature like how our forefathers lived some 3-4 generations ago. Time your body clock with nature, increase physical activity, avoid processed foods, cut down fat consumption, increase intake of natural fibres and eat more green vegetables.

Maintain the correct ratio between fat and carbohydrate versus protein versus fibre, which unfortunately is drastically skewed.

#### **Q What are the initiatives of Kauvery Group of Hospitals in larger health schemes?**

A large-scale cervical cancer screening and immunization programme is being promoted by Kauvery Hospital among women, and girls who are in the puberty stage for which we are visiting clusters to identify such cases. Ideally, immunization is best done before young women are exposed to sexual activity. In the west 13 years is concerned to be the right age for the immunization against cervical cancer, but in India it can go up to 18-20 years. Those who are vaccinated for cancer of the cervix, it will also help prevent cancer of the throat and growth of warts.

#### **Q How is your department reassuring patients, besides educating those who are intimidated by surgery?**

In oncology, we start with a handicap of lack of public information about the latest treatment available, including complete cure in early stages, which means dealing with and counselling flabbergasted patients and their families. In most cases, once a person is diagnosed with cancer they are scared of coming forward for treatment fearing that death is imminent and it's a painful slow death. Once a patient come to Kauvery Hospital, a dedicated team takes complete charge of the situation assuaging their fears by informing them about the possibilities of cure, that surgery is painless, recovery is quick and one can lead a good life, which negates all the negative feelings they harbour. They then go for surgery with confidence. We also encourage patients to

interact with those who have been treated and are leading a normal life.

Minimal access surgery is targeted to relieve the patient at the earliest from the hospital. Patients who have a positive outlook are the ones who respond best to treatment and recover faster than the rest.

#### **Q What is the longevity and success rate after a cancer surgery?**

Longevity depends on the stage of the cancer in which a patient comes to us. Today, surgery of breast and uterine cancers give about 95-97 percent cure. The longevity of cancer patients in Chennai is a high 97 percent. We have also had patients with stage four breast cancer live up to 10-15 years after undergoing surgery. Not all but many cancers are curable with present day advancements, but they turn hormone receptor positive with the right diagnosis and right sequencing of treatment giving the desired results. With the support of Electronic Medical Records (EMR), follow-ups, reminders for check-up and keeping in touch with our patients has improved accessibility and communication.

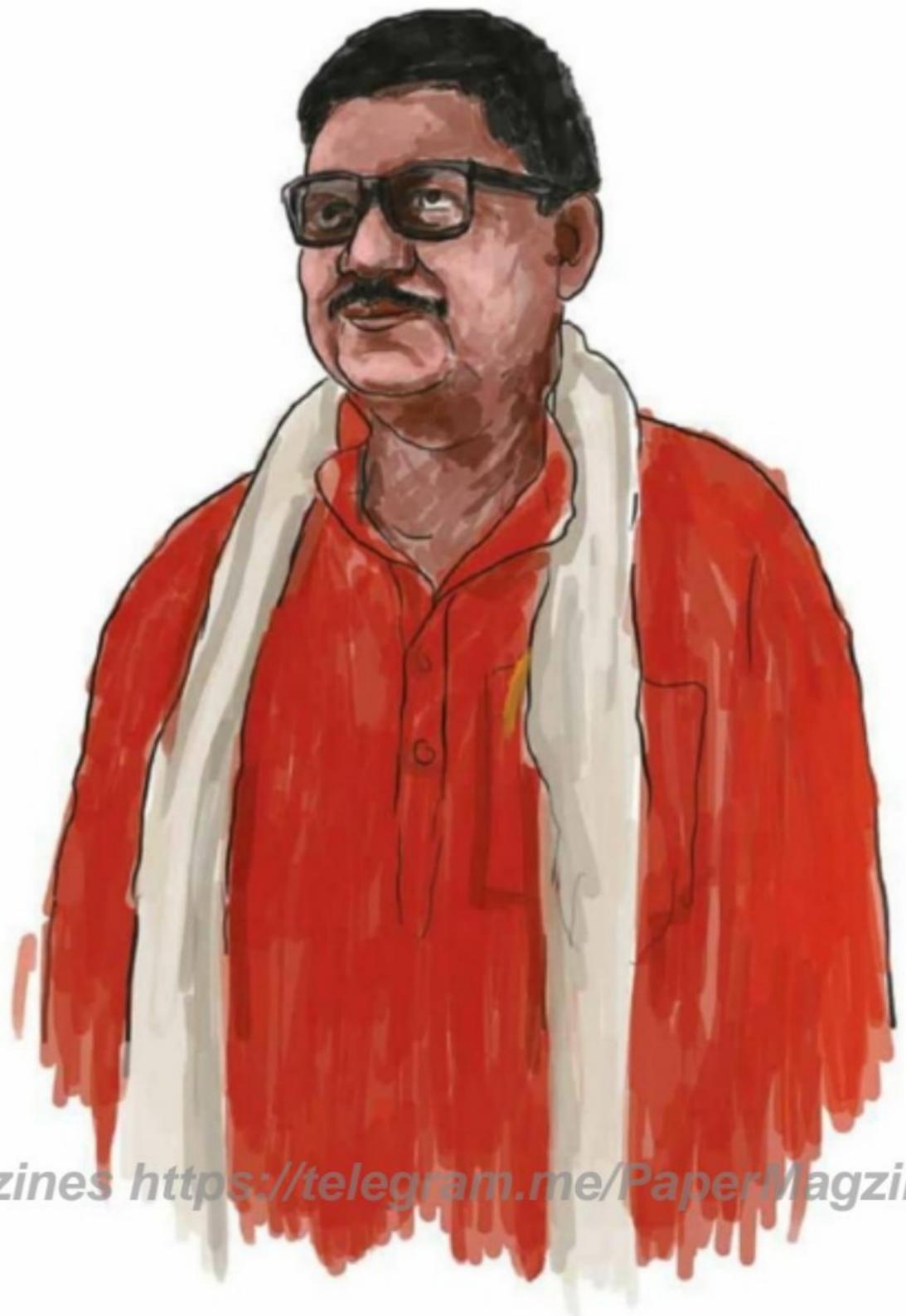
#### **Q What are the new frontiers in Onco-surgery that your hospital wishes to conquer in the near future?**

Kauvery Hospital has a big network of hospitals in Chennai and in other towns within the state where we go to do complex surgeries, on call. CMEs are organised regularly and we also collaborate where physicians from other hospitals come to train for more specialised work.

Our objective is to consistently improve the quality of lives, improve recoveries, and make it very quick and easy for a patient, in our speciality of Onco-surgery, which means carrying out all major and extensive surgeries that are exacting in time and energy for the surgeon and the patient as well. With new advancements, we are trying to minimise recovery time, where even after destructive surgeries, we want them to come back as normal as possible as they were before the surgery. I am confident that our team will achieve what it has set out to.

The vision and mission of Kauvery Group of Hospitals is largely guided by philanthropic intent to benefit the society and we strive to fulfil this objective with commitment and compassion.





# Red Revival

On his way to the hallowed chamber of Parliament, OBC leader Sudama Prasad defeated a BJP stalwart in Arrah and ensured CPI-ML's entry into Parliament after more than three decades



Umesh Kumar Ray

IS A BIHAR-BASED  
INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST

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**FROM** starting out in a small, family-run sweet shop, to being a grassroots politician for nearly four decades, to now becoming the first Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation MP in 35 years, OBC leader Sudama Prasad's journey has been an incredible one.

On his way to the hallowed chamber of Parliament, Prasad, 56, defeated RK Singh, a two-time MP, former bureaucrat and a BJP stalwart who has been a minister at the Centre, by almost 60,000 votes in Arrah, Bihar.

Prasad's win is significant on two counts—despite coming from a deprived background, he managed to defeat an influential leader like Singh, and his win has ensured the party's entry into Parliament after more than three decades. Prasad will be one of two CPI (ML) Liberation MPs in the 18th Lok Sabha. Raja Ram Singh, 66, won the Karakat seat in South Bihar, defeating the NDA's

Upendra Kushwaha, and Bhojpuri actor Pawan Singh, who contested as an Independent.

Arrah happens to be the same Lok Sabha seat from where the party won the General Elections nearly three decades ago. In 1989, Rameshwar Prasad, the Indian People's Front (IPF) leader, won from then Ara. The IPF was a CPI (ML) Liberation organisation which was set up to contest elections because at that time the party was underground. Later, the IPF was dissolved.

After 1989, the party could never win a Lok Sabha seat in Bihar. "We lost our voters to socialist leader Lalu Prasad Yadav after he emerged as a big leader. We are now hoping to regain our support base," says CPI (ML) Liberation leader Kunal.

A two-time MLA, Prasad fought to protect Bihar's public libraries, led the paddy procurement movement, and agitated for projects to develop Bhojpur.

Those close to him say that he got drawn towards grassroots politics right from his childhood. His father Ganga Dayal Sah used to run a small sweet shop in the village and Prasad used to accompany him. The repeated feudal and police atrocities that the family had to face impacted Prasad and later, when he grew up, he became inclined towards CPI (ML) Liberation, which was emerging as a strong resistance force against upper-caste atrocities.

Prasad passed his matriculation examination in 1978 and then took admission in a local college, but left his studies midway and became a full-time worker of the party. In the early years of CPI (ML) Liberation, he was active in the cultural organisation and helped in staging street plays.

In 1984, he was elected IPF secretary for Bhojpur-Rohtas districts and in 1989 he started the Bhojpur *Jagao-Bhojpur Bachao* movement. He agitated for a long time on the issues of modernisation of canals, construction of the Kadvan reservoir, construction of bridges on the Son and Ganga rivers, and construction of the Arrah-Sasaram broad gauge railway line, among others.

Situated at the confluence of the Ganga and Son rivers, Arrah is home to quality golden sand. But illegal sand mining has dried-up the Son river bed near Arrah, posing environmental and economic concerns. The 2024 election in Arrah featured a battle between development promises and social justice issues.

During his decades-long activism, Prasad also had to face jail time. He was arrested for the first time in 1985 in a police raid in Bhojpur and spent 22 days in jail. In 1989, he went to jail for the second time for participating in a meeting organised against the murder of party leader Baijnath Chaudhary in Ekwari village of the district and spent about 2.5 years in jail.

In 1990, he contested his first election from the Arrah assembly seat on an IPF ticket from jail, but lost. He contested again from the Arrah assembly in 2005 and from the Jagdishpur assembly in 2010. He tasted his first success in 2015 when he contested assembly elections from the Tarari seat in Bhojpur. In 2020, he again won from this seat. In 2009, he contested his first General Elections from the Buxar Lok Sabha seat, but lost.

What worked for him in these elections was effective door-to-door campaigning. "We did not have any star campaigner, so we focused on this. A team of 10-12 people was formed for each panchayat, who went door-to-door to meet people and convince them to vote for Sudamaji," a CPI (ML) Liberation activist, who was part of his election campaign, says.

"As a policy, we do not accept electoral bonds, so we asked people to fund our election expenditure. We printed a coupon of Rs 20 and went door-to-door to appeal to people to pay at least Rs 20 as a donation. We gave them coupons in lieu of donation," he adds.

Sharing his campaign journey, Prasad says: "This election

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## "DEMONETISATION AND LATER COVID-19 HAVE BROKEN THE BACK OF THE *KHUDRA VYAPARI* (RETAIL TRADERS) HERE. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO RECOVER TO DATE. WE WILL WORK FOR THEM"

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taught me that if you are a public representative, you have to be there for them when they need you the most."

"*Aam Janta apse sone ka mahal nahi chahti hai* (The general public does not expect you to build golden palaces for them). They want you to be with them in their tough times. If their crops get damaged, if their huts get washed away in floods, then you should reach out to them and help them in whichever way you can. Even if you are unable to help, you should be seen trying to help," he says. While he was an MP, Prasad was often seen visiting villages in his region and helping people. Perhaps this was the biggest shortcoming of Singh; he never visited his constituency, say political experts.

"While campaigning, we would often ask people if they got an opportunity to garland their MP. They would say that forget garlanding, they had never seen their MP ever. They were angry with Singh and we were confident that we would win," says Prasad.

The people of Arrah rejected Singh so their expectations from Prasad are definitely very high. Arrah is mainly an agricultural region, so agriculture-based initiatives are needed here. There is also a need to provide better facilities to farmers. In this context, it helps that Prasad is associated with the agricultural organisation of CPI (ML) Liberation.

"My priority is to set up agriculture-based industries in the region because the economy here is driven by agriculture. A large part of our area is irrigated through government borings, but 80 per cent of the borings are lying defunct; they have to be repaired. The paving of the Son canal will also be our priority as it is a lifeline for farmers," says Prasad.

Demonetisation and later Covid-19 have broken the back of the *khudra vyapari* (retail traders) here. They have not been able to recover to date. We will work for them, he adds.

For CPI (ML) Liberation, which is all set to enter Parliament from Bihar after three decades, this can also be an opportunity to increase its support base in the state. "We will fight for people in Parliament the way we have been fighting on the roads," says Prasad. 

# Art of the Possible

Youngest Dalit MP Shambhavi Choudhary plans to focus on connectivity to schools, colleges and hospitals, women and jobs

Umesh Kumar Ray

**S**HAMBHAVI Choudhary, 25, who won the General Elections with a margin of 1,87,537 votes from Samastipur—one of the six Lok Sabha seats reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC) in Bihar—is one of the youngest parliamentarians in the country. She is also the first woman MP from Samastipur.

The seat was earlier represented by constituent assembly member Satya Narayan Sinha, socialist icon Karpoori Thakur, and freedom fighter Ajit Kumar Mehta, among others.

Choudhary belongs to an influential political family. Her father Ashok Choudhary is a Janata Dal (United) leader and a minister in Nitish Kumar's cabinet.

Choudhary did her MA in Sociology from the Delhi School of Economics in 2022. For the most part of her life, she was out of the limelight as she was not that fond of politics and being in public life. Her name only made headlines after she entered the political arena.

The Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), the political outfit floated by the late Ram Vilas Paswan, gave her a Lok Sabha ticket from Samastipur.

To ensure Choudhary's victory, Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself held a public meeting where he addressed her as his daughter and appealed to the public to vote for her. In a public meeting in Darbhanga, pointing towards Choudhary who was present on the stage, PM Modi said: "Our daughter is the youngest candidate contesting general elections. Please bless her. She must win."

After her victory, Choudhary said: "Our grandfather was in politics, father is also in politics, so we grew up in a political environment. When we used to see them working, we felt that there is nothing more satisfying than serving the public. I was interested in politics, but I could never have imagined that I would taste success at such a young age," she says.

However, there was a controversy when she was given the ticket. It angered the old guard of the party. Two dozen



leaders resigned, alleging that tickets were being given to outsiders, ignoring the party's old-time workers.

One of the leaders who resigned said on condition of anonymity: "We have been associated with the party for years. We have been grassroots workers and have been working, putting our personal lives at stake. But we were ignored and the ticket was given to a person who has never worked on the ground."

After her win Choudhary said: "We saw on the ground that people had full faith in CM Nitish Kumar, PM Modi and party chief Chirag Paswan. Women said that we would vote for the one who gives us ration and housing. This made me believe that my victory was certain."

Apart from industries, her focus areas are road connectivity, educational institutions and health centres in remote areas.

Choudhary considers her win as the victory of *nari shakti* and for her, connectivity is a major issue. "Connectivity to schools, colleges and rural hospitals is not good. My priority will be to strengthen connectivity, so that girls can reach colleges and get higher education and sick people can reach hospitals," she says.

Samastipur is one of those districts of Bihar where migration for jobs is high because there are no employment opportunities. Industries like the old sugar mill, jute mill and paper mill are closed. "We will look into if these closed industries can be reopened," she says.

"The issue of employment for youth has been dominating for quite some time. If industries are set up in our area, they will get employment. We will work on this," says Choudhary. 

# Outlook

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# Technologies Transforming Healthcare Delivery Systems

In today's rapidly evolving world, technology and health innovations are becoming increasingly intertwined, driving profound improvements in global healthcare. These innovations range from advanced diagnostic tools to artificial intelligence (AI) applications that personalize patient care, all contributing significantly to a higher standard of living worldwide. Here, we explore how these technological advancements are making a definitive impact, helping the world live better.

**Expanding Access with Telemedicine**  
Telemedicine has been a cornerstone in democratizing access to healthcare services. By utilizing video conferencing, mobile apps, and other telecommunication technologies, medical professionals can reach patients in the most remote areas. A leading researcher in healthcare technology, states, "Telemedicine is not just an alternative, but a necessity in reaching underserved populations and providing continuous care in rural or

isolated communities." This technology reduces travel time and expense for patients, allows for immediate consultation, and is vital during emergencies when immediate medical advice is needed.

## Enhancing Precision with AI and Machine Learning

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are at the forefront of transforming healthcare by enhancing diagnostic accuracy and personalizing treatment. AI algorithms can analyse vast amounts of medical data, from patient records to genetic information, to predict diseases and recommend treatments.

## Revolutionizing Diagnostics through Advanced Imaging and Sensors

Innovative diagnostic tools, including next-generation sequencing and advanced imaging technologies, have revolutionized the early detection and treatment of diseases. Portable imaging devices and wearable sensors now monitor health conditions in real-time, providing critical data that can be used to prevent severe illnesses.

## Improving Surgical Outcomes with Robotic Surgery

Robotic surgery is another area where technology is making a significant impact. This innovation allows for more precise and less invasive procedures, reducing recovery times and improving surgical outcomes. Surgeons use robotic systems to perform complex procedures with enhanced visibility and control.

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**"AI is divided into three categories: descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive Descriptive AI helps to gain insight into historical events. Predictive AI is associated with predicting events. Prescriptive AI has the ability to inform decisions, for instance on possible treatments, which is controversial as well as interesting. AI also benefits the healthcare industry by reducing economic disparity A report of TCS global survey highlights that although AI would reduce jobs, there will be possibility of creation of new jobs due to entry of new AI integrated healthcare projects in those companies"**  
**-ResearchGate**



**Alka Dwivedi**

Co-founder of ImmunoACT

“Lowering cancer costs- Alka Dwivedi (Co-founder of ImmunoACT ) An effective treatment against the disease still remains a farfetched dream. However, a new treatment has raised hopes after first patient has been declared “cancer-free” using India’s CAR-T cell therapy. CAR-T, short for chimeric antigen receptor T-cell therapy, has been making waves in the medical community for its success in treating certain blood cancers. At the forefront of this is the Indian research team led by Alka Dwivedi. Their ground-breaking work focuses on modifying CAR-T cells to carry a more human-like antibody, a strategy aimed at evading immune system attacks”



**Dr Srinivas Desai**

Eminent Diagnostic & Interventional Radiologist

“MRGFUS (MR GUIDED FOCUSED ULTRASOUND SURGERY) has totally transformed the treatment of Brain diseases (intentional tremor, Parkinson’s, BBB disruption for drug delivery for brain Tumors) & Various Body Tumors (fibroids, adenomyosis, prostate cancer, bone Tumors etc) offering Non Invasive Surgery with negligible side effects, sub millimeter precision and superb outcomes”



**Dr Barnali Das**

Lead consultant in Laboratory Medicine

“With advanced diagnostics and digital transformation, we can detect health issues before they become symptomatic. This improves standardized care, by flagging patients like AKI e alerts, applying risk algorithms in EMR and providing better interpretation; thus dramatically changing outcomes for patients across the globe”



**Dr Vijay D'Silva**

Renowned Critical Care Specialist

“The digital data and communication boom in the last few decades has resulted in the development of AI powered healthcare technology. AI tech is leading us to rapid and accurate diagnosis, personalised treatment, better patient safety, risk prediction and disease prevention, remote patient monitoring, healthcare to remote areas and research”

**Democratizing Mental Health Care with Digital Tools**

Mental health care has also benefited immensely from health innovations, particularly through the use of digital tools that increase accessibility to psychological services. Online therapy platforms, apps for mindfulness and stress management, and AI-based diagnostic tools help individuals manage their mental health more proactively.

**The Future of Health Tech Innovations**

Looking forward, the potential for health tech innovations continues to grow exponentially. Nanotechnology, biotechnology, and continuous advances in AI are expected to further revolutionize how medical care is delivered and experienced. These technologies not only promise to extend life expectancy but also improve the quality of life, reinforcing the adage that we are not just aiming to add years to life, but life to years.

In conclusion, as technology and health innovations advance hand-in-hand, their impact on global healthcare is undeniably positive. By making health services more accessible, enhancing diagnostic precision, and personalizing treatment, technology is indeed helping the world live better. The integration of these technologies into everyday healthcare is transforming the landscape of medicine and paving the way for a healthier future for all.

Rank	BEST MULTI-SPECIALITY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	ASTER MEDCITY	KOCHI
3	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
4	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
5	ASTER CMI	BENGALURU
6	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
7	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
8	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
9	YASHODA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITALS (KAUSHAMBI)	GHAZIABAD
10	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
10	PARK HOSPITAL, PALAM VIHAR	GURUGRAM
12	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
13	KAUVERY HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
13	SIMS HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
15	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
16	RELA HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
17	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH	DELHI
17	ASTER MIMS HOSPITALS	CALICUT
19	STAR HOSPITAL	HYDERABAD
20	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
21	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	DELHI
22	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI
23	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY	BENGALURU
24	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL	DELHI
25	SAGAR HOSPITALS	BENGALURU
26	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL	KOLKATA
27	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL	MUMBAI
28	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
29	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
30	PARK GRECIAN HOSPITAL	CHANDIGARH
31	APOLLO MULTISPECIALTY HOSPITALS	KOLKATA
32	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
33	MARENGO CIMS HOSPITALS	AHMEDABAD

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	AIG HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD
3	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
4	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
5	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
6	THE INSTITUTE OF LIVER AND BILIARY SCIENCES (ILBS)	DELHI
7	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
8	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
9	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
10	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL	KOLKATA
11	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI
12	RAJAGIRI HOSPITAL	KOCHI

Rank	BEST PLASTIC SURGERY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL, PAREL	MUMBAI
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
3	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
4	A. J. HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MANGALURU
5	KAUVERY HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
6	MIOT INTERNATIONAL	CHENNAI
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET	DELHI
8	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
9	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
10	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
11	CARE HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD

Rank	BEST OPHTHALMOLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SANKARA EYE HOSPITALS	COIMBATORE
2	CENTRE FOR SIGHT	DELHI
3	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
4	L. V. PRASAD EYE INSTITUTE	HYDERABAD
5	DMITA EYE CARE HOSPITAL	DURGAPUR
6	NARAYANA NETHRALAYA	BENGALURU
7	SUSRUT EYE FOUNDATION AND RESEARCH CENTRE	KOLKATA
8	NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OPHTHALMOLOGY	PUNE
9	ARAVIND EYE HOSPITAL AND POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF OPHTHALMOLOGY	COIMBATORE
10	DR. AGARWAL'S EYE HOSPITAL	BENGALURU

Rank	BEST ENDOCRINOLOGY & DIABETES HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
3	KAUVERY HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
4	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
5	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
6	DR. MOHAN'S DIABETES SPECIALITY CENTRE	CHENNAI
7	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
8	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
9	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS, KAUSHAMBI	NCR
10	CARE HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD
11	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL, FARIDABAD	NCR
12	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI

Rank	BEST PAEDIATRICS HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SURYA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
2	KANCHI KAMAKOTI CHILDS TRUST HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
3	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
4	SRCC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - MANAGED BY NARAYANA HEALTH MUMBAI	MUMBAI
5	APOLLO CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
6	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
7	MARENGO ASIA HOSPITALS	FARIDABAD
8	RAINBOW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	HYDERABAD
9	MOTHERHOOD HOSPITAL	BENGALURU
10	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL	DELHI

Rank	BEST VASCULAR SURGERY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	BENGALURU
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
3	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
4	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
5	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
6	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
7	ASTER MIMS HOSPITALS	CALICUT
8	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
9	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE	DELHI
10	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
11	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI

Rank	BEST GYNAECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
1	SURYA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
3	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
4	MOTHERHOOD HOSPITAL	BENGALURU
5	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
6	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
7	RAINBOW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	HYDERABAD
8	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
9	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
10	CARE HOSPITAL, BANJARA HILLS	HYDERABAD
11	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR	KOLKATA
12	KAUVERY HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
13	MAX MULTI SPECIALITY CENTRE, PANCHSHEEL PARK	DELHI



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**Dr C S Pramesh**  
MS, FRCS  
Director- Tata Memorial Hospital

“Biggest problems we face is inequities in quality cancer care, with patients often having to travel thousands of miles to reach a good cancer center... The National Cancer Grid is an initiative to create uniform standards of cancer care across the country & eliminate these disparities.”

Rank	BEST NEURO SURGERY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
3	SIMS HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
4	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
5	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
6	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
7	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
8	ASTER MEDCITY	KOCHI
9	CARE HOSPITALS, BANJARA HILLS	HYDERABAD
10	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
11	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
12	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE	DELHI

Rank	BEST GI, LAPROSCOPIC & GENERAL SURGERY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
3	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
4	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
5	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
6	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
7	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
8	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
9	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
10	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
11	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
12	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL	DELHI
13	CARE HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD

Rank	BEST PULMONOLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
3	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
4	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
5	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL, PAREL	MUMBAI
6	MAZUMDAR SHAW MEDICAL CENTER	BENGALURU
7	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
8	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
9	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
10	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
11	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL	DELHI
12	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET	DELHI
13	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI

Rank	BEST INFERTILITY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	SURYA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
3	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
4	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
5	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
6	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
7	RAINBOW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	KONDAPUR
8	CRAFT HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	KOCHI
9	CARE HOSPITAL, BANJARA HILLS	HYDERABAD
10	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
11	MAX MULTI SPECIALITY CENTRE, PANCHSHEEL PARK	DELHI
12	FORTIS LA FEMME [FORTIS HEALTHCARE]	DELHI

Rank	BEST UROLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
3	ASTER MEDCITY	KOCHI
4	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
5	A. J. HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MANGALURU
6	NU HOSPITALS	BENGALURU
7	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
8	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS, KAUSHAMBI	NCR
9	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD
10	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
11	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
12	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
13	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
14	DEENANATH MANGESHKAR HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	PUNE
15	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI
16	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
17	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
18	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
2	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
4	KAUVERY HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
4	SIMS HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
6	THE MISSION HOSPITAL	DURGAPUR
7	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY	BENGALURU
8	RELA HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
9	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
10	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
11	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
12	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL	KOLKATA
13	SAGAR HOSPITALS	BENGALURU
14	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
15	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
16	A. J. HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MANGALURU
17	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
18	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI
19	ASTER MEDCITY	KOCHI
20	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH	DELHI
21	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL	MUMBAI
22	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
23	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
24	U. N. MEHTA INSTITUTE OF CARDIOLOGY & RESEARCH CENTRE	AHMEDABAD
25	B. M. HEART RESEARCH CENTRE	KOLKATA



**Padama Shree Dr Yash Gulati**  
Joint Replacement and Spine Surgeon

“Specific drugs can effectively control or eradicate rheumatoid arthritis if diagnosed early. For both types, managing symptoms includes anti-inflammatory medications, weight control, physiotherapy, muscle strengthening and Yoga.”

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Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
3	SURYA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
4	M   O   C CANCER CARE AND RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
5	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
6	A. J. HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MANGALURU
7	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY	BENGALURU
8	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
9	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
10	RAJIV GANDHI CANCER INSTITUTE AND RESEARCH CENTRE	DELHI
11	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
12	BASAVATARAKAM INDO AMERICAN CANCER HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE	HYDERABAD
13	APOLLO CANCER CENTRE	CHENNAI
14	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	HOWRAH
15	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
16	HCG CANCER CENTRE, KALINGA RAO ROAD	BENGALURU
17	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
18	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
3	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
4	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL	DELHI
5	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
6	NU HOSPITALS	BENGALURU
7	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
8	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
9	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY	BENGALURU
10	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI	BENGALURU
11	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
12	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
13	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI

Rank	BEST LIVER TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	RELA HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
2	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL, PAREL	MUMBAI
3	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
4	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
5	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
6	KAUVERY HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
7	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
8	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
9	CARE HOSPITALS HITEC CITY	HYDERABAD
10	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
11	MARENGO ASIA HOSPITALS	FARIDABAD
12	ASTER CMI	BENGALURU
13	THE INSTITUTE OF LIVER AND BILIARY SCIENCES (ILBS)	DELHI

Rank	BEST ORGAN TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
2	MARENGO CIMS HOSPITALS	AHMEDABAD
4	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
5	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
6	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL, SARITA VIHAR	DELHI
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET	DELHI
8	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD	BENGALURU
9	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
10	CARE HOSPITAL, HITEC CITY	HYDERABAD
11	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL	MUMBAI
12	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
13	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
3	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
4	NEUROGEN BRAIN AND SPINE INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
5	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL	MUMBAI
6	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
7	SIMS HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
8	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL	BENGALURU
9	INSTITUTE OF NEUROSCIENCES	KOLKATA
10	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
11	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
12	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
13	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
14	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE	DELHI
15	CARE HOSPITAL, BANJARA HILLS	HYDERABAD



Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDICS HOSPITALS: ALL INDIA	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	MIOT INTERNATIONAL	CHENNAI
3	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
4	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
5	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
6	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
7	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	DELHI
8	THE MISSION HOSPITAL	DURGAPUR
9	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
10	MARENGO ASIA HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM
11	SANCHETI INSTITUTE FOR ORTHOPAEDICS AND REHABILITATION	PUNE
12	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	PUNE
13	JASLOK HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
14	MEDANTA THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
15	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE	DELHI

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**Prof Dr Balakumar. S**  
Senior Consultant Vascular and Endovascular Surgeon

Detection of Vascular diseases involving veins and Peripheral arteries(PAD) remains most under diagnosed and under treated.50% of patients PAD are yet to detected and venous disease is reported to be twice as prevalent as coronary disease. With the newer technologies in imaging and treatment options, I aim to bridge the gap between patients and Vascular Surgeon seeking right, personalised treatment choices that will certainly impact the health care system

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: WEST	CITY
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
3	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
4	SAIFEE HOSPITAL	MUMBAI
5	RUBY HALL CLINIC	PUNE
6	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL	MUMBAI
7	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
8	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
9	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	MUMBAI
10	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	MUMBAI
11	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
12	CRITICARE ASIA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE	MUMBAI
13	MARENGO CIMS HOSPITALS	AHMEDABAD
14	DEENANATH MANGESHKAR HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE	PUNE

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
3	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
4	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
5	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
6	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
7	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
8	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
9	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
10	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
11	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE
12	APOLLO HOSPITALS
13	SRCC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - MANAGED BY NARAYANA HEALTH

Rank	BEST PLASTIC SURGERY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
3	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
4	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
5	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
6	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
7	BREACH CANDY HOSPITAL
8	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
9	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
10	FORTIS HOSPITAL
11	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST OPHTHALMOLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
3	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
4	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
5	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
6	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
7	SAIFEE HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST INFERTILITY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	SURYA HOSPITALS
3	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
4	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
5	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
6	CLOUDNINE HOSPITAL
7	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
8	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
9	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST PAEDIATRICS HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SURYA HOSPITALS
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
3	SRCC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - MANAGED BY NARAYANA HEALTH MUMBAI
4	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
5	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
6	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
7	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
8	CLOUDNINE HOSPITAL
9	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
10	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
11	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE

Rank	BEST VASCULAR SURGERY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
3	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
4	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
5	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
6	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
7	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
8	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
9	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
10	FORTIS HOSPITAL
11	APOLLO HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST ENDOCRINOLOGY & DIABETES HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
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2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
3	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
4	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
5	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
6	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
7	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
8	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	FORTIS HOSPITAL
10	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
11	APOLLO HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST GYNAECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
1	SURYA HOSPITALS
3	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
4	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
5	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
6	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
7	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
8	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
9	CLOUDNINE HOSPITALS
10	GLOBAL HOSPITALS

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3	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE
4	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
5	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
6	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
7	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
8	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
9	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
10	FORTIS HOSPITAL
11	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE HOSPITAL
2	SURYA HOSPITALS
3	M   O   C CANCER CARE AND RESEARCH CENTRE
4	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
5	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
6	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
7	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
8	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
9	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
10	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	APOLLO HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDICS HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE HOSPITAL
2	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
3	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
4	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
5	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
6	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
7	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
8	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE
9	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
10	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE

Rank	BEST LIVER TRANSPLANTATION HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
2	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
3	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
4	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL
6	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
7	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
8	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
9	S. L. RAHEJA HOSPITAL
10	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
11	APOLLO HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST NEROSURGERY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
3	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
4	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
5	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
6	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
7	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
9	FORTIS HOSPITAL
10	APOLLO HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
3	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
4	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
5	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
6	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
7	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
8	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
9	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
10	FORTIS HOSPITAL
11	BREACH CANDY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
3	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
4	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
5	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
6	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
7	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
8	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE
10	APOLLO HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
3	NEUROGEN BRAIN AND SPINE INSTITUTE
4	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
5	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
6	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
7	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
8	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
9	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
10	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
11	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
12	FORTIS HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST UROLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
2	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
3	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
4	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
5	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
6	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
7	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
8	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
9	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
10	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	SAIFEE HOSPITAL
3	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
4	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
5	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
6	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
7	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
8	P D HINDUJA HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
9	BREACH CANDY HOSPITAL
10	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	CRITICARE ASIA MULTI SPECIALITY HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Rank	BEST ORGAN TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS: MUMBAI
1	SIR H. N. RELIANCE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
2	DR L H HIRANANDANI HOSPITAL
3	GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL PAREL
4	JASLOK HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
5	NANAVATI MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
6	KOKILABEN DHIRUBHAI AMBANI HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
7	BOMBAY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE
8	FORTIS HOSPITAL
9	LILAVATI HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
10	SAIFEE HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: PUNE
1	RUBY HALL CLINIC
2	KEM HOSPITAL
3	POONA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
4	DEENANATH MANGESHKAR HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
5	SAHYADRI HOSPITALS
6	JEHANGIR HOSPITALS
7	NOBLE HOSPITAL
8	ADITYA BIRLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
9	JUPITER HOSPITAL

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Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: NORTH	CITY
1	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
2	YASHODA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITALS (KAUSHAMBI)	GHAZIABAD
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH	DELHI
4	PARK HOSPITAL, PALAM VIHAR	GURUGRAM
5	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL	DELHI
6	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)	DELHI
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET	DELHI
8	PARK GRECIAN HOSPITAL	CHANDIGARH
9	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
10	ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	FARIDABAD
11	AMRC HOSPITAL, MANSAROVAR	JAIPUR
12	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	DELHI
13	VIVEKANANDA POLYCLINIC AND INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	LUCKNOW
14	FORTIS MEMORIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	GURUGRAM

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
2	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
3	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
4	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
5	PARK HOSPITAL, DELHI
6	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
7	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
8	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
10	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
12	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
13	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH

Rank	BEST PEDIATRIC HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
2	CLOUDNINE HOSPITAL
3	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
4	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
5	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
6	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
7	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
8	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
9	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA

Rank	BEST NEURO SURGERY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE
2	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
3	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
4	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
5	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
6	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
7	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
8	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
10	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
11	VENKATESHWAR HOSPITAL, DWARKA

Rank	BEST LIVER TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	THE INSTITUTE OF LIVER AND BILIARY SCIENCES (ILBS)
2	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
3	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
4	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
5	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
6	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
7	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
9	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
10	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET

Rank	BEST GI, LAPROSCOPIC & GENERAL SURGERY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
2	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
3	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
4	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
5	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
6	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
7	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
8	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
9	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
10	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
11	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST PLASTIC SURGERY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
2	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
4	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
5	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
6	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
7	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
8	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
9	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
10	VENKATESHWAR HOSPITAL, DWARKA

Rank	BEST VASCULAR SURGERY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE
2	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
3	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
4	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
5	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
6	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
8	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
9	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
10	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	THE INSTITUTE OF LIVER AND BILIARY SCIENCES (ILBS)
2	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
4	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
5	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
6	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
7	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
8	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
9	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
10	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
2	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
4	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
5	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
6	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
7	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	AAKASH HEALTHCARE
9	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
10	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA



**Dr Bharat Jagiasi**  
Eminent Critical Care Expert and  
General Secretary-ISCCM

“Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing critical care by enhancing diagnostic accuracy, optimizing treatment plans, and improving patient outcomes. Leveraging AI in intensive care units enables real-time monitoring and predictive analytics, ensuring timely interventions and personalized care, ultimately saving lives and advancing medical practice.”

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	RAJIV GANDHI CANCER INSTITUTE AND RESEARCH CENTRE
2	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
3	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
4	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
5	PARK HOSPITAL, DELHI
6	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
8	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
10	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
2	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
3	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
4	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
5	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
6	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
7	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
9	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
10	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE
2	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
3	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
4	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
6	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
8	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
9	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
10	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
11	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
12	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ

Rank	BEST PULMONOLOGY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
2	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET
3	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
4	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
5	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
6	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
7	DHARAMSHILA NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
9	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, PATPARGANJ
10	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
11	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
12	VENKATESHWAR HOSPITAL, DWARKA

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE
2	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, SHALIMAR BAGH
4	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
5	PUSHPAWATI SINGHANIA HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PSRI HOSPITAL)
6	FORTIS ESCORTS HEART INSTITUTE & RESEARCH CENTRE, OKHLA
7	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	FORTIS FLT. LT. RAJAN DHALL HOSPITAL, VASANT KUNJ
9	HCMCT MANIPAL HOSPITAL, DWARKA
10	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL, SAKET

Rank	BEST INFERTILITY HOSPITALS: DELHI
1	MAX MULTI SPECIALITY CENTRE, PANCHSHEEL PARK
2	FORTIS LA FEMME [FORTIS HEALTHCARE]
3	CLOUDNINE HOSPITAL
4	INDRAPRASTHA APOLLO HOSPITAL
5	JAIPUR GOLDEN HOSPITAL
6	SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL
7	BLK-MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	VENKATESHWAR HOSPITAL, DWARKA

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS	NCR
1	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
2	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KAUSHAMBI
3	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
3	MARENGO ASIA HOSPITALS	FARIDABAD
5	PARK HOSPITAL, SECTOR 47	GURUGRAM
6	ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	FARIDABAD
7	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	NOIDA
8	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL	FARIDABAD
9	THE SIGNATURE HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
10	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM
11	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	VAISHALI
12	KAILASH HOSPITAL & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA
13	ARTEMIS HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS	NCR
1	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
2	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
3	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KAUSHAMBI
4	ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	FARIDABAD
5	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL	FARIDABAD
6	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	VAISHALI
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GHAZIABAD
8	METRO HOSPITALS & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA
9	KAILASH HOSPITAL & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA
10	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM

Rank	BEST GYNECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS HOSPITALS	NCR
1	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
2	ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	FARIDABAD
3	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
4	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KAUSHAMBI
5	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GHAZIABAD
6	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL	FARIDABAD
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	VAISHALI
8	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM
9	KAILASH HOSPITAL & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA
10	ARTEMIS HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDICS HOSPITALS	NCR
1	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KAUSHAMBI
2	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
3	MARENGO ASIA HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM
4	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
5	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	NOIDA
6	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	VAISHALI
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GHAZIABAD
8	ARTEMIS HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
9	ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	FARIDABAD
10	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL	FARIDABAD

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS	NCR
1	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM
2	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
3	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GHAZIABAD
4	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KAUSHAMBI
5	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	VAISHALI
6	NARAYANA SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
7	ARTEMIS HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
8	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL	FARIDABAD
9	KAILASH HOSPITAL & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA
10	METRO HOSPITALS & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS	NCR
1	NARAYANA HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
2	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KAUSHAMBI
3	MEDANTA - THE MEDICITY	GURUGRAM
4	ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES	FARIDABAD
5	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL	FARIDABAD
6	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GURUGRAM
7	MAX SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL	VAISHALI
8	MANIPAL HOSPITALS	GHAZIABAD
9	KAILASH HOSPITAL & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA
10	ARTEMIS HOSPITAL	GURUGRAM
11	METRO HOSPITALS & HEART INSTITUTE	NOIDA

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Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	AMRC HOSPITAL, MANSAROVAR
2	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
3	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
4	APEX HOSPITAL
5	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
6	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
7	MAHATMA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL
8	SAWAI MAN SINGH HOSPITAL
9	ETERNAL HOSPITAL
10	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
11	METRO MAS HOSPITAL
12	SANTOKBA DURLABHJI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	BHAGWAN MAHAVEER CANCER HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
2	AMRC HOSPITAL, MANSAROVAR
3	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
4	APEX HOSPITAL
5	HCG CANCER CENTRE
6	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
8	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
9	MAHATMA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	AMRC HOSPITAL, MANSAROVAR
2	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
3	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
4	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
5	MAHATMA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL
6	METRO MAS HOSPITAL
7	APEX HOSPITAL
8	ETERNAL HOSPITAL
9	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
2	SANTOKBA DURLABHJI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
3	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
4	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
5	SAWAI MAN SINGH HOSPITAL
6	APEX HOSPITAL
7	METRO MAS HOSPITAL
8	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
9	ETERNAL HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	AMRC HOSPITAL, MANSAROVAR
2	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
3	SANTOKBA DURLABHJI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
4	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
5	MAHATMA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL
6	APEX HOSPITAL
7	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
8	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
9	METRO MAS HOSPITAL
10	ETERNAL HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	AMRC HOSPITAL, MANSAROVAR
2	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
3	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
4	APEX HOSPITAL
5	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
6	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
7	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
8	SHALBY MULTI-SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	METRO MAS HOSPITAL
10	SAWAI MAN SINGH HOSPITAL
11	ETERNAL HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	FORTIS ESCORTS HOSPITAL
2	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
3	APEX HOSPITAL
4	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
5	SANTOKBA DURLABHJI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
6	ETERNAL HOSPITAL
7	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
8	MAHATMA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST GYNECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	SURYA HOSPITALS
2	APEX HOSPITAL
3	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
4	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
5	TAGORE HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE
6	RUKMANI BIRLA HOSPITAL
7	SAKET HOSPITAL
8	FORTIS ESCORT

Rank	BEST PEDIATRIC HOSPITALS: JAIPUR
1	SURYA HOSPITALS
2	CRADLE CHILDREN HOSPITAL
3	CHIRAYU HOSPITAL
4	NARAYANA MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITAL
5	TAGORE HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE
6	MANIPAL HOSPITALS
7	ETERNAL HOSPITAL



**Dr Rajesh Rajan**  
Chairman -Indian Association of  
Clinical Cardiologists

“The undeniable link between excess weight and cardiovascular diseases highlights the urgency of addressing the global obesity crisis. Excess weight increases the risk of conditions such as heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure. Understanding this connection is vital for promoting a healthier lifestyle and reducing the burden of cardiovascular diseases.”

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: INDORE
1	BOMBAY HOSPITAL
2	CHOITHRAM HOSPITAL AND RESEARCH CENTER
3	APOLLO HOSPITALS
4	CARE HOSPITAL
5	MEDANTA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITALS
6	CHL HOSPITAL
7	SHALBY HOSPITALS
8	GOKULDAS HOSPITALS
9	VISHESH HOSPITALS



Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: SOUTH	CITY
1	ASTER MEDCITY	KOCHI
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS	CHENNAI
2	ASTER CMI	BENGALURU
4	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.	CHENNAI
4	KAUVERY HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
4	SIMS HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
6	RELA HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
7	CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE	VELLORE
8	ASTER MIMS HOSPITAL	CALICUT
9	STAR HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD
10	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL	CHENNAI
11	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD
12	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY	BENGALURU
13	SAGAR HOSPITALS	BENGALURU
14	KIMS HEALTH	TRIVANDRUM
15	APOLLO HEALTH CITY	HYDERABAD
16	CARE HOSPITALS	HYDERABAD
17	MANIPAL HOSPITAL, HAL AIRPORT ROAD	BENGALURU

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	APOLLO HOSPITALS
1	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
3	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
3	SIMS HOSPITAL
5	RELA HOSPITAL
6	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
7	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
8	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL
9	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
10	VIJAYA HOSPITAL
11	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
12	STANLEY MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL
13	GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HEALTH CITY
14	MGM HEALTHCARE MALAR ADYAR HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ORGAN TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
2	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
2	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL
4	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
5	APOLLO HOSPITALS
6	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
7	SIMS HOSPITAL
8	SRI RAMACHANDRA HOSPITAL
9	VIJAYA HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST HOSPITAL CHENNAI: LIVER TRANSPLANT
1	RELA HOSPITAL
2	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
3	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
4	APOLLO HOSPITALS
5	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
6	SIMS HOSPITAL
7	MGM HEALTHCARE MALAR ADYAR HOSPITAL
8	GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HEALTH CITY

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	APOLLO CANCER CENTRE
1	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
3	RELA HOSPITAL
3	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
5	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
6	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
7	SIMS HOSPITAL
8	MGM HEALTHCARE MALAR ADYAR HOSPITAL
9	GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HEALTH CITY
10	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
11	SRI RAMACHANDRA HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST PULMONOLOGY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	APOLLO HOSPITALS
1	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
3	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
4	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
5	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
6	RELA HOSPITAL
7	SIMS HOSPITAL
8	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
9	GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HEALTH CITY
10	SRI RAMACHANDRA HOSPITAL

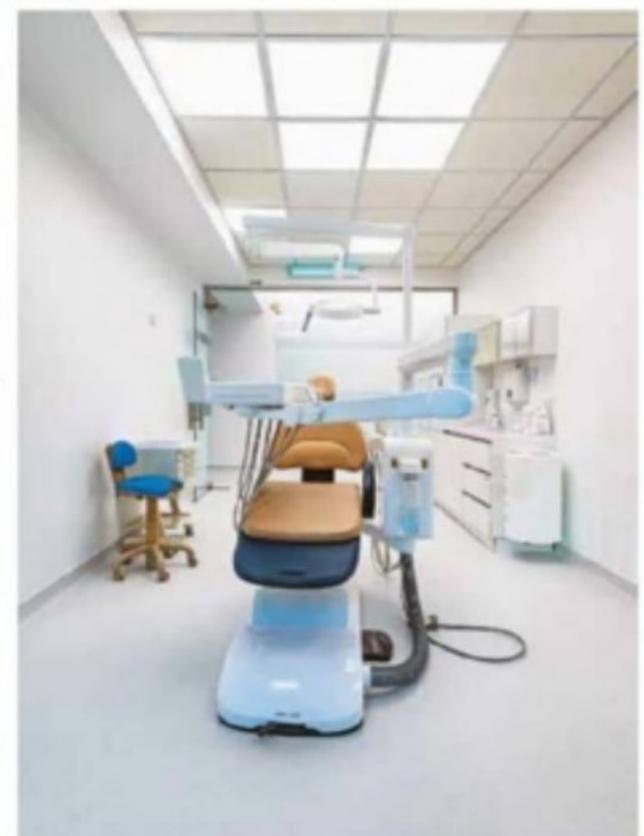
Rank	BEST UROLOGY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL
2	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
3	APOLLO HOSPITAL
4	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
5	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
6	SIMS HOSPITAL
7	RELA HOSPITAL
8	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
9	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
10	GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HEALTH CITY
11	BILLROTH HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS
3	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
4	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL
6	SRI RAMACHANDRA HOSPITAL
7	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
8	PRASHANTH HOSPITALS
9	VIJAYA HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST PAEDIATRICS HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	KANCHI KAMAKOTI CHILDS TRUST HOSPITAL
2	APOLLO CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS
3	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
4	RAINBOW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
5	VIJAYA HOSPITAL
6	MOTHERHOOD HOSPITAL
7	SUNDARAM MEDICAL
8	CLOUDNINE HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	SIMS HOSPITAL
2	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
3	RELA HOSPITAL
4	APOLLO HOSPITAL
5	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
6	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
7	VIJAYA HOSPITAL
8	GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HEALTH CITY
9	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
10	SRI RAMACHANDRA HOSPITAL
11	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST HOSPITAL CHENNAI: ENDOCRINOLOGY & DIABETES
1	KAUVERY HOSPITALS
2	DR. MOHAN'S DIABETES SPECIALITY CENTRE
3	APOLLO HOSPITALS
4	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
5	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
6	SIMS HOSPITAL
7	VIJAYA HOSPITAL
8	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
9	APOLLO SPECIALITY HOSPITALS - OMR
10	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL



Rank	BEST HOSPITALS CHENNAI: GASTROENTEROLOGY
1	RELA HOSPITAL
2	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
3	APOLLO HOSPITALS
4	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
5	SIMS HOSPITALS
6	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
7	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
8	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL
9	VIJAYA HOSPITAL
10	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
11	STANLEY MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
2	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
3	SIMS HOSPITAL
4	RELA HOSPITAL
4	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL
6	APOLLO HOSPITAL
7	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
8	MIOT INTERNATIONAL
9	VIJAYA HOSPITAL
10	BILLROTH HOSPITALS
11	HINDU MISSION HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITALS: CHENNAI
1	MIOT INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALS
2	SIMS HOSPITAL
3	MGM HEALTHCARE PVT. LTD.
4	RELA HOSPITAL
5	DR. MEHTA'S HOSPITAL
6	KAUVERY HOSPITAL
7	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
8	DR. KAMAKSHI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
9	APOLLO HOSPITALS
10	THE MADRAS MEDICAL MISSION HOSPITAL
11	VIJAYA HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
2	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
3	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI
4	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, YESHWANTHPUR
5	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
6	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
7	ASTER R V HOSPITALS
8	ST. JOHN'S MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL
9	FORTIS HOSPITAL, CUNNINGHAM ROAD
10	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
11	FORTIS HOSPITAL, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
12	SPARSH HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
2	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI
3	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
4	SRI JAYADEVA INSTITUTE OF CARDIOVASCULAR SCIENCES & RESEARCH
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
6	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
8	SPARSH HOSPITAL
9	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
10	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL



Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	NU HOSPITALS
2	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
3	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI
4	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
6	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
8	SPARSH HOSPITAL
9	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
10	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI
2	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
3	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
4	HOSMAT HOSPITALS
5	MAZUMDAR SHAW MEDICAL CENTER
6	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
7	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
8	COLUMBIA ASIA HOSPITAL
9	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
10	SPARSH HOSPITAL
11	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
2	HOSMAT HOSPITALS
3	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
4	FORTIS HOSPITAL, CUNNINGHAM ROAD
5	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
6	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
7	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
8	SAGAR HOSPITALS
9	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
10	VIKRAM HOSPITAL
11	SPARSH HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
2	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
3	SRI SHANKARA CANCER HOSPITAL & RESEARCH CENTRE
4	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
6	HCG CANCER CENTRE, KALINGA RAO ROAD
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
8	COLUMBIA ASIA HOSPITAL
9	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
10	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	SPARSH HOSPITAL
12	BGS GLENEAGLES GLOBAL HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST UROLOGY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	NU HOSPITALS
2	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
3	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
4	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
6	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
7	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
8	SPARSH HOSPITAL
9	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
10	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS: BENGALURU
1	ASTER CMI HOSPITAL
2	SAGAR HOSPITALS, BANSHANKARI
3	NARAYANA HEALTHCITY
4	FORTIS HOSPITAL, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
5	APOLLO HOSPITALS, BANNERGHATTA ROAD
6	MANIPAL HOSPITALS, HAL AIRPORT ROAD
7	SPARSH HOSPITAL
8	SAKRA WORLD HOSPITAL
9	VYDEHI SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL

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Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	STAR HOSPITALS
2	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
3	AIG HOSPITALS
4	APOLLO HOSPITALS
5	ASTER PRIME HOSPITAL
6	CARE HOSPITALS HITEC CITY
7	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	KIMS HOSPITAL
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	CITIZENS HOSPITAL
11	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS
12	GLENEAGLES HOSPITALS



**Dr Sunil Shroff**  
Managing Trustee,  
MOHAN Foundation

“We have close to 110,000 brain-dead patients, and one person can give life to eight people. But we have only 700–800 hospitals that are authorised for transplants and donations. So, not only awareness but also medical facilities are required to fill this gap. The other problem is that there’s nobody in the ICU many times who can actually speak to the family and create awareness about organ donation. So, there’s no support from the system or hospital.”

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	STAR HOSPITALS
2	BASAVATARAKAM INDO AMERICAN CANCER HOSPITAL & RESEARCH INSTITUTE
3	ASTER PRIME HOSPITAL
4	APOLLO HOSPITALS
5	AMERICAN ONCOLOGY INSTITUTE
6	CARE HOSPITALS HITEC CITY
7	GLENEAGLES HOSPITALS
8	KIMS HOSPITAL
9	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
10	AIG HOSPITALS
11	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
12	CITIZENS HOSPITAL
13	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	STAR HOSPITALS
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS
3	AIG HOSPITALS
4	ASTER PRIME HOSPITAL
5	CARE HOSPITALS HITEC CITY
6	KIMS HOSPITAL
7	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
8	GLENEAGLES HOSPITALS
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	CITIZENS HOSPITAL
11	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	STAR HOSPITALS
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS
3	CARE HOSPITALS BANJARA HILLS
4	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
5	ASTER PRIME HOSPITAL
6	GLENEAGLES HOSPITALS
7	AIG HOSPITALS
8	KIMS HOSPITAL
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	CITIZENS HOSPITAL
12	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS

Rank	BEST GASTROENTEROLOGY HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	AIG HOSPITALS
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS
3	CARE HOSPITALS HITEC CITY
4	STAR HOSPITALS
5	APOLLO SPECTRA HOSPITALS
6	PACE HOSPITALS
7	GLENEAGLES HOSPITALS
8	KIMS HOSPITAL
9	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
10	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
11	CITIZENS HOSPITAL
12	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS
13	ASTER PRIME HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST CRITICAL CARE HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	STAR HOSPITALS
2	CARE HOSPITALS HITEC CITY
3	APOLLO HOSPITALS
4	KAMINENI HOSPITALS
5	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS
6	AIG HOSPITALS
7	SLG HOSPITALS
8	KIMS HOSPITAL
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
11	CITIZENS HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	STAR HOSPITALS
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS
3	KAMINENI HOSPITALS
4	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
5	CARE HOSPITALS BANJARA HILLS
6	AIG HOSPITALS
7	SLG HOSPITALS
8	KIMS HOSPITAL
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS
11	CITIZENS HOSPITAL



Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	APOLLO HOSPITALS
2	STAR HOSPITALS
3	KAMINENI HOSPITALS
4	CARE HOSPITALS BANJARA HILLS
5	KIMS HOSPITAL
6	AIG HOSPITALS
7	SLG HOSPITALS
8	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS
11	CITIZENS HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST ORGAN TRANSPLANT HOSPITALS: HYDERABAD
1	KIMS HOSPITAL
2	APOLLO HOSPITALS
3	ASTER PRIME HOSPITAL
4	YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITAL
5	CARE HOSPITALS BANJARA HILLS
6	KAMINENI HOSPITALS
7	SLG HOSPITALS
8	CONTINENTAL HOSPITALS
9	SUNSHINE HOSPITAL
10	CITIZENS HOSPITAL

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Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: EAST	CITY
1	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL	KOLKATA
2	APOLLO MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS	KOLKATA
3	THE MISSION HOSPITAL	DURGAPUR
4	FORTIS HOSPITAL ANANDAPUR	KOLKATA
5	AMRI HOSPITALS	KOLKATA
6	CARE HOSPITAL	BHUBANESWAR
7	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITAL [CMRI]	KOLKATA
8	MEDICA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITAL	KOLKATA
9	BELLE VUE CLINIC	KOLKATA
10	PEERLESS HOSPITAL AND B.K.ROY RESEARCH CENTRE	KOLKATA
11	APOLLO HOSPITAL	BILASPUR

Rank	BEST MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS: KOLKATA
1	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL
2	APOLLO MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR
4	AMRI HOSPITALS
5	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITALS [CMRI]
6	MEDICA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITAL
7	BELLE VUE CLINIC
8	PEERLESS HOSPITAL AND B.K.ROY RESEARCH CENTER
9	WOODLANDS HOSPITAL
10	DESUN HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEUROLOGY HOSPITALS: KOLKATA
1	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL
2	INSTITUTE OF NEUROSCIENCES
3	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR
4	MEDICA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITAL
5	AMRI HOSPITALS
6	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITALS [CMRI]
7	BELLE VUE CLINIC
8	APOLLO MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS
9	DESUN HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST PEDIATRICS HOSPITALS: KOLKATA
1	INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH
2	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL
3	APOLLO HOSPITAL
4	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR
5	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITALS [CMRI]
6	MANIPAL HOSPITAL
7	AMRI HOSPITALS
8	WOODLANDS HOSPITAL
9	PEERLESS HOSPITAL AND B.K.ROY RESEARCH CENTER
10	MEDICA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITAL

Rank	BEST NEPHROLOGY HOSPITALS: KOLKATA
1	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR
2	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL
3	DESUN HOSPITAL
4	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITALS [CMRI]
5	PEERLESS HOSPITAL AND B.K.ROY RESEARCH CENTER
6	AMRI HOSPITALS
7	KOTHARI MEDICAL CENTRE
8	WOODLANDS HOSPITAL
9	APOLLO MULTISPECIALITY HOSPITALS
10	MEDICA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITAL

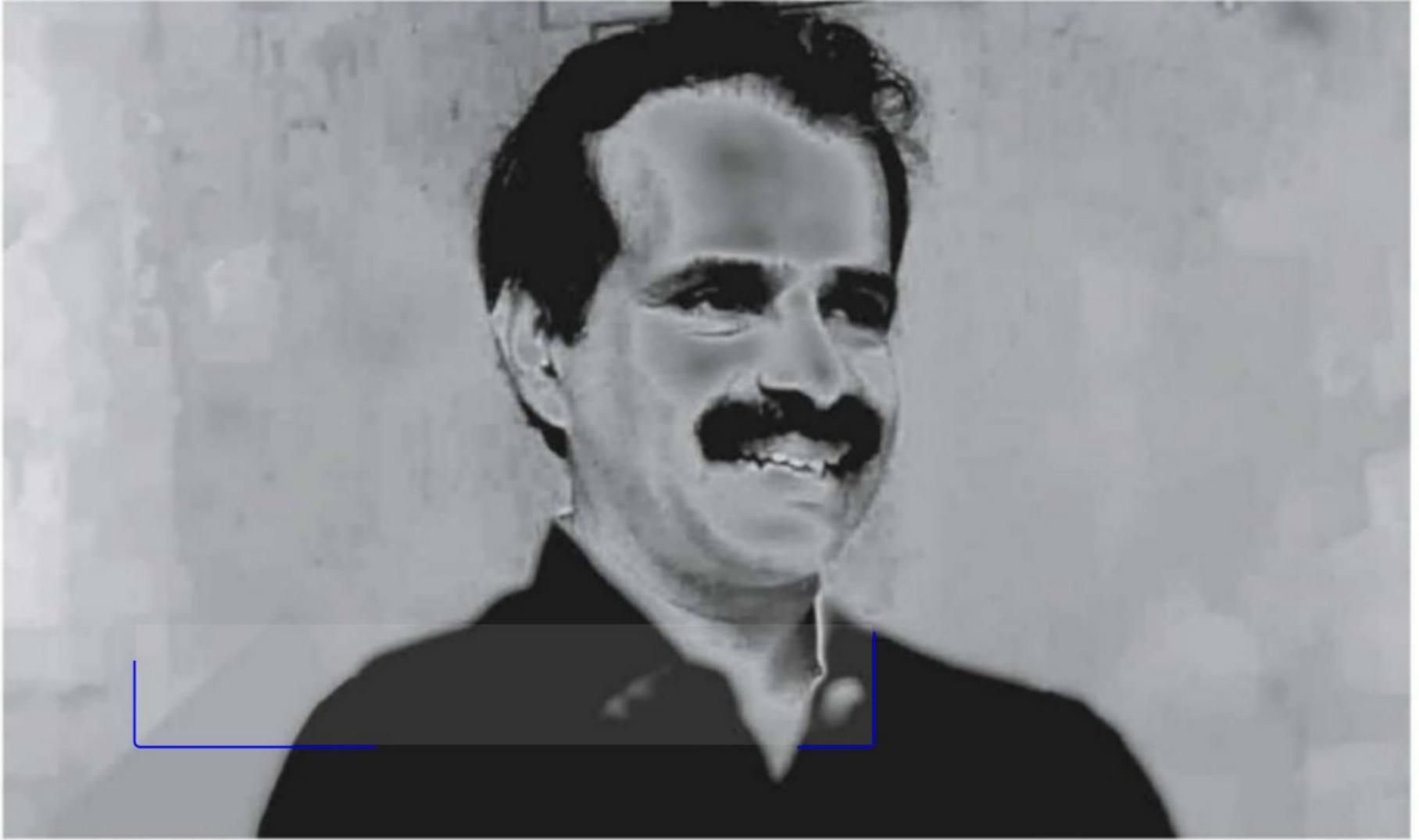
Rank	BEST CARDIOLOGY HOSPITALS: KOLKATA
1	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL
2	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR
3	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITALS [CMRI]
4	AMRI HOSPITALS
5	APOLLO HOSPITAL
6	MEDICA SUPERSPECIALTY HOSPITAL
7	MANIPAL HOSPITAL
8	WOODLANDS HOSPITAL
9	BELLE VUE CLINIC
10	PEERLESS HOSPITAL AND B.K.ROY RESEARCH CENTER

Rank	BEST ONCOLOGY HOSPITALS: KOLKATA
1	NARAYANA - R N TAGORE HOSPITAL
2	NCRI HOSPITAL
3	SAROJ GUPTA CANCER CENTRE & RESEARCH INSTITUTE
4	HCG ONCOLOGY HOSPITAL
5	FORTIS HOSPITAL, ANANDAPUR
6	C. K. BIRLA HOSPITALS [CMRI]
7	WOODLANDS HOSPITAL
8	PEERLESS HOSPITAL AND B.K.ROY RESEARCH CENTER
9	AMRI HOSPITALS



**Dr Soumya Swaminathan**  
(former WHO Chief Scientist)

**“Air pollution has short-term and long-term impacts on health, many studies have shown. These range from heart attacks, diabetes, and strokes, and in pregnancy it increases the risk of low birth weight, stillbirth, and miscarriage due to long-term exposure”**



# Minority Mantra

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The elevation of George Kurian, long serving Party functionary, to the Union cabinet is part of the Bharatiya Janata Party's ongoing "Christian project" in Kerala

**Shahina K K**

**D**ESPITE being a frequent participant in television debates in Kerala, George Kurian, a surprise addition to the new Union cabinet, is the least trolled Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader in the state. While other celebrities like actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi and former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Alphonse Kannanthanam have faced heavy trolling, Kurian has remained untouched by social media. Known for his calm and balanced demeanour, he has been steadfast in his political positions. Despite being a member of the Christian community, he has never shied away from expressing the overtly communal stance of the Sangh Parivar. A loyalist since the BJP's formation, Kurian has remained with the Party even during its difficult times.

"Kurian's political life began with the JP Movement," recalls his colleague, Narayanan Nambuthiri, BJP spokesperson, Kerala. Nambuthiri, who has known Kurian since 1980, the period of the formation of the BJP, notes that Kurian's entry

into the Party was not unusual for a Christian in Kerala at the time. Kurian started his public life as an active member and office bearer of the Student Morcha, eventually rising to the national leadership of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM). "He was attracted to the ideology upheld by the Jana Sangh and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Not being an opportunist, he stood with the Party through all its ups and downs," says Nambuthiri.

Kurian has never publicly been seen taking sides in the factional feuds within the Party. He was closely connected to the central leadership of the BJP, serving as a National Executive member from 1999-2010. Kurian was appointed as the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) for O Rajagopal when he was a Minister of State in the Union government from 1999-2004. As the All India General Secretary of the Minority Morcha, Kurian became more active in State politics from 2010. He took on the role of State spokesperson for the BJP in 2010 and was appointed Vice Chairman of the National Minority Commission in 2015. At the time of his elevation to this post, he was the State General Secretary of the Party in Kerala.

Even while holding various responsibilities at the national level, Kurian has maintained an active presence in the State. He contested the 2016 Assembly election in Puthuppally constituency against then Chief Minister and Congress leader Oommen Chandy but did not win the seat. Political opponents remember him as a man who refrained from personal attacks. “During the campaign in Puthuppally, although he criticised the government severely, he never crossed the line or made below-the-belt allegations, as we often see in today’s politics,” says a Congress office bearer from Puthuppally.

However, despite being a member of a minority community, Kurian has consistently aligned himself with hardline Hindutva politics. He endorsed the ‘Narcotic Jihad’ theory put forth by Pala Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt of the Syro-Malabar Church in Kerala, even going so far as to write a letter to the Home Minister requesting increased security for the Bishop. In 2021, the Pala Bishop had said that extremists were employing tactics such as ‘Love Jihad’ and ‘Narcotic Jihad’ to convert non-Muslims, citing instances where Muslim youth involved in drug-trafficking allegedly targeted individuals from other religions. This unsubstantiated allegation drew widespread criticism.

Kurian’s elevation to the rank of Union minister is seen as part of the BJP’s strategy to expand its voter base in the Christian-majority regions in Kerala. The results of the 2024 elections have bolstered the Party’s hopes of increasing its influence among Kerala’s Christian voters. The shift in Christian votes in favour of the NDA was most notable in Thrissur, from where Suresh Gopi became the first BJP member elected to the Lok Sabha from Kerala. In Thrissur, where Christians constitute 21.4% of the electorate, Gopi led in six out of seven assembly segments, with margins ranging between 8,000 and 13,000 votes. A significant portion of Kerala’s 6.14 million (18.4%) Christian community is concentrated in the central districts of Ernakulam, Idukki, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta. In terms of vote share, the NDA saw an increase in Kottayam (from 17.04% to 19.74%), Idukki (from 8.55% to 10.86%), and Ernakulam (from 14.24% to 15.87%), while experiencing a decline in Pathanamthitta (from 28.95% to 25.49%).

Six seats in the State have a Christian population share of over 20%, with the highest being in Idukki at 41.8%, and Pathanamthitta at 39.6%. In the Kottayam Lok Sabha constituency, where Christian voters make up around 38.7% of the electorate, the Congress-led UDF saw a decline in their vote share compared to 2019, dropping from 46.25% to 43.6% in 2024, although they still won the seat. In Idukki, the UDF’s vote share decreased from 54% to 51%. However, the UDF increased its vote share in Ernakulam from 51% to 53%, where Christians constitute 32% of the electorate.

\* \* \*

“It is not factually correct to say that Kurian is an exception in the Party (as a member of the Christian community). When the Jana Sangh started, there were a handful of Christians at the forefront. O M Mathew and K U John, who belong to the Syro-Malabar Church like Kurian, were State Vice Presidents of the Jana Sangh,” says Nambuthiri.

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## KURIAN STARTED AS A MEMBER AND OFFICE BEARER OF THE STUDENT MORCHA, EVENTUALLY RISING TO THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE YUVA MORCHA.

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Kurian is not the first National Democratic Alliance (NDA) member from Kerala to become a Union minister. P C Thomas, former leader of the Kerala Congress (Mani group) and initially part of the United Democratic Front (now with the Left Democratic Front), joined the NDA after leaving the Kerala Congress. The unexpected victory of P C Thomas, contesting as an NDA candidate from the Muvattupuzha Lok Sabha constituency in 2004, marked the BJP/NDA’s initial penetration into the Christian belt in central Kerala. Thomas, who was appointed to the Rajya Sabha in 2003, had previously served as a Minister of State in the Union government. His tenure continued until 2006 when the Supreme Court disqualified him for “invoking religious sentiments” during his campaign.

The next prominent leader from the Christian community in the NDA in Kerala was renowned anti-corruption crusader Alphonse Kannanthanam, a 1979 batch IAS officer. During his tenure as Commissioner of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) in 1990, he gained fame for his vigorous eviction campaign, reportedly demolishing over 14,000 illegal buildings.

Kannanthanam entered Kerala assembly politics in 2006 as an independent candidate supported by the LDF and won. However, in 2011, he joined the BJP and in 2017, he was appointed to the Union cabinet as the Minister of State for Information Technology, with an additional responsibility in the Tourism Ministry. Suresh Gopi, subsequently, is the second Union Minister of State under the NDA to hold the Tourism portfolio. Kannanthanam played a crucial role in fostering ties between BJP leaders and various factions within the Christian community in Kerala, particularly in the influential Syro-Malabar Church. His efforts significantly advanced the BJP’s “Christian Project” in Kerala. Home Minister Amit Shah’s meeting with bishops from multiple churches, including Catholic, Latin, Mar Thoma and Orthodox ones in 2017 underscored the Party’s ongoing efforts to integrate Christian leaders into its Central cabinet, highlighting that this initiative is not new for the BJP.

It is evident that the BJP’s strategy to appeal to religious sentiments and garner support from the Christian vote base in Kerala has a long history dating back to the early 2000s. Unlike in other states, the BJP cannot secure seats in the Kerala Legislative assembly or the Lok Sabha without making inroads into minority votes, particularly the Christian electorate. The Muslim minority in the state remains largely beyond the Party’s reach. 

# A Journey of Creating a Healthier Community for more than 90 Years

Dr Mehta's Hospitals is a tertiary care hospital serving diverse people in and around Chennai, providing multidisciplinary care across 80 different specialties under one roof in its two units at Chetpet and Velappanchavadi with 400 beds. Focusing on improving people's health and well-being - enabling affordable & easy access to healthcare for everyone and better outcomes across the health continuum – from healthy living and prevention to diagnosis and treatment

**D**r Mehta's Hospitals has been standing as a pillar of healthcare excellence for over ninety years, tracing its origins back to 1933. Established by the visionary duo Dr Anantraj Jayanatilal Mehta and Dr Savitha Ben Mehta, the institution began as Mehta Nursing Home in Sowcarpet, Chennai, with just two beds, a labor room, an operation theatre, and a consultation room. Marked by continuous expansion and innovation – relocated to Chetpet, and expanded into a 100-bed facility, integrating in-

house pharmacy services to provide comprehensive care. This modest beginning set the stage for what would evolve into one of Tamil Nadu's premier multispecialty hospitals.

## Healthcare for Everyone

Dr Mehta's Hospitals now operates two units with a combined capacity of 400 beds, offering over 80 specialties managed by 500 expert clinicians. The hospital is renowned for its excellence in clinical outcomes, particularly in centers of excellence such as: surgeries,



pediatrics, women's health, transplants, pediatric intensive care, neonatal intensive care, cardiology, and urology. This ensures that patients receive holistic and specialized care under one roof.

A key feature of Dr Mehta's Hospitals is its focus on leveraging advanced technology and deep clinical insights to enhance patient outcomes. The hospital's facilities are equipped with cutting-edge diagnostic and therapeutic tools, enabling precise and effective treatment. This technological integration, coupled with the expertise of its medical professionals, makes Dr Mehta's Hospitals a leader in the healthcare industry with a strong foundation over the past 90 years.



receive the best possible care.

Continuous professional development is a cornerstone of the hospital's philosophy. Regular training programs, workshops, and conferences are conducted to keep the medical staff abreast of the latest advancements in their respective fields.

The hospital's commitment to maintaining high standards is reflected in its accreditation from NABH and NABL.

#### **Ethos of Dr Mehta's Hospitals**

At the core of Dr Mehta's Hospitals' philosophy, is its patient-centric approach that emphasizes genuine care, compassion, and respect. The hospital's environment is designed to be welcoming and conducive to healing, with spacious rooms, modern amenities, and a soothing ambiance.

To further enhance patient convenience, Dr Mehta's Hospitals offer 24/7 accessible care, ensuring that quality healthcare is always within reach. The institution also extends its expertise beyond the hospital premises through home care services, including the "Doctor to Home" program, which allows patients to receive medical care in the comfort of their homes.

"A continued deep-rooted sense of responsibility towards our community - makes us steadfast and has a positive impact on the lives of those around us," quotes Mr. Sameer Mehta.

Dr Mehta's Hospitals have always been deeply committed to giving back to the community. The institution regularly conducts health camps, awareness programs, and free medical check-ups for underserved populations. These initiatives are aimed at promoting health and wellness in the community and making quality healthcare accessible to all.

#### **Moving Forward**

With a legacy spanning over 9 decades, Dr Mehta's Hospitals continues to set benchmarks in the healthcare industry as it remains steadfast in its mission to provide world-class healthcare that is accessible to everyone.

#### **A Legacy of Trusted Care Across Generations**

Dr Mehta's Hospitals, takes pride in serving more than 30,000 families across two generations and more than 300 families across three generations. The hospital has achieved remarkable milestones, including facilitating over a million safe births, performing over 2.5 million successful surgeries, and pioneering excellence in day-care surgery and kidney transplants. With a commitment to quality care and innovation, the hospital continues to set new standards in healthcare, says Mr. Sameer Mehta, Vice Chairman of Dr Mehta's Hospitals.

At the heart of Dr Mehta's Hospitals'

success is its team of dedicated healthcare professionals, including the most experienced & finest doctors, surgeons, and medical staff. These experts bring a wealth of experience and knowledge, ensuring that patients

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**Dr Mehta's Hospitals,  
takes pride in serving  
more than 30,000 families  
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families across three  
generations**



**Fluid Political Matrix** BJP supporters at a 2024 Lok Sabha campaign meeting at Hoshiarpur, Punjab

# Chak De Change

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There is a new churning in Punjab politics and the Bharatiya Janata Party is diving in with an eye on the 2027 assembly election

**Ashwani Sharma**

**I**N March 2024, when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) officially announced its decision to contest the 2024 general election in Punjab on its own, the party's decision was neither sudden nor unexpected. The decision to go solo was linked to a deeper dynamics, largely capitalising on the State's changing political matrix, which is in the throes of a dynamic transition—both generational and cultural. After three decades as a junior partner of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), an ideologically divergent ally, the BJP contested all 13 Lok Sabha seats in Punjab's new four-cornered political landscape, but did not win any. However, even in its failure, there is a silver lining for the saffron party, which already governs at the Centre under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, now serving his third term. During the election campaign, Modi sought to connect with Punjab's voters by criticising the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for drug trade and economic

challenges, while also targeting the Congress.

At a rally in Hoshiarpur, he claimed, "The government's authority doesn't prevail here; instead, it's the sand and drug mafia along with shooter gangs." When he assumed office after the polls, Prime Minister Modi swiftly appointed Ravneet Singh Bittu, a former two-time Congress MP who lost the Ludhiana Lok Sabha election, to the Union cabinet.

In the 13 Lok Sabha seats, the Congress, despite being part of the INDIA bloc, won seven seats, one less than in 2019. The AAP secured three seats, while the Akalis won one in Bathinda. The SAD's attempt to regain farmers' trust amid ongoing protests backfired. Worse, their vote share fell from 27.45 percent in 2019 to 13.42 percent in 2024, with 10 out of 13 candidates losing their security deposits.

The Congress won seven seats—Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ferozepur, Patiala, Ludhiana, and Fatehgarh Sahib—capitalising on anti-incumbency against the AAP and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Its traditional vote share dropped from 42.01 percent in the 2022 assembly polls to 26.02 percent, attributed by analysts to Congress

stalwarts' exodus to the BJP. The Congress, once a beneficiary of bipolar politics, no longer dominates the northern State.

In this scenario, Avinash Rai Khanna, a former BJP MP from Punjab, outlines the party's determination to engage more proactively in Punjab and build up their machinery with an eye on the 2027 State assembly election.

BJP leaders believe Modi appointed Bittu to his cabinet for his ability to address Punjab's popular challenges and advance the party's agenda. The appointment also aims to bridge the party's existing gulf with the Sikh community, an ideal desired by the late SAD patriarch Parkash Singh Badal. Badal passed away in 2023 and the SAD parted ways with the BJP in September 2020 amid farm protests. Contesting separately in the 2022 assembly election, AAP emerged victorious with 92 seats, surpassing the SAD and the Congress, the traditional power players in the agrarian State.

The Akalis and the Congress suffered heavy losses in the last State polls, with heavyweights like Parkash Singh Badal, Charanjit Singh Channi, Captain Amarinder Singh and Navjot Singh Sidhu losing their seats. Punjab's political landscape has shifted with emerging new alliances.

Khanna, a former State BJP president, admits to the "new churning" in Punjab politics. "With an 18.5 percent vote share in the 2022 polls, up from 9.63 percent in 2019 after ending ties with SAD, our party led in 23 assembly constituencies and secured second place in six others. This is highly encouraging. We aim to form the government in Punjab by 2027. You will witness many positive developments for the BJP in Punjab."

Bittu's oath as Minister of State in Modi 3.0 is politically significant for the BJP. The deliberate move aims to project him as a future party leader and to counter the Congress in the State. Bittu, the grandson of slain CM Beant Singh, opposes separatism and drug issues, aligning with the BJP's Punjab agenda.

"Beant Singh was one chief minister who eliminated militancy from Punjab and also sacrificed his life. Bittu represents his legacy and happens to be a popular leader who can make an impact in the State due to his own popular base and experience," according to Khanna.

His inclusion ensures Sikh representation in the cabinet, addressing diversity concerns and boosting the BJP's visibility in the border State. This comes amid debates over the election of two Sikhs accused of radicalism and alleged Khalistani sympathies, and their impact on Punjab's peace.

Professor Ashutosh Kumar of Punjab University, Chandigarh, views the election of Amritpal Singh from Khadoor Sahib and Sarabjit Singh Khalsa from Faridkot as worrying. Khalsa is the son of Beant Singh, an assassin of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He and Singh, both associated with separatism, highlight lingering wounds from past unrest and unmet demands of the Sikh electorate. "Their wins can also be attributed to people's growing alienation with traditional parties like the Congress, the SAD and also the AAP," Kumar says.

Radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh, 31, who is currently jailed under the National Security Act in Assam's Dibrugarh, won by 1.97 lakh votes, the highest margin in the

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## **BITTU'S OATH AS MINISTER OF STATE IN MODI 3.0 IS POLITICALLY SIGNIFICANT FOR THE BJP. THIS MOVE AIMS TO PROJECT HIM AS A FUTURE PARTY LEADER AND TO COUNTER THE CONGRESS IN THE STATE.**

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State. His family has sought his temporary release to let him take the parliamentary oath.

According to Kumar, the BJP has adopted a strategy that it has used to the hilt in States like Odisha, Bihar, Karnataka and Maharashtra. The strategy, he says, involves initially aligning with powerful regional parties as a junior ally before establishing itself as a viable force.

Despite challenges like the farmers' agitation and opposition from farmers, the BJP's 18.5 percent vote share indicates its appeal to both Hindu and Sikh voters, even in rural areas. Previously limited to urban areas, the BJP now shows strength independently in Punjab, cutting across urban and rural regions. When Sunil Jakhar, the BJP State president had announced the party's decision to go solo in the 2024 polls, he said that the "decision was based on feedback from its workers and the public in general."

Jakhar, who led early Congress defections to the BJP before the 2022 assembly polls, now heads the State unit. With Bittu and other former Congress and AAP leaders in the BJP, the party strategically expands across the Malwa, Majha and Doaba regions. The surge in vote share signals a promising future. "Our eyes are set on the 2027 assembly election," Jakhar maintains.

Jagtar Singh, a veteran Punjab journalist says, "The 2024 Punjab election is not all about statistics. The statistics don't provide much insight into the changing electoral dynamics of the State. Of the poll's key-takeaways, the most notable is the increase in the vote share of the Congress and the BJP—both national parties." He predicts, "The BJP entered the Punjab arena with a bang in this election, although it has not won any seats. It has succeeded in entering even the rural areas, despite strong opposition from farmers' organisations. This is the party that is eyeing the 2027 assembly election." The SAD, the second oldest political party and once the voice of the Sikhs, he says, is in ideological confusion, while the AAP lacks local roots as well as a future vision beyond freebies.

Bittu emphasises Modi's development focus despite his electoral loss in Punjab, adding that he will address farmers' issues in co-ordination with the Centre. "Even when I was with the Congress, I always spoke for the national interest on several issues, be it our relations with Canada and Pakistan, or drugs. Punjab is a border State with several issues. I will be a bridge between the people of Punjab and Delhi." 

**Outlook**

# TRAVELLER

From adventurous treks to tranquil lakeside retreats, create unforgettable memories with your loved ones in the scenic state of Uttarakhand

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**UTTARAKHAND'S  
— BEST  
FAMILY**

*Getaways*

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Uttarakhand offers a plethora of family-friendly destinations that cater to all age groups

# Top Family-Friendly Destinations In Uttarakhand For You

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Whether you seek relaxation in the hills, adventure in the rivers, or cultural insights in ancient temples, this Himalayan state has something to offer every family

**A**s the school holidays approach and summer temperatures climb, many families and travellers seek respite from daily life's heat and hustle. Nestled in the northern part of India, Uttarakhand stands out as a premier destination for those looking to escape the scorching summer heat. Its proximity to neighbouring states like Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Delhi makes it an accessible haven, perfect for those preferring the convenience of drivable destinations.

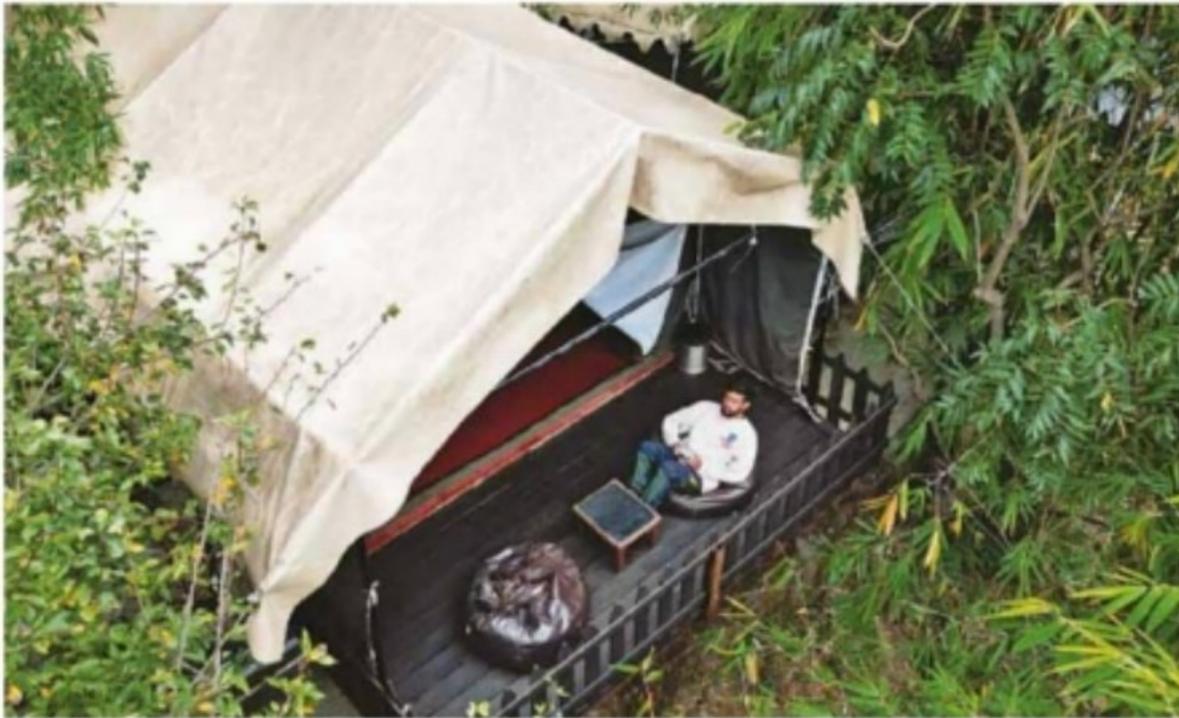
Uttarakhand's ease of access,

combined with its diverse offerings, makes it possible for travellers to plan not just one but multiple visits, each exploring different facets of its natural and cultural landscape. From the serene hill stations of Nainital and Mussoorie to the spiritual retreats of Rishikesh and Haridwar, Uttarakhand presents a perfect blend of adventure, spirituality, and tranquillity. Opting for Uttarakhand over other hill destinations offers distinct advantages, such as its unique combination of scenic beauty, adventure sports, and rich cultural heritage. Families can immerse themselves in the

lush greenery, pristine rivers, and majestic mountains, ensuring a memorable experience for all ages. Here are the top places to visit in Uttarakhand with family.

## LANSDOWNE

Lansdowne is a hidden gem known for its tranquil atmosphere and natural beauty. Located at about 1,706 meters, this charming town offers picturesque views of the Garhwal Himalayas and lush forests, making it an ideal retreat for nature lovers and peace seekers. Established by the British in 1887, Lansdowne is named after Lord



Clockwise from left: With its serene atmosphere, the stay makes for a tranquil getaway. Their luxe glamping tents are hugely popular. The atmospheric bar is the oldest in Lansdowne

# In The Lap of Nature in Lansdowne

**W**ith its unspoiled landscapes and serene atmosphere, Lansdowne is a perfect retreat for nature enthusiasts, offering scenic walks and breathtaking hillside views. Amid this tranquil haven lies Samskara and Samsara, inviting you to experience the magic of the landscape.

Located around 250 km from Delhi, this boutique stay is Lansdowne's lazy haven. This charming stay run by a brother-sister duo Chahat Satija and Gaurang Satija woos guests with indulgent, no-agenda days, nourishing cuisine sourced from an organic garden, panoramic sunrise and sunset views, and surrounding pine forests.

The pet-friendly stay is a true return to nature for your furry friends. They have two dogs of their own - Rudra and Lobsang. They will be happy to be your constant companions, from going on hikes to playing football or for when you are just lazing around..

## ROOMS WITH A VIEW

The boutique stay is one of the most

spacious properties in Lansdowne. Take your pick from a variety of accommodations such as glamping tents, family rooms, suites, and an executive room, all with plenty of room for bonfires, outdoor activities, and sports. Benefit from complimentary WiFi and free car parking throughout your stay.

One of the highlights of the stay is the atmospheric Lansdowne Bar, the oldest bar in town. Transformed from a humble six-bed dormitory in an old cowshed in 2015 with interiors inspired by the famous show Peaky Blinders, this establishment has evolved into a charming old-English Victorian bar. Launched in September 2021, it now stands as a beautifully repurposed bar.

## THINGS TO DO

You can spend your days lazing around, reading that unfinished book, or if you are the outdoorsy type, then go on a trek to Lansdowne town or go on trails around the property surrounded by woods. If you are adventurous, you can also sign up for Corbett wildlife safaris and paragliding, offered on a chargeable basis.

## A SUSTAINABLE STAY

Most travellers nowadays are concerned about the impact of their stay in pristine places. However, you need not worry about your footprint when you stay here. The owners have ensured that no trees were cut down while creating Samskara & Samsara. The property is home to more than 100 species of trees and plants. Their extensive kitchen garden has fresh vegetables and herbs and fosters a deep connection to the earth for guests. The hot water comes from solar panels. Additionally, they have a strict water-saving system, including rainwater harvesting. They also avoid using single-use toiletry bottles and instead provide dispensers in all bathrooms to reduce waste. Unsurprisingly, they recently won the "Green Hotel of the Year, North India Category" award from IHE for their sustainable practices.

## PARADISE REDISCOVERED

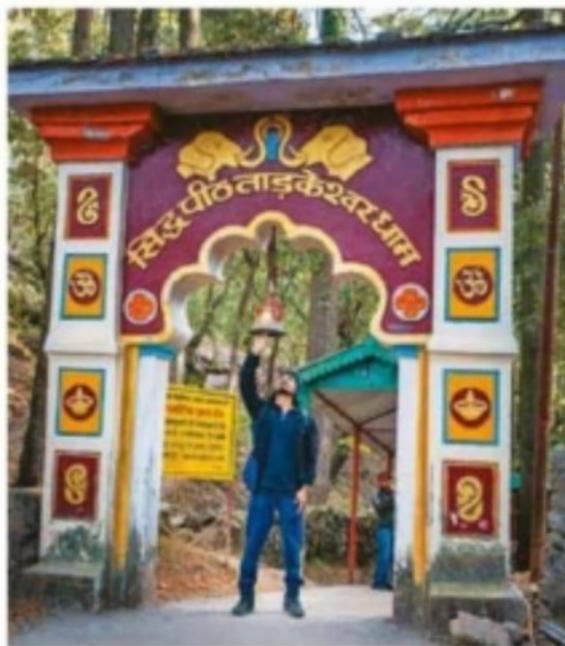
Be warned that you may find it difficult to leave this haven of peace and tranquillity. Chahat says they sometimes find persuading guests to depart from this idyllic setting challenging. She talks about a city dweller who once stayed here and declared, "This is where I belong," and stayed for three months.

*Samskara & Samsara, Upper Goyun, Lansdowne, Uttarakhand.  
Email info@samskarasamsara.com  
Call +91 9412 955 70*

Lansdowne, the then Viceroy of India. The town retains its colonial charm with quaint churches, old bungalows, and well-maintained gardens. Main attractions include the War Memorial at the Garhwal Rifles Regimental Centre, which honours the bravery of the regiment's soldiers. The Regimental Museum, also known as the Darwan Singh Sangrahalaya, showcases the history and achievements of the Garhwal Rifles. St. Mary's Church, dating back to the colonial era, offers a glimpse into the town's past and is a serene spot for reflection. Nature enthusiasts can explore the verdant trails around Bhulla Lake, enjoy boating, or take a walk to the Tip-n-Top viewpoint for panoramic views of the snow-clad peaks.

**Getting There**

The nearest airport to Lansdowne is Jolly Grant Airport, approximately 148 km away. Kotdwar serves as the nearest railhead, located around 40 km away. It is well-connected by roads to major towns and cities.



A devotee at the Tarkeshwar Mahadev Temple in Lansdowne

**MUSSOORIE**

Mussoorie, known as the "Queen of the Hills," is situated at an elevation of approximately 2,005 meters. This enchanting destination offers breathtaking views of the Himalayan ranges and the Doon Valley, making it a popular retreat

for nature lovers and adventure seekers. Founded in 1823 by Captain Frederick Young, Mussoorie boasts a rich colonial heritage reflected in its architecture and charming streets. The Mall Road, the town's main promenade, has shops, cafes, and historic buildings, providing a perfect blend of old-world charm and modern amenities.

One of Mussoorie's significant attractions is Kempty Falls, a magnificent waterfall where visitors can picnic and bathe in the cool waters. Gun Hill, the second-highest peak in Mussoorie, offers a panoramic view of the surrounding mountains and valleys and can be accessed by a scenic cable car ride. The Camel's Back Road provides a peaceful walk with stunning sunset views for those seeking tranquillity. Lal Tibba, the highest point in Mussoorie, offers breathtaking vistas of snow-capped peaks.

**Getting There**

The nearest airport is Jolly Grant in Dehradun, 82 km away. Dehradun



The Kempty Falls, and the area around is surrounded by high mountain ranges at an altitude of 4500 feet

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# Hillside Havens

Escaping to the hills to unwind? At Zone Connect by The Park in Mussoorie and Lansdowne, experience unparalleled hospitality in the lap of serene nature



Zone Connect by The Park in Mussoorie

**T**he fresh, crisp breeze of the hills brings with them enchanting stories. While the scapes inspire with their beauty, the hallmark of a truly relaxing holiday is a great stay, and Zone Connect by The Park delivers just that at their hotels in Mussoorie and Lansdowne. Distinct in their ambience and yet unified in their commitment to provide unparalleled comfort, Zone Connect by The Park in Mussoorie and Lansdowne promise an unforgettable experience, whether you are seeking a break from the bustling city life or escaping to the hills for a workation.

## **ZONE CONNECT BY THE PARK MUSSOORIE**

Situated at a mere stone's throw from the vibrant Mall Road, Zone Connect by The Park Mussoorie serves as an oasis of comfort in the heart of this popular hill station. In addition, being a paw-friendly hotel, Zone Connect by The Park Mussoorie ensures that you don't have to leave your furry friend behind to enjoy Mussoorie's beauty. The hotel boasts an array of meticulously designed rooms to cater to every type of traveller. The premium rooms with terraces and luxe rooms with balconies allow you to wake up to mesmerising views, while family rooms are spaciouly designed to make your stay with loved ones cosy yet comfortable.

The all-day dining restaurant, Cafe C, presents a diverse menu, from

traditional Uttarakhandi delicacies and all-time favourites like kebabs and curries. Relish must-haves like aam chunda paneer, kandali hara bhara, Zone chicken 65, Kangra khatta meat, and Wai Wai bhel. If you seek a unique dining experience, the hotel's outdoor dining spaces offer breathtaking mountain and valley views, perfect for a romantic dinner or a peaceful meal amidst nature. Moreover, the hotel's Townhall/Banquet facility is a versatile space designed to host gatherings of up to 100 guests and is perfect for celebrating big moments.

Mussoorie's renowned tourist attractions, such as Kempty Fall, Lal Tibba, Gun Hill Point, Mussoorie Lake, Buddha Temple, Jabarkhet Wildlife Reserve, and Dhanaulti, are all within easy reach, making the hotel a convenient base for sightseeing adventures.

**How to reach:** The nearest airport is Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun, located 60 km away. The nearest

Zone Connect by The Park in Lansdowne



railway station is in Dehradun, located 33 km away.

## **ZONE CONNECT BY THE PARK LANSDOWNE**

Surrounded by lush greenery, Zone Connect by The Park Lansdowne, is a haven for peace and nature lovers. The rooms at Zone Connect Lansdowne are crafted to provide the utmost comfort and are available in various configurations to meet your diverse needs.

Dining at Zone Connect by The Park Lansdowne is an experience that merges gourmet delights with natural beauty. At Cafe C, the hotel's all-day dining restaurant, relish in-house specialities like aam chunda paneer, choli roti wrap, dhuawala butter paneer zone soup, alongside regional favourites like swala, gaith ka shorba, chikotra salad, aloo jhakiya, lingoda ki subzi, and jhangora kheer. Moreover, the outdoor dining areas offer a unique setting to enjoy meals amidst the pristine natural surroundings.

This hotel's outdoor pool is a standout feature that provides a refreshing oasis with panoramic views of the verdant mountains. It's the perfect spot to unwind, bask in the sun, and appreciate the tranquil environment.

**How to reach:** The nearest airport is Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun, located 148 km away. The nearest railway station is Kotdwar Railhead, located 36 km away.

*For more information and bookings, visit [zonebythepark.com](http://zonebythepark.com)*



Rishikesh's evening Ganga aarti is a popular attraction among tourists

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Railway Station, 68 km away, serves as the nearest railhead. Dehradun is well connected by road—travellers can access it via the Tehri bypass from Mussoorie and the Mussoorie-Chamba road.

**RISHIKESH**

Nestled in the Himalayas with the pristine Ganga flowing through, Rishikesh is a prominent tourist and pilgrimage hub, attracting peace seekers worldwide. Known as the “yoga capital of the world,” this ancient town is vibrant with visitors learning yoga and meditation. Rishikesh is home to numerous ashrams, some internationally recognised for their teachings in philosophical studies, yoga, and traditional Indian wellness practices. The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board hosts the annual International Yog Festival (IYF) here, drawing thousands of yoga enthusiasts.

The town is also famous for its connection to The Beatles.

In February 1968, the legendary English rock band visited Maharishi Mahesh Yogi’s ashram, now known as the Beatles Ashram, to learn transcendental meditation. During their stay, they composed nearly 48 songs, many featured on the White Album and Abbey Road. John Lennon even penned “The Happy Rishikesh Song” during this period. Rishikesh also boasts quaint cafes offering local and international cuisines that are popular among tourists.

**GETTING THERE**

Jolly Grant Airport, 21 km from Rishikesh, offers daily flights to Delhi and convenient taxi connections. Rishikesh is also accessible by frequent trains and buses from major Indian destinations, including Delhi ISBT Kashmiri Gate and Meerut.

**MUKTESHWAR**

Lodged in the Kumaon Hills of Uttarakhand, Mukteshwar is a

charming hill station renowned for its stunning vistas and serene ambience. Perched at an elevation of 2,286 meters, this picturesque destination offers panoramic views of the majestic Himalayan range, making it a haven for nature lovers and adventure enthusiasts.

Mukteshwar’s name is derived from the 350-year-old Mukteshwar Dham temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple, located atop a hill, is a significant pilgrimage site and offers breathtaking views of the surrounding valleys and peaks. Nearby, the Chauli ki Jali, a natural rock formation, is a popular spot for rock climbing and rappelling, providing a perfect blend of thrill and tranquillity. The region is enveloped in lush pine, oak, and rhododendron forests, home to diverse flora and fauna, including the elusive Himalayan black bear and rich birdlife. This makes it ideal for wildlife enthusiasts and bird watchers. Mukteshwar is known for its vibrant orchards, producing

# Ekaanta: Luxury Experiential Wellness In Uttarakhand

Discover the magic of holistic wellness at Ekaanta this summer and experience its unique blend of nature, tranquillity, and rejuvenation

**N**estled on the banks of the Ganges in Haridwar, Ekaanta is an extraordinary boutique wellness retreat that offers curated experiences designed to rejuvenate the mind and body. As the summer heat intensifies, Ekaanta emerges as an ideal sanctuary for travellers seeking solace and rejuvenation amidst the natural beauty of Uttarakhand.

Ekaanta believes in the transformative power of holistic wellness. The retreat offers a variety of thoughtfully designed programs tailored to meet the diverse needs of its guests. From Ayurvedic wellness therapies to guided nutrition programs, comprehensive solutions for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being are provided. Yoga-based wellness sessions and mindfulness-based rejuvenation programs are top-rated among guests looking to reconnect with their selves.

## WHERE CREATIVITY FLOURISHES

Ekaanta offers soulful musical evenings on the serene banks of the Ganges, creating an atmosphere perfect for creative pursuits. Guests can immerse themselves in the tranquil melodies, read a book from the library, or play instruments like the guitar. This serene environment fosters relaxation and inspiration, enhancing the overall experience and allowing guests to connect deeply with their inner selves and the natural surroundings.

## IN THE LAP OF NATURE

One of the highlights of a stay at



Nighttime ambiance at the ghat; Ekaanta Suite, a tranquil retreat; Indulge in Ekaanta's tantalising variety of dishes

Ekaanta is the chance to immerse oneself in the enchanting beauty of nature. Guests can meditate by a cascading waterfall, take invigorating walks in the lush jungle, or relax with soulful music on the ghats. As the sun sets, open-air movie nights under the stars create unforgettable memories, blending cinema's magic with the serenity of the natural surroundings.

Ekaanta's location provides unparalleled access to some of Uttarakhand's most stunning natural attractions. Guests can explore nearby national parks and verdant forests while enjoying the tranquil ambience of the Ganges. This unique combination of natural beauty and holistic wellness makes Ekaanta a standout destination for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

## PATHWAY TO SERENITY

Yoga and mindfulness are integral to the Ekaanta experience. Daily Yoga sessions cater to all levels, from beginners to advanced practitioners, enhancing flexibility, strength, and mental clarity. Mindfulness practices, including meditation and breathing exercises, help guests cultivate a

sense of calm and focus.

Whether seeking a short escape or a longer retreat, Ekaanta offers a variety of packages to suit different needs. The accommodations are designed to provide comfort and tranquillity, allowing guests to unwind and embrace the healing journey fully.

## A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY AWAITS

"Our vision for Ekaanta is to create a haven where guests can experience the profound benefits of holistic wellness in a setting that is both inspiring and nurturing," said one of the founders. "We aim to offer a space where people can reconnect with nature, rejuvenate their bodies, and find tranquillity."

Ekaanta is more than just a retreat; it is a place where guests can embark on a transformative journey of self-discovery and healing. As guests immerse themselves in the natural beauty of Uttarakhand and partake in holistic wellness programs, they will leave Ekaanta feeling refreshed, revitalised, and deeply connected to their true selves.

For more information, visit [ekaanta.in](http://ekaanta.in)



Bhalu Gaad is a small waterfall in Mukteshwar popular among tourists



Tiffin Top, also known as Dorothy's Seat, is a popular picnic spot and view point in Nainital

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visitors can enjoy boating while taking in the stunning views of the surrounding hills. The town is divided into two parts: Mallital, the northern end, and Tallital, the southern end. Both are connected by the bustling Mall Road, lined with shops, cafes, and eateries.

Nainital's scenic beauty is complemented by several viewpoints, such as Snow View, Tiffin Top, and Naina Peak, which provide panoramic views of the Himalayas and the town below. The Naina Devi Temple, dedicated to the goddess Naina Devi, is a significant pilgrimage site and offers a tranquil spot for reflection. Adventure enthusiasts can indulge in trekking, horse riding, and cable car rides.

delicious apples, peaches, and plums.

connects it to various cities in Kumaun and northern regions.

#### GETTING THERE

Pantnagar Airport is the closest air hub to Mukteshwar, located approximately 100 km away. Kathgodam Railway Station, located 62 km away, offers excellent connectivity to major cities. Mukteshwar's bus stand

#### NAINITAL

Nainital, nestled around a shimmering, pear-shaped lake, is often called the "Lake District of India" and offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, colonial heritage, and vibrant culture. The heart of Nainital is the Naini Lake, where

#### GETTING THERE

Pantnagar Airport is Nainital's nearest air hub, followed by a 70 km road journey by bus or cab. Alternatively, travellers can fly to Delhi IGI Airport and complete a 300 km road trip to Nainital via bus from Delhi Kashmiri Gate ISBT.

# The Giant Killer

The election campaign of Geniben Thakor, the lone Congress MP from Gujarat, was as impressive as her victory

Shweta Desai

**G**UJARAT'S cooperative model of marginal farmers pooling in small resources to generate large-scale production and become self-reliant with ownership control has made an invaluable contribution to dairy and agriculture development across the country. The same model became an inspiration for Banaskantha district's cash-strapped Congress MLA Geniben Nagaji Thakor when locals nudged her to take the big dive and contest elections.

In her 28-year-long political career, Thakor holds an impressive winning strike rate in local panchayat and municipal body elections, having experienced losses only twice in the Assembly elections. She told the villagers if they wanted her to stand for national elections, she would not just require their votes but also *notes* (money) for campaigning.

"Gujarat is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home ground, and the BJP has a stronghold in the state. It is not easy to contest elections on an Opposition ticket, especially when one has no money," she told *Outlook*.

Of Gujarat's 33 districts, Banaskantha holds the rare distinction of being a Congress-supporting seat. Barring the Lok Sabha, the local Zilla Parishad, municipal bodies and the MLA belong to the Congress party.

Thakor said the district has a strong anti-BJP sentiment as villagers were weary of the BJP's dominance and its promotion of members of only one caste. "People want things to change. The entire government machinery, including employees, works to the BJP's advantage. And the BJP works for the Chaudhari caste, which gets job postings and all other benefits from contracts to election tickets."

Thakor, who belongs to the Other Backward Classes (OBC), was up against the upper caste Chaudhari clan, which wields enormous influence and money power in Banaskantha.

She requested the villagers to participate in her Lok Sabha campaign's planning strategy and booth management by contributing funds starting at as little as Rs 11. Her team incorporated the instant mode of the UPI payment system in the election posters and pasted stickers with the QR code across Banaskantha's 14 talukas. The strategy helped her with crowdfunding raising an estimated Rs 30 lakh and also backed her as a people's candidate.



On poll day, voters turned out in large numbers, with Banaskantha witnessing a record-high 68.44 per cent turnout, the highest in Gujarat. Thakor won with over six lakh votes, defeating BJP's Rekhaben Chaudhari by a margin of more than 30,000 votes. Her victory, although by a modest margin, is remarkable as Banaskantha became the sole Parliamentary seat for the Congress in more than three decades.

"There has been no Congress presence in Gujarat for the last 29 years. But Geniben's win has changed the norm, it has revitalised our workers and infused a winning spirit," said Congress worker Pradeep Sindhav. He said the BJP has won all the elections in Gujarat because government agencies work for the party. "Without the support of government machinery, BJP candidates will not be able to win a single local-level election. People have realised that the BJP is only concerned about winning seats, it is not bothered about them," he said, assuring that the results of the 2027 assembly elections in Gujarat would be different for the Congress.

Thakor says as an MP she wants to continue her work for the education of girls and youth employment. In the past, she faced criticism for supporting controversial proposals at the local panchayat like restricting mobile phones for girls and banning inter-caste marriages as well as making parental consent mandatory for marriage registration. Thakor, however, said she supported gender equality. "Our concern is the welfare of youth, and we want them to focus their energy on education and jobs instead of getting trapped in early marriage," she clarified. For now, Thakor is still absorbing the thrill of being the only candidate for Congress in Gujarat who has secured victory for her people and party. 

# SIMS Hospitals: Fortifying Healthcare within the SRM Group

In a world where several facets of society are screaming for change and hands are never enough, some leaders refuse to stick to one path and continue to create an impact on more areas than one. Dr Ravi Pachamuthu is one of them. He breaks the mold of conventional visionaries

Outlook in conversation with Dr Ravi Pachamuthu,  
Chairman - SIMS Hospitals and SRM Group



**Q Brand SRM is among India's biggest business conglomerates with interests in various sectors, including medical education and healthcare. What led you to venture into healthcare?**

We are traditionally a multi-faceted educational group, a passion that goes back to 60 years. Today, we have multi-campus in the north and south of India with a staggering student strength of over 60,000, who are imparted world-class education. Having established our credibility as educationist, it was in the order of things to venture into another social concern i.e., quality and affordable healthcare. This idea emerged from our experience in running medical colleges under SRM institutions. We started healthcare services based on the core concept of an institution that functions in corporate style where the focus is on offering quality medical care effectively, efficiently by a team of highly qualified, world renowned iconic doctors serving as faculty as well as managing the 'institutional corporate' hospitals. Similar to our education vertical, our core philosophy is adopting a right mix of professionalism excellence and philanthropy. For example, our medical colleges were converted into Covid

centres when the pandemic erupted. Some 450 patients were treated on a daily basis at nominal cost underlining our social commitment.

**Q Which are the most important aspects that need attention to significantly improve the nation's healthcare index?**

Tamil Nadu is known to have a high number of medical colleges and hospitals with world-class infrastructure and the best-of-best medical armamentarium that function under the watchful eyes of highly qualified and experienced doctors across disciplines. Today, we have matured to explore international markets, attracting a huge influx of foreign patients. At SIMS medical colleges and institutions, the students get hands-on training under the best faculty to do complex surgeries in heart, kidney, GI and liver etc. We are strategic, responsive and mission-driven, that keeps us grounded and focused on the task.

**Q What are the gaps in healthcare and the strategies that you have adopted, including, expansion plan?**

There is marked improvement in healthcare in the state of Tamil Nadu

following several healthcare schemes launched by the state and central governments. These schemes have covered a substantial population which has significantly closed the gap in healthcare. I see the insurance sector playing a dramatic role in making healthcare affordable and accessible to the general masses belonging to the upper and middle crust of society, who are not covered by corporate, private or government jobs. The Ayushman scheme has addresses the insurance cover for the economically weaker section (EWS). So the progressive role of insurance is irrefutable. Today, there is a perceptible shift where hospitals are dedicated to a particular speciality such as heart hospital, GI and Liver, Kidney, the argument for which is that it facilitates deeper study, understanding and treatment of the ailment. I personally believe that every medical treatment must be available under one roof to handle any emergencies where many organs too maybe affected. SIMS Hospitals, being a multi-super speciality, facilitating various super specialities under one roof, delivers just that. We plan to add more hospitals under the SIMS Hospitals banners in Chennai and

in Sonipet. We are mulling on opening a medical centre abroad as well.

**Q How is technology being leveraged at SIMS Hospitals?**

With technology advancements, taking place at a rapid pace the challenge is to consistently stay on par with it. We recognize that technological innovation is essential not only in clinical settings but also in non-clinical areas to ensure holistic and seamless patient care. In clinical domains, we have integrated cutting-edge technologies such as robotic surgery systems, advanced imaging modalities, and precision medicine approaches to enhance diagnosis and treatment outcomes. Moreover, in non-clinical areas, we leverage technology to streamline administrative processes, optimize resource utilization, and enhance the overall patient experience. From electronic health records (EHR) systems to telemedicine platforms, we are committed to harnessing technology across all facets of healthcare delivery. Our investment in advanced technologies enables us to provide precise diagnoses, personalized treatment plans, and efficient care delivery, ultimately leading to better outcomes and faster recovery times for patients. While the initial investment in technology may contribute to higher costs, the long-term benefits in terms of improved patient outcomes, reduced hospital stays, and minimized complications far outweigh the initial expenditure. We are committed to ensuring that every patient who walks through our doors receives exceptional value and experiences positive health outcomes.

**Q What is the leadership philosophy and culture at SRM Group and SIMS that enable sustained growth and profitability?**

Our objective is to be known as an ethical business Group where whatever we do is genuine. Every activity revolves around patient satisfaction because they come in pain and anguish, but when they go back home they should carry memories of happy experience of quality



SIMS Hospital

treatment, attention and care. Feedbacks are taken seriously and any course correction is attended to promptly. The utmost dedication and whole-hearted commitment of our doctors, nurses and care givers is praiseworthy. I would say that the success of the hospital is the result of this collective passion and skill to serve humankind.

**Q You are shouldering a legacy established by your celebrated father. What have you learned from his life?**

My father, T. R. Pachamuthu's life was value based which saw his rise from the grassroots to the pinnacle of success. He led by example and we have been in awe of his lived experience, which has been a learning and example for us to emulate. That one on has to be committed to the business and committed to the people whose lives it touches. Once you are committed, sincerity comes, which ensures growth and success is bound to follow on its own. Business and people share a symbiotic relationship. This was the message of my father to his family, friends and associates.

**Q Gathering from your extensive experiences, what are the three tips you would give to the next generation healthcare founders, leaders and entrepreneurs?**

Apart from commitment and dedication, one has to understand the business thoroughly e.g., some business are mostly powered by funds, others by manpower and some need both. This logistics of the business one should understand very well. The other advice is that whatever business you do should benefit the society. Money must not be the only main motive in launching an enterprise. A valuable tip is also to start small and then build the business.

**Q What are your hobbies and ways to unwind after a hard day's work?**

I see myself as a humble servant in this business. My top executives leading the various SRM business interest are doing their job with responsibility and are capable of handling their respective domains. Only when any crucial issue arise do they approach me, which I solve for them. I live, breathe business, and consider it my hobby. SRM Group functions like a close-knit family and we share a good camaraderie that is relaxing in itself. Another advantage is that I travel extensively because I have different business verticals to tend to which entails meeting different people, work on different concepts etc., that keeps me enthused. Monotony is an alien word for me.



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**Unmet Demands** Torn campaign posters in Eastern Nagaland where there is a call for separate statehood

# Winds of Change

Ethnic questions and local dynamics make the Bharatiya Janata Party lose ground in the Northeast



Sandipan Talukdar  
IS AN INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST  
BASED IN GUWAHATI

## THE

Northeast was not easy ground for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to enter without allying with the local forces, be it the National People's Party (NPP) in Meghalaya, the Naga People's Front (NPF) and the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) in Nagaland, or the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) in Assam. The alliances have managed to rule for a decade now, which has been seemingly unwavering. But the outcomes of the 2024 Lok Sabha election in the region has put a brake on BJP's easy flow, posing challenges to the local allies as well at least in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura, while Mizoram went to the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), the independent regional force that emerged in last year's assembly election there.

All of these states have their idiosyncratic issues and their own alternatives for which to vote. Notwithstanding, there are also concerns that prevail across the entire region, even where the BJP has registered victories. These concerns surround the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), religious freedom, ethnic identity, ILP (Inner Land Permit), etc.

### Meghalaya: BJP Ally NPP Trounced

On the first day of the budget session of the newly formed Conrad Sangma-led coalition government (in 2023) Voice of the People Party (VPP) leader and Nongkrem MLA Ardent Miller Basaiawmoit staged a walk-out protesting against the delivery of the inaugural speech in Hindi by Phagu Chauhan, the governor of Meghalaya.

Formed as recently as in 2021, the VPP has emerged as the primary Opposition party in Meghalaya, which has four MLAs in the Meghalaya assembly for the first time. While other regional parties in Meghalaya—barring the NPP, had chosen to stand with the government—the VPP stood against it consistently.

The VPP's victory in the Shillong seat with a commendable margin reflects the aspiration of people for change. So is the emergence of another regional force in the offing in Meghalaya? This is an important question because the Congress incumbent MP Vincent Pala suffered a heavy loss. And so did Ampareen Lyngdoh (a cabinet minister from Meghalaya) of the NPP to Ricky Andrew J Syngkon of the VPP. Meghalaya was one of the Northeastern states where protests against the UCC and the CAA intensified last year. Alongside, Ardent has been quite vocal for the ILP for Meghalaya. Surely, regional sentiments and local issues are important here.

Patricia Mukhim, Editor of *The Shillong Times* says, "The mandate shows that people disliked the NPP as it is a part of the BJP. People remain apprehensive here about the BJP's agendas, be it the UCC or the CAA, which are not acceptable for them." She adds, "It's too early to say how far the VPP will travel. I think they should have gone with the united Opposition bloc."

Ardent, on other hand, affirms that the VPP will stick to

## ALL THE NORTHEASTERN STATES HAVE THEIR IDIOSYNCRATIC ISSUES AND THEIR OWN ALTERNATIVES FOR WHICH TO VOTE. THERE ARE ALSO CONCERNS THAT PREVAIL ACROSS THE ENTIRE REGION.

its ground. "From the beginning of statehood, people of Meghalaya have been regional-minded. However, failure of regional parties led them to support national parties. We stand against the UCC and the CAA, but our main focus has been on corruption, poverty and unemployment in Meghalaya. It's a combination of regional and basic issues that got us the mandate."

Alankar Kaushik, a faculty member of EFL University, Shillong is of the opinion that the rise of the VPP signifies the emergence of "native" perspectives, characterised by their distinct cultural, societal, and linguistic identity. "However, it's noteworthy that the broader political verdict in Northeast India seems to downplay the impact of the ruling government," he says.

Notably, the Tura seat has been snatched away from P A Sangma's family (which held on to it for the past 45 years since 1977; with a gap of two years from 1989 to 1991). Incumbent MP Agatha Sangma was defeated by Saleng Sangma of the Congress. Agatha Sangma's absence in the public sphere, her support for the CAA and association with the BJP led to the result. "There is no institution of national eminence in the Garo Hills, which Agatha should have tried for," says Mukhim.

However, the VPP's fragility can be traced to its stand on the 1972 Meghalaya reservation policy for jobs. Ardent has been demanding a review of the process, which makes the people of the Garo hills apprehensive. But Ardent told *Outlook* that he believes the Garo people will come to understand the gravity of the issue.

### A Congress Comeback in Nagaland After 20 Years

A few years back, Nagaland was in focus nationally and internationally when the BJP government at the Centre initiated the Naga Peace Accord under Narendra Modi's leadership. However, the latest Lok Sabha election result indicates that the people there are in no mood to accept it as the ultimate solution.

The many upheavals Nagaland has been experiencing recently, combined with apprehensions about the BJP's policies nationwide, culminated in the Congress' stunning comeback in 20 years with Supongmeren Jamir beating the NDPP candidate Chumben Murry by over 50,000 votes.



**In Protest** Muslim women at a rally against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) at Rupahi in Nawgaon, Assam

The NDPP is a partner of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and heads the Nagaland government.

Apprehensions about religious freedom, a perceived risk to ethnic identity and mishandling of local issues like separate statehood for eastern Nagaland by the governments, both at the Centre and the state, led to this result.

Moa Jamir, a journalist with *The Morung Express*, a leading newspaper of Nagaland, says the political situation in the State indicated a close fight this time. “From the vantage point of Nagaland, religious freedom and constitutional safeguards for ethnic identities have been the most important issues. While the Central and State governments failed to convince people on these, the Congress candidate could capitalise on them better,” he points out. “The CAA, the UCC and separate statehood demand were the pertinent issues in Nagaland,” he adds.

The Eastern Nagaland People’s Organisation (ENPO) has been demanding separate statehood comprising six districts of present day Nagaland—Mon, Teunsang, kiphire, Shamator, Longleng and Noklak. Formed in 1997, the ENPO has been spearheading the movement for “Frontier Nagaland” since 2010, the year when they submitted a memorandum to the then PM of India. The ENPO decided not to take part in the election and 20 amongst the 60 assembly seats boycotted this election. However, as Jamir

says, even without the poll boycott by eastern Nagaland, the verdict wouldn’t have been drastically different.

### **The Promise of Separate Statehood**

In 2012, the erstwhile BJP president Nitin Gadkari had asserted that a separate state of Frontier Nagaland would be carved out if the BJP wins the Lok Sabha election in 2014. However, it remained a distant dream for the people. Home Minister Amit Shah’s reassurance in 2023 of finding a solution to the issue also could not convince them.

The ENPO remains determined to not be satisfied with hefty economic packages in place of the separate state. Supongmeren Jamir has reiterated that the Congress will work to find a solution. He remained firm on his position throughout his campaign.

### **Manipur Bids a Cantankerous Farewell to the BJP**

Manipur’s violent ethnic clashes have not faded away from collective memory and they won’t vanish so easily, at least for the people of Manipur. In the words of Deban Bachaspatimayum, a civil rights activist of Manipur, “One can’t imagine what an ethnic clash is. It is driven by the strongest feelings of belongingness to protect the people and the land. People go to extremes to save their own and the land.”

The Lok Sabha election results reflect the anger of the people against both the Central and State governments. However, the BJP did try to win the election there—it supported the NPF candidate in the Outer Manipur seat (comprising mainly the hills) while fielding its own in Inner Manipur (comprising the valley). There were apprehensions about the Outer seat where all the candidates are Nagas including that of the Congress. The division of votes, involvement of underground arms groups of both the Kukis and the Nagas, the influence of the The National Socialist Council of Nagaland NSCN (IM)—all played a part in the polls.

The Kukis decided not to field any candidate. Although the narrative of election boycott by the Kukis was in the air initially, the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM)—the apex body of the Kukis—appealed to people to exercise voting rights. A former MP from Outer Manipur, Kim Gangte, told *Outlook* that in the conflict-laden state, both the Kuki and Meitei communities blamed the BJP to the core and that is why they have voted for the Congress in both the Inner and Outer constituencies of Manipur. “Both the Kukis and the Meiteis must have finally realised that it was the Centre and the State governments that caused the people all the misery, pain and death that they face till today. This is a signal given to the governments by the people out of their anger and pain,” she says.

### Could TIPRA Motha with INDIA Bloc Bring Different Results in Tripura?

The TIPRA Motha Party (TMP) emerged in Tripura politics as a prominent presence during the 2023 assembly election in which it bagged 13 seats. Based on the identity issue of the Tiprasa people, the TMP opposed the CAA vehemently as well as the BJP. But this year, they aligned with the BJP just before the Lok Sabha polls. The BJP won both the West and East Tripura seats.

However, there is growing disenchantment within the TMP and its supporters. This was reflected in the election results where the vote percentage of the BJP-TMP alliance decreased in comparison to the previous election.

TMP leader Pradyot Bikram Manikya Debbarma brought in his sister Kriti Devi Debbarman to contest from the East Tripura seat, where the Tripuri tribals are a deciding factor. Kriti Devi fought under the BJP’s symbol. This irked many TMP supporters. Bikash Rai Debbarma, a political observer and linguist-activist from Tripura told *Outlook*, “Kriti Devi doesn’t have any rooting in Tripura’s politics. Her husband was also a BJP MLA. She was not a member of the TMP and Pradyot made it a sentimental issue.”

Bikash Rai Debbarma said that had the TMP allied with the INDIA bloc, the results would have been different. He considers the latest tripartite treaty between the TMP and the Tripura and Central governments just an eyewash. “In the Northeast, we have our own problems of protecting identity and ethnicity and in the name of Indianness, all are diluted,” he says. “But this year’s election result is a silver lining with the strong message that diversity in India is to be honoured and local issues

## THIS YEAR'S ELECTION RESULT IS A SILVER LINING WITH THE STRONG MESSAGE THAT DIVERSITY IN INDIA IS TO BE HONOURED AND LOCAL ISSUES SHOULD BE SOLVED FROM A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE ONLY.

should be solved from a local perspective only.”

### BJP Does Well in Assam, Arunachal and Sikkim, but All is Not Well

The BJP’s undisputed victories in the Northeast came from Arunachal and Assam, while in Sikkim, the NDA ally outperformed. However, Assam gave slightly more votes to the Congress than the BJP even though the latter could manage only three seats out of a total of 14. The Congress vote share is 37.48% while the BJP got 37.43 % of the votes polled. Moreover, there are certain signals in Assam that reflect peoples’ growing disenchantment of the BJP.

Gaurav Gogoi’s win in the Jorhat seat is a sharp retort to the Assam CM’s claim. Observers in Assam say that CM Himanta Biswa Sarma made the fight in Jorhat a personal one as he repeatedly said that Gogoi would lose with a huge margin. Moreover, many ministers close to the CM were actively engaged in the Jorhat contest. Gogoi’s victory is widely seen as a moral defeat for the CM.

All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) supremo Badaruddin Ajmal lost the election from Dhubri with a margin of over ten lakh votes to Rakibul Hussain of the Congress. The INDIA bloc candidate in Dibrugarh, Lurinjyoti Gogoi, bagged over four lakh votes while contesting against Union minister and ex-CM of Assam Sarbananda Sonowal, and Mira Borthakur of the Congress in Guwahati bagged over six lakh votes while contesting against the BJP’s Bijuli Kalita Medhi. Although both lost to the BJP, the anti-BJP vote share in both constituencies increased significantly.

However, the Opposition could have done better if seats were managed better, at least in the Barpeta and Diphu seats, where the split in Opposition votes helped the BJP win. In Barpeta both the Congress and the Communist Party of India Marxist (CIP[M]) fielded candidates, while in Diphu, an alliance between the Congress and independent candidate John Ingti Kathar would have brought different results. A similar situation prevailed in Kokrajhar and Darrang-Udalguri, where the Bodoland People’s Front (BPF)—a former Congress ally, and the Congress fielded candidates. 

*(Views expressed are personal)*

# Rebel With a Cause

Congress rebel candidate Vishal Patil fights as an independent, defeats the BJP candidate and sitting MP by over one lakh votes and rejoins the Congress

Shweta Desai

**I**T was an affair that was meant to happen. Just that it took Vishal Patil a little over 30 years to finally win over the love of his life—the Congress. On June 6, two days after winning the Sangli Lok Sabha constituency with a margin of over one lakh votes, he headed straight to 10 Janpath, his face pink with the celebratory *gulal*. Minutes later, he announced his official engagement with the Congress by sharing his photo on X, flanked by Rahul and Sonia Gandhi, and he captioned it *Hum Saath Saath Hai*.

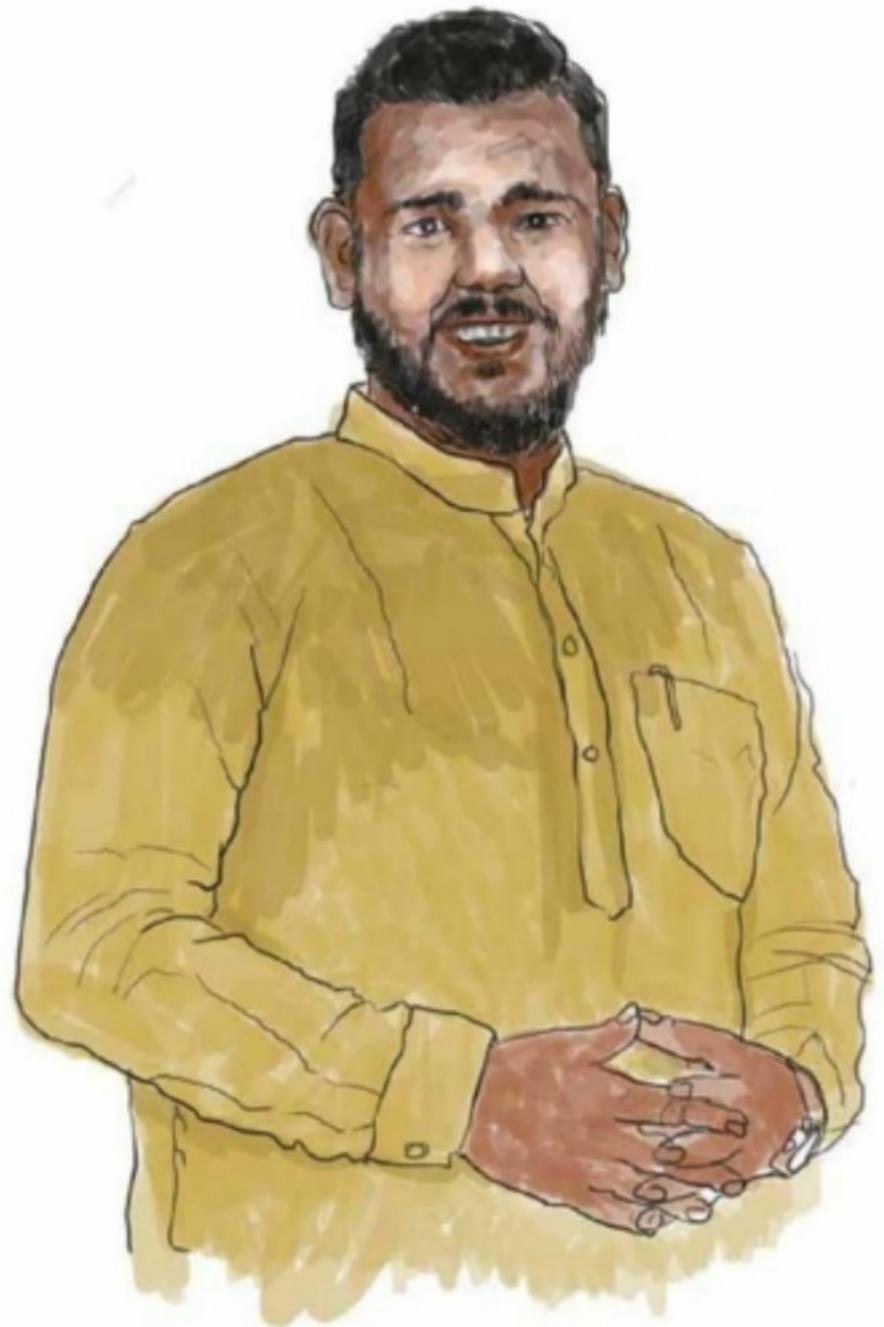
Patil defeated the BJP's incumbent MP Sanjaykaka Patil as an independent candidate but later pledged his unconditional support to the Congress. The endorsement helped the party to take its overall winning tally in the Lok Sabha to 100—for the first time since 2014—and enabled Patil's long-awaited return to the party's fold as a Congressman.

The Congress ideology runs deep in Patil and his family. His grandfather, the late Vasantdada Patil, was a stalwart leader and two-time chief minister of Maharashtra. His father Prakash Patil was an MP and his brother Pratik Patil is the former Minister of State for coal.

"My family is bound to Congress' ideology. We are like *ek duje ke liye*," Patil says. The song from the 1981 hit movie of the same name featured in every campaign rally of Patil. It was his way to publicly declare his intense dedication to the Congress, a party that rejected his proposal for official candidature on four occasions in the last 30 years.

At 18, he was told he was too young to contest the Zilla Parishad elections. In his 20s, he was not ready to be fielded on a Congress ticket for the Maharashtra Assembly and by the time he was in his 30s, disagreements within the Congress became a hurdle for the Lok Sabha ticket.

In 2019, upon the Congress's suggestion, he contested the Sangli seat on the ticket of alliance member Shetkari Swabhimani Sanghatna but faced defeat. Patil did not lose heart and continued to build his network and connect with the people at the grassroots level. "We were not prepared for the 2019 election. There were quarrels within the Congress cadre and the division of OBC votes eventually helped the BJP to



win. But this time, we had corrected our past mistakes. I was confident of my win," he says.

The Sangli seat was the highly contested one, putting the Mahavikas Aghadi parties at loggerheads. Both the Congress and the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) had differences over ticket distribution and both refused to withdraw their candidature. "The Congress wanted to back Patil as the official candidate of the MVA, but the UBT faction was not willing to back down. As part of the coalition, we let them keep the official candidate and told Patil to contest independently," says a Congress worker.

Patil, who filed his nomination as an independent candidate, refused to withdraw it even as it caused turmoil within the MVA coalition. He could have faced expulsion for rebelling against the coalition member. However, he decided to face the two heavyweights—BJP's Sanjay Patil and Sena UBT's Chandrarhar Patil. "My rebellion was not out of selfish reasons, but was important for a larger social cause, for the Congress party's existence and relevance in Sangli," Patil says.

Sangli used to be a stronghold of the Congress, but since 2014, the BJP has been dominant at the assembly and parliamentary levels. Patil said coming back to power was the only way to reinstate the Congress's influence in Western Maharashtra's sugar belt. He is confident that the party will make positive gains from Sangli in the upcoming Assembly polls.

As an MP, he intends to procure central funds for farm irrigation projects, lobby with the Union government to expand the quota ceiling in Maharashtra, resolve the reservation agitation of Maratha and Dhargar communities and make Sangli a smart city. 

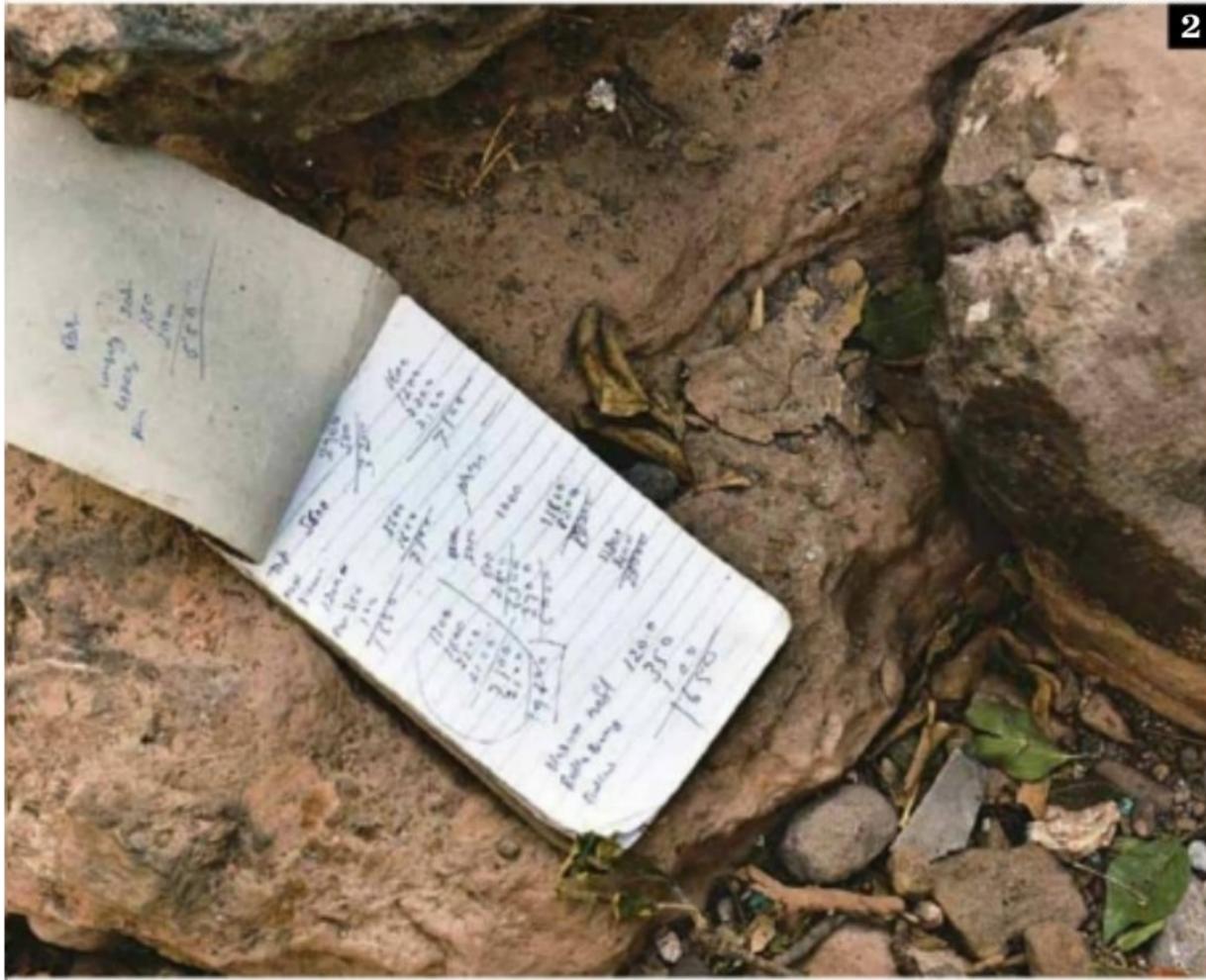
# OVERLAP

*Political*



## Unquiet Flows The Tawi

The recent attack on a bus carrying pilgrims in Reasi district spotlights Jammu's increased vulnerability to militancy



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**The Wreckage**

- 1. The damaged bus being towed away from the site of the June 9 attack in Reasi
- 2. A notebook with scribbles by an unknown person found at the site
- 3. A clay pot, part of the funeral rites, at the deceased bus driver Vijay Kumar's home
- 4, 5, 6. Belongings of those who died or were injured in the Reasi attack

**Naseer Ganai in Reasi**

**J**UNE 9 was a special day for Shamsheer Singh, the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) *mandal prabhari* of Pouni tehsil in Jammu's Reasi district. Forty-six-year-old Singh had planned to watch Prime Minister Narendra Modi's oath-taking ceremony on TV with his wife and two children. In anticipation, he drove from Pouni to his home in Ransoo village, nestled in the hills, which incidentally is also a base camp for pilgrims visiting the Shiv Khori shrine.

The 20 km journey from Pouni to Ransoo is a serpentine route, characterised by its frequent slopes and sharp bends. On one side of the road lies the Kanda area, a deep gorge offering breathtaking views. The other side is flanked by towering hills called Kadol Kala, covered with dense forests. This scenic road winds through rugged terrain, eventually leading to the Shiv Khori shrine.

Along the way, travellers also encounter the tranquil shrine of Pir Baba, adding to the route's spiritual allure.

Just as the oath-taking ceremony was about to begin, tragedy filtered into Singh's neighbourhood. A bus carrying pilgrims had met with an accident in Kanda, located between Bhamblya and Ransoo villages, he heard. Soon, it was revealed that militants had attacked the bus. Singh rushed to the scene, where he was confronted with the sight of ambulances with blaring sirens, the wailing injured and mute bodies. He stayed awake the entire night, working with volunteers at the accident site.

The tragedy occurred on June 9, at 6:10 pm, when militants ambushed a bus carrying pilgrims from the Shiv Khori shrine to Katra. They fired at the driver, causing the bus to plunge into the Kanda gorge. Nine people were killed and 31 others were wounded. Trees in the deep gorge briefly impeded the bus's descent, but the out-of-control vehicle fell further under its own weight.

The wrecked bus was eventually retrieved by Balwan Motors using cranes. The company is owned by five brothers, all of whom were present at the site four days after the incident, working together under the leadership of their eldest brother, Rashpal Singh.

For Raj Veer Sharma, a 26-year-old from Bhamblya village, located 6 km from the site, the experience was harrowing. On Tuesday, June 12, he was at the scene as a crane pulled up the heavily damaged pilgrim bus up to the road.

Meanwhile, as soon as the bullet-ridden and severely damaged carriage of the bus was extracted from the gorge, Sharma painted its numberplate red. "I don't want the family members of those pilgrims who died and were wounded in the incident to ever see the bus number and recognise it," he says. "Once we move the vehicle from here, people will take photos, and when the family members of the victims see the bus number, they will be heartbroken to realise this was the bus in which their loved ones died. That's why I erased the number."

There was no security at the site on that Tuesday afternoon. Just two police checkpoints dotted the over 80-km stretch from Katra to the accident site.

At the Sula Stop checkpoint, local journalist Karan Deep cautions the *Outlook* team, which visited the site. "Don't offer a lift to anyone, even if they appear to be in dire need. You never know who they might really be."

Along the way, tourists took pictures at the Chenab Bridge. Some enjoyed rafting in calm waters. At Kanda, some pilgrims returning from the Shiv Khori shrine stopped to examine the bus' wreck and moved on.

Sharma, one of the first rescuers on the scene, found the driver with bullet wounds in his head and groin. Some wounded passengers told him that a militant had suddenly appeared in front of the bus and opened fire on the driver. Despite his injuries, the driver managed to drive a few metres, until the conductor attempted to take control of the steering wheel. However, the bus veered out of control and plunged into a deep gorge.

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## THERE WAS NO SECURITY THERE THAT TUESDAY AFTERNOON. JUST TWO POLICE CHECKPOINTS ON THE STRETCH FROM KATRA TO THE ACCIDENT SITE.

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"If the bus had stopped, they would have killed all the passengers," says local resident Sunil Kumar. Kumar says militants continued firing at the bus as it rolled down, leaving locals convinced that all 50 passengers would have died if the vehicle had halted. Authorities have retrieved 25 bullets from the scene. Locals praise the bravery of the driver and conductor, who, despite being hit, managed to steer the bus a few metres further before it plunged into the gorge. Kumar believes they deserve martyr status and that job opportunities should be provided for their families.

The rescue operation was harrowing, according to Sharma. As soon as he heard about the militant attack, he didn't think twice before jumping into his vehicle and joining the rescue efforts with friends. "They were all crying for help. I was helping a 56-year-old man, but he kept asking, 'Mein bach jaoonga?' (Will I survive?)" and when I reassured him that he would, he asked if his son would survive. I saw the 16-year-old boy in the backseat. He was dead, with a bullet in his head."

Rescuers lifted the injured and placed them next to concrete road barriers. Authorities then transported them to nearby health centres, apart from the Reasi Hospital and the Government Medical College, Jammu. A local resident showed photos on his phone of the injured lying next to the road barriers. "We weren't concerned about our own safety while rescuing people; our main worry was whether we could save everyone," he says. "It was challenging to retrieve the bodies and injured due to the crevasse, so we formed a human chain to expedite the process. All the injured were pleading, 'Save us,'" Sharma says. "The last person we rescued was a woman, but sadly, she did not survive."

Sharma was wearing an orange shirt, but by the time he returned home at midnight, it was stained deep red. "No one slept in the area that night," he recalls. "I didn't sleep either. I kept thinking of a child whose body we wrapped in white cloth and salvaged."

Of the nine killed in the attack, the driver, Vijay Kumar (40), and his 19-year-old conductor, Arun Kumar, were locals from Reasi. The passengers on the 53-seater bus, including the seven other victims, who hail from different states. Four victims were from Rajasthan and three from Uttar Pradesh (UP). Among the deceased were the two-year-old son of victim Pooja Sawhney and 16-year-old



**In Mourning** The family of Vijay Kumar, the bus driver who was killed in the Reasi attack, at their home

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Anurag Verma from UP. At least 10 of the victims sustained bullet wounds.

Locals believe that the timing of the bus being targeted just before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's oath ceremony cannot be a coincidence. They also suggest that the selection of a bus carrying pilgrims from UP, Rajasthan and Delhi does not seem accidental. "It seems they were waiting for it and had prior information," says Kumar.

Mann Singh, one of the five brothers of Balwan Motors, immediately began trying to contact the driver upon hearing about the accident. "When I arrived at the Teryath health centre where the bodies were kept, I was shocked by the scene," Mann Singh recalls. "We operate around 50 buses. I have no regrets about the bus itself, but we are all deeply affected by this incident. No one deserves such a tragic death," he adds. The Teryath medical facility is located within Rajouri district, which has witnessed increased militant activity since 2021, including attacks on the Army.

At their home in Dassanoo village, about 50 km from the incident site, Vijay Kumar's family is still struggling to come to terms with the tragedy. Their single-storey

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**"ONE HIGH-PROFILE INCIDENT EVERY COUPLE OF MONTHS IS ENOUGH TO ERODE TRUST. WE NOW SEE A GREATER SECURITY PRESENCE THAN BEFORE."**

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house sees men leaning against the walls and sitting on the lawns, speaking in hushed tones, while the women gather in an adjacent room. Sanjay, Vijay's elder brother, recalls rushing to the Teryath health centre in Rajouri after hearing about the accident and finding his brother's body. "He was naked and an ambulance took him to Reasi Hospital an hour or two later," says Sanjay, who works as a day labourer. "He had three gunshot wounds—one in the head, one in the groin and one in the leg. He was the sole breadwinner for his family."

## THE J&K POLICE HAVE ARRESTED 50 PEOPLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE REASI ATTACK. THE INVESTIGATION HAS SPREAD TO ARNAS AND MAHORE, KNOWN MILITANCY HOTBEDS IN THE MID-1990s.

Sanjay's primary request is for Kumar's wife to be provided with a government job and for the family to receive compensation and martyr status for Vijay.

Vijay's wife, Renu Devi, is in shock, unable to utter a word. Her two children, one-and-a-half-year-old Bashu and seven-year-old Anshu, cling to her as she remains in shock.

Taking note of the rising cases of terrorism in Jammu, Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a high-level meeting at which security agencies were directed to implement "zero-terror plans" in Jammu. In a statement issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs he said that the fight against terrorism is at a decisive phase and the government is determined to root out terrorism.

### Jammu's Terror Roster

Since the abrogation of Article 370, the BJP-led Jammu and Kashmir government, under the Lieutenant Governor, has repeatedly claimed a return to peace in the region. They report over two crore tourists visiting the region annually and declare militancy a thing of the past. However, since 2021, Jammu has experienced a surge in militant attacks.

On October 11, 2021, five army soldiers, including a JCO, were killed in an encounter with militants in the Chamrer forests of Surankote tehsil, Poonch district. Five days later, on October 16, 2021, another four soldiers, including a JCO, were killed in a gun battle with the same group of militants in Bhatta Durrian, Mendhar tehsil, Poonch. The search operation continued for a month in the jungle after the encounter.

In March and April 2022, four blasts rocked Koteranka tehsil in Rajouri district. On August 11, 2022, five army men and two militants were killed during an attack on an army camp in Pargal, Darhal area, Rajouri district.

### Enter 2023

On January 1, seven civilians from the minority Hindu community, including two minors, were killed in firing and an IED blast triggered by militants in Dhangri village, Rajouri district. On April 20, 2023, militants ambushed an army truck near Bhatta Durian on the Bhimber Gali-Surankote road, killing five soldiers. On

December 21, 2023, militants attacked two army vehicles en route to Thanamandi in Rajouri district, killing four soldiers and injuring two.

On May 6, militants ambushed an Air Force (IAF) convoy near Shahsitar in Poonch district, resulting in the death of an IAF personnel. The attackers used US-made M4 rifles and AK-47s.

Since the Reasi attack, Jammu has witnessed three additional incidents. This time, the footprint of the incidents has spread from the Pir Panjal districts of Rajouri and Poonch to the Chenab Valley districts of Doda.

On June 11, militants fired at a joint checkpoint of the 4 Rashtriya Rifles and police at Chattergalla in Bhaderwah, Doda district. The next day, a search party in Gandoh, also in Doda district and bordering Himachal Pradesh, was attacked, resulting in injuries to seven security personnel, including a policeman.

Later, in an overnight gun battle on June 12 in Kathua, security forces killed two militants, but a CRPF jawan was also killed in the exchange.

### Pak Hand?

Director General of Police R R Swain visited Katra on June 13, accusing Pakistan of attempting to disrupt the region's peace through mercenaries. He stated that terrorism had spread to Jammu's Doda and Ramban regions in 1995 but was eradicated by 2005.

"We are committed to giving a befitting response and maintaining peace," he added. Earlier, in Kashmir, Swain had mentioned the region's shift from "resident terrorism to foreign terrorism" and disclosed that "around 70 to 80 foreign terrorists have entered J&K."

Zafar Choudhary, political commentator and author of *Kashmir Conflict and Muslims of Jammu*, critiques the misdating of Jammu and Kashmir's security situation to August 2019. He argues it actually began in early 2017 with 'Operation All Out,' targeting suspected militants and their associates as 'over ground workers'. Choudhary notes that this operation weakened militant support networks significantly. He contrasts Jammu's response to Article 370's abrogation with that of the Valley, where no special measures were implemented and local Muslims remained subdued. Post-abrogation, Pakistan and militants focused on Jammu to escalate conflict and challenge security forces, who are less experienced in Jammu's terrain compared to Kashmir.

"Another objective seems to be to reduce the heat on Kashmiris. Every incident leads to random action across a whole village in a bid to find suspects and supporters," says Choudhary. In fact, the Jammu and Kashmir Police have arrested 50 people in connection with the Reasi terror attack. The investigation, led by the Kanda Area Police Station, has expanded to Arnas and Mahore, known militancy hotbeds in the mid-1990s.

"One high-profile incident every couple of months is enough to erode social cohesion and trust. We now see a greater security presence than ever before. So, Jammu is

once again in the spotlight,” Choudhary adds.

There was a general expectation that if this is Prime Minister Modi's third term, it might show a conciliatory approach towards Kashmir. Some anticipated Modi's third term would resemble his first. There was also hope that Modi might seek to improve relations with Pakistan, especially with the Sharif brothers returning to power.

“Modi's chemistry with Nawaz Sharif is well-established. The PML(N) government consistently made positive overtures throughout the Indian elections,” says Choudhary.

“The recent incidents in Jammu coinciding with Modi 3.0's inauguration could be a message from militants/terrorists or elements within Pakistan's security establishment against the prospects of bilateral normalcy without addressing core issues. The attack on pilgrims from UP and other states appears to be a carefully chosen plan aimed at exerting pressure from the BJP's core constituency against any progress with Pakistan,” Choudhary adds.

He suggests that the recent incidents in Jammu during Modi 3.0's inauguration may signal militants or elements within Pakistan's security establishment opposing bilateral normalcy without addressing core issues.

The attacks in Jammu also challenge the BJP-led Union government's narrative that peace has returned to Jammu and Kashmir after scrapping Article 370 and downgrading it to a Union Territory.

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah says, “It is unfortunate to see areas that had previously been cleared of all militants now witness a return of militancy.”

Reasi, Rajouri-Poonch, and Doda districts were considered militancy-free zones before Article 370 was abrogated. Aditya Gupta, a lawyer and PDP member, criticised the government's counter-terrorism policy, stating that despite claims of eradicating terrorism from the Kashmir Valley, Jammu faces significant threats.

Gupta highlighted that the recent attacks in Rajouri and on an army convoy in Poonch underscore critical gaps in India's counter-terrorism strategy, particularly in Jammu. “Despite assertions that terrorism has been largely eliminated from the Kashmir Valley, these incidents demonstrate that Jammu, previously considered more secure, is now confronting significant threats. The government overlooked early signs of terrorist infiltration in the Pir Panjal area, leading to four coordinated attacks within 72 hours across two of Jammu's three divisions,” he says.

Instead of addressing these gaps, Gupta insists that officials have often deflected, pointing to well-lit images of Lal Chowk adorned with the National Flag, high tourist inflows, G20 summits and more when questioned about these incidents.

### **In Search of Answers**

A crucial question remains unanswered, as Gupta points out: “How did these terrorists manage to penetrate a region previously considered secure, especially when the official

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## **STILL GRAPPLING WITH FRESH SCARS, SUNIL KUMAR ASKS WHY JAMMU CANNOT HAVE SECURITY MEASURES SIMILAR TO THOSE IN KASHMIR.**

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narratives suggest terrorism is a relic of the past?”

Shamshir Singh, the man who gave up watching Modi's swearing-in ceremony to rush to the aid of injured pilgrims, believes he has answers to these questions. J&K has transformed since 2019, but long-standing conflict and ideologies persist. Singh says militancy aims to undermine Jammu's economy, which heavily relies on pilgrim tourism. “Unlike Kashmir, which has tourism, horticulture and pilgrim tourism, Jammu relies almost entirely on pilgrim tourism,” he explains.

Singh highlights that prior to the attack, the Shiv Khori shrine welcomed 10,000 *yatris* (pilgrims) daily, but this number has since dwindled and continues to decline. Reflecting on past militant activities in the region, Singh recalls a significant incident in 1998 when the Army pursued militants near the Kanda stream. “One militant was presumed dead after drowning in the river, only to open fire and kill a soldier as they approached,” he recounts.

He notes a lull in such incidents over the past two decades. Singh also references a tragic incident in May 2022, where a bus returning from the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine caught fire, resulting in the deaths of four pilgrims and injuries to about 24. Initially deemed an accident, further investigations revealed it was caused by bombs planted by militants.

Located near Jammu district, Reasi is home to significant religious shrines, hydroelectric projects and boasts better road connectivity compared to Rajouri and Poonch. Singh advocates for increased security presence and arms for locals to combat escalating militancy in the mountains. “People are terrorised by these incidents, but their primary concern is the declining number of pilgrims. If this trend continues, Jammu's economy will suffer,” he laments, surveying the road where remnants of the bus' windshield were the only visible traces of the attack.

After the wreckage of the bus was cleared, Rashpal Singh sat on the roadside with only the bus number as a reminder. His brother, Sujan Singh, calls for tighter security around Jammu and its pilgrim shrines.

Still grappling with the fresh scars, Sunil Kumar questions why Jammu cannot have security measures similar to those in Kashmir, which currently enjoys relative peace, highlighting the new security challenges posed by the Jammu hills to the government. 

# A transformative shift towards inclusive urbanisation



Adding three crore homes under PMAY is a significant step towards achieving the vision of 'housing for all' and will certainly bolster the real estate sector, particularly in the affordable housing segment.



**TOP STOREY**  
**Kausar Firdausi**

The recent decision to build three crore more rural and urban houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) marks a transformative shift towards inclusive urbanisation. The real estate industry applauds the maiden cabinet's decision. "Affordable housing development is a crucial step towards revitalising the property market. As the realty sector is the second largest employer in the country, the extension of the PMAY will have a ripple effect on employment and economic growth indices," says Dr. Niranjana Hiranandani, chairman, NAREDCO National.

The Modi government launched PMAY in 2016 with the aim to provide 'housing for all' and since then over 2.61 crore houses have been built in his

last term. Anuj Puri, chairman, Anarock Group is of the view that the affordable housing sector, a flagship scheme of the government, had not fared well over the last term. "Affordable housing (homes priced under ₹40 lakh) sales in Q1 2024 recorded 26,545 units, which is just 20% of the total sales. Concurrently, supply in this critical segment had also dropped from 44% in Q1 2019 to 18% in Q1 2024," observes Puri.

Affordable housing is driven primarily

**"As the realty sector is the second largest employer in the country, the extension of the PMAY will have a ripple effect on employment and economic growth indices."**

**DR. NIRANJANA HIRANANDANI**  
Chairman, NAREDCO National

by lower ticket sizes. "The downward spiral of this erstwhile posterchild of the Indian housing industry began during the pandemic, and then morphed into a broader malaise," he adds.

This increased focus on rural and urban housing will not only improve the living standards of millions but also create substantial employment opportunities, thereby contributing to the overall economic growth. "We at NAREDCO Maharashtra are committed to supporting this endeavour and look forward to collaborating with the government to ensure the successful implementation of this ambitious project," avers Prashant Sharma, president, NAREDCO Maharashtra.

Representing CREDAI-MCHI, Pritam Chivukula, vice president of the body and who is also co-founder & director, Tridhaatu Realty is also eager to collaborate with the government to achieve these ambitious targets and contribute to the successful implementation of PMAY.

## IN SPOTLIGHT

### India's smart homes market to grow by 9.14% by 2028: NAREDCO-Resurgent India study

The smart homes market in India is projected to grow by 9.14% from 2024 to 2028, reaching a market volume of \$9.2 billion. This growth is attributed to the increasing integration of Internet of Things (IoT) devices in homes, which enhance security, energy efficiency and convenience. Startups specialising in smart home solutions are expected to see substantial growth during this period.

Additionally, the green buildings market in India is set to rise

significantly, contributing \$39 billion (₹3.2 lakh crore) by 2025. This trend reflects the growing emphasis on sustainable construction, with green buildings becoming a larger share of new developments.

These findings are detailed in the white paper 'Pathways to Sustainable Living & Building Practices', jointly prepared by Resurgent India and NAREDCO. The white paper, titled 'Green Foundations', was released at the 3rd NAREDCO Mahi Convention 2024. According to the report, the commercial segment of green buildings in the country is expected to generate a market worth \$11 bn., while the residential segment is projected to reach \$28 billion, together totalling \$39 bn. by next year.

Dr. Ananta Singh Raghuvanshi, president, NAREDCO Mahi, an arm of realty body NAREDCO, highlighted that with the increasing focus on

sustainability, proptech startups offering eco-friendly and energy-efficient solutions are gaining traction in India's realty market. These startups are leveraging IoT and artificial intelligence (AI) to optimise energy management systems, reduce consumption, and improve overall building efficiency. IoT-based energy management systems, for instance, can reduce energy consumption by upto 20 per cent in commercial complexes by optimising lighting and HVAC systems.

The report also highlights the rise of proptech startups, which refers to the innovative use of technology in the real estate sector. These startups are utilising advancements such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, big data, and IoT to revolutionise the buying, selling, renting, and management of properties.

**"By integrating green building technologies, we can ensure that this massive housing project contributes positively to environmental sustainability."**

**AVNEESH SOOD**  
Director, Eros Group

As the vice president and CEO of MHADA (Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority), which serves as the state nodal agency for PMAY-U in Maharashtra, Sanjeev Jaiswal too has a clear view of how this initiative is going to transform lives by providing affordable housing solutions.

Jaiswal informs that the total financial outlay for PMAY is ₹8.07 lakh crore, with the union government committing ₹2 lakh crore in central assistance. Of this, ₹1,63,926 crore has already been disbursed to the states and union territories. In Maharashtra alone, MHADA has sanctioned approximately 6 lakh houses across

**"The total financial outlay for PMAY is 8.07 lakh crore, with the union government committing 2 lakh crore in central assistance."**

**SANJEEV JAISWAL**  
Vice President & CEO, MHADA

1,630 projects. This unprecedented scale of operation is a testament to the commitment to housing for all.

Both rural areas and several tier-2 cities have experienced significant benefits. "We foresee substantial growth in the housing sector over the next 10 years, with developers like us strongly promoting affordable housing. The addition of three crore homes under the scheme showcases the government's dedication to affordable housing, leading to increased demand, job creation, financial inclusion, and fostering balanced regional development, despite challenges in land acquisition, quality standards, and infrastructure," elucidates Ashok Chhajjar, CMD, Arihant Superstructures Ltd.

This initiative not only addresses the pressing housing shortage but also catalyses advancements in sustainable construction practices. "By integrating green building technologies and prioritising energy-efficient designs, we can ensure that this massive housing project contributes positively to environmental sustainability. This forward-thinking approach will set new benchmarks in affordable housing, promoting a healthier and more resilient living environment for millions of families across India," asserts Avneesh Sood, director, Eros Group.

However, the initiative's success will depend on efficient implementation, addressing challenges such as land acquisition, financing, and infrastructure support to meet the set targets effectively.

## Central Park launches Bignonia Towers on Gurugram's Sohna Road

Central Park, one of the leading Gurugram-based real estate developers, has recently launched 'Bignonia Towers', the first-ever ultra-luxury high-rise residential project in the heart of Central Park Flower Valley, on Sohna Road.

The project features an array of state-of-the-art amenities, from cutting-edge fitness centres and serene swimming pools to elegantly designed communal spaces and lush landscaped gardens. "We go beyond mere housing to providing our clients with exceptional infrastructure, contemporary amenities which fit their expectations, and a safe and secure living environment," said Amarjit Bakshi, CMD, Central Park.

Bignonia Towers represents a new chapter in luxury living, marking a pivotal moment for Central Park. "We are thrilled to announce that the launch of Bignonia Towers has been a grand success. It has already recorded an overwhelming sales value of ₹500 crore within the first few days of the launch," stated Vikram Singh, president, Central Park.

With a starting price of ₹5 crore, Bignonia Towers includes 193 exclusive units, offering a mix of 3 & 4 bedroom apartments. Each one is meticulously designed to provide maximum comfort and luxury, the apartment sizes range from a minimum of 3805 sq.ft. to a maximum of 5581 sq.ft.

Each apartment is equipped with a private balcony which provides a breathtaking view of the picturesque Flower Valley and Aravalli hills. The two majestic towers stand tall at 183 meters and 145.5 meters.



## Realtors' Forum

Industry players expect the new government to continue its capital outlay for the infrastructure sector, accommodating all stakeholders. Excerpts...



**AJAY CHAUDHARY**  
CMD, Ace Group

"The development of new highways and airports through the regional connectivity scheme 'UDAN' has brought into focus several new cities as potential destinations for realty development while fostering inclusive and sustainable development across the nation. We look forward to this infrastructure improvement."



**AMAN TREHAN**  
Executive Director,  
Trehan Iris

"The new government is expected to maintain its thrust on the infrastructure sector. Moreover, there will be more re-prioritisation between various infra sub-segments to accommodate all stakeholders. Besides, the capital outlay towards infrastructure is expected to sustain robust growth momentum."



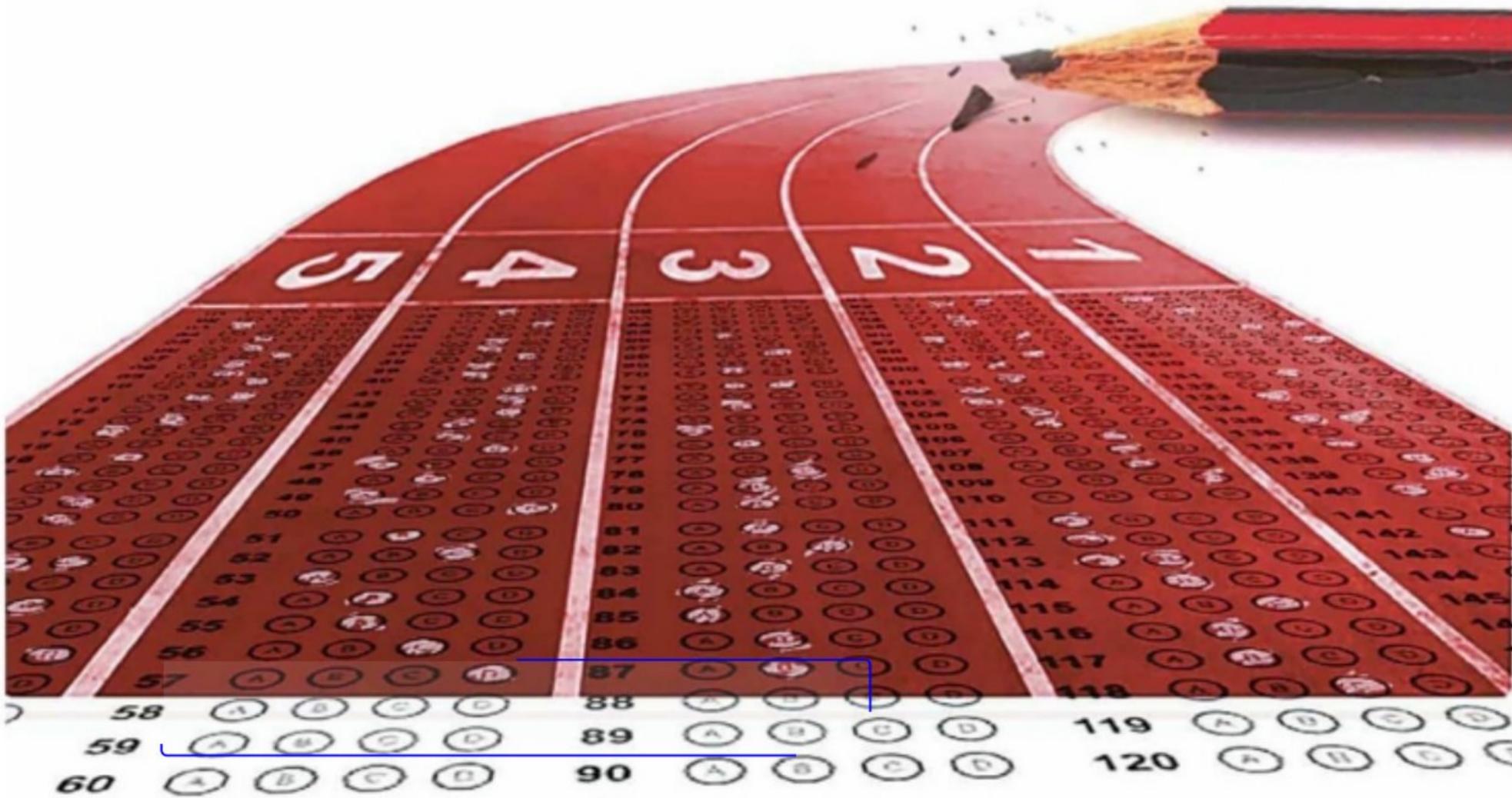
**SANDEEP CHILLAR**  
Founder & Chairman,  
Landmark Group

"With the government's ongoing efforts to boost the infrastructure sector, we anticipate that the capital outlay will sustain the healthy growth momentum considering all stakeholders. The government's focused approach towards the infrastructure sector will lead to a domino effect benefitting businesses and industries."



**GAUTAM KANODIA**  
Co-founder,  
Kanodia Group

"In its new term, we are highly optimistic that the momentum will continue unabated and that too with renewed vigour. We equally anticipate that this commitment will further ensure that the developers, investors, and the end-users alike can leverage enhanced connectivity and improved amenities."



## Lost In The Rat Race

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The NEET exam is mired in multiple controversies. Will this medical entrance exam fiasco discourage future aspirants?

**Abhik Bhattacharya**

**R**AUNAK\* was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> standard when he scribbled on the back of his report card, “I want to be a doctor.” Now he is 20 years old. It was his third attempt in the National Eligibility-cum Entrance Test (NEET), and he scored 663—usually good enough to get admission to any of the topmost medical colleges in Delhi. However, NEET 2024 is neither a usual case nor an aberration. Raunak’s dreams are shattered, as are those of many others.

On June 4, when millions in the country were glued to their TVs to find out the outcome of the Lok Sabha elections, a notification was issued: ‘NEET-UG results declared’. Eighteen-year-old Ayesha was comfortably sitting with her parents closely watching the political scorecard. “Suddenly we got to know that the NEET results are out. I immediately opened the site and found that I ranked 41,000. It was impossible,” she says.

When the NEET Answer Key PDF was released, Ayesha compared it with her responses and found that she had scored 636 out of 720—good enough to get into a good government college, if one considers the earlier cut-offs. Last year, the cut-off was 610, and if you consider Ayesha's marks, the rank should have been something around 8,000-9,000, says her mother. "However, when I saw the result and found my rank, I was literally shocked and then I got to know that 67 students had got full marks!" says Ayesha. In the last two years, usually 2-3 students used to achieve the feat.

Though the NEET results were supposed to come out on June 14, the National Testing Agency (NTA), the body that conducts NEET, decided to release it 10 days earlier. Within minutes of the declaration of the results, various controversies cropped up, especially on social media.

While the NTA said that "moderate" questions were responsible for such high scores, which consequently pulled up the cut-off marks, there are two other factors that worked behind the rank inflation—a condition where the expected ranks of the students as per the scorecard of the previous years is amplified multiple times.

Firstly, the number of students who got the same rank this time is unprecedented. This is the first time in the history of NEET that 67 students scored full marks—720 out of 720. Similarly, for the fourth rank with a 99.996614 percentile, there are 10 students and for the fifth rank with a 99.987314 percentile, there are 21 students. This apparently holds true across the ranks that led to the unusual crowding in each position.

Secondly, what made it more confusing are the marks of students who scored 719 or 718 and got ranked second and third, respectively. In a NEET paper, one has to solve 180 questions. For each correct answer, one gets four marks, and for each wrong answer, one mark is deducted. So mathematically, it is impossible for anyone to get 718 or 719. Against this backdrop, when the integrity of the NTA was questioned, the agency explained that grace marks were given to 1,563 students whose papers were delayed either due to the negligence of NTA staff or invigilators. Later, it cancelled the grace marks given to these students, but this too contributed to the rank inflation.

Notably, the NTA had decided to give grace marks to the students following a Supreme Court judgement on the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) where the body conducting the examination had been asked to give grace marks to students who unduly lost time. Though the NTA says that the grace marks were decided keeping several factors in mind, including the competence and frequency of the students to mark the right answer, well-known NEET teachers like Physics Wallah Chief Executive Alakh Pandey moved the Supreme Court (SC), saying that the grace marks had been given randomly to the students.

Earlier, the SC, during its hearing in another case pertaining to the controversy, had said that the "sanctity of the exam had been affected". Though the apex court hasn't stalled admission counselling for eligible candidates, it has sought answers from the NTA. The NTA formed a four-member body to check whether the students with grace marks could be re-examined. On June 13, the committee said that the 1,563 students would be given two options—either to accept the scorecard without grace marks, or to reappear in the exam to be conducted on June 23.

However, this is not the only controversy that has marred the NEET results. From accusations of paper leaks to allegations that eight students from the same examination centre secured ranks in the top 100, this medical entrance exam was one of the most contentious in the recent past.

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The NTA has been conducting NEET since 2019. The NTA was formed

**THE SUPREME COURT, DURING ITS HEARING IN A CASE PERTAINING TO THE CONTROVERSY, SAID THAT THE "SANCTITY OF THE EXAM HAD BEEN AFFECTED". THOUGH THE APEX COURT HASN'T STALLED ADMISSION COUNSELLING, IT HAS SOUGHT ANSWERS FROM THE NTA.**



**Joining Forces** Congress workers protest against alleged irregularities in the NEET examination in New Delhi on June 9, 2024

by the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) for “conducting efficient, transparent and international standards tests in order to assess the competency of candidates for admissions to premier higher education institutions”.

However, ever since the NTA started conducting NEET, it has faced severe criticism from at least one southern state. When the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) came to power in Tamil Nadu in 2021, Chief Minister M K Stalin formed a committee headed by Justice A K Rajan to find out the feasibility of a singular test across the state. Contending that the Union government imposing exams on states was against the essence of federalism, he wrote on X, “The Committee’s report, based on extensive data analysis and inputs from students, parents, and the public, has been published and shared with various State Governments to expose NEET’s anti-poor and anti-social justice nature.”

Interestingly, in 2018, before the NTA took up NEET, the cut-off of the exam was 541, but in 2019, it shot up to 583. And since then, every year, the cut-off has increased significantly, making the competition more difficult.

The NEET controversy has widened the north-south divide. DMK leader Dayanidhi Maran gave a political twist to the debate when he said, “In north India, students are helped by their parents itself to copy. The students are also

getting higher marks. We are honest. But today, NEET has become a national issue. People across the country are speaking against NEET now.”

The question of whether a single multiple choice question (MCQ) test comprising 180 questions to be finished in 200 minutes can actually judge the competence of future doctors has been there since NEET was made compulsory in 2017. This time, questions have been raised even over its credibility. “How can 67 people get full marks? Doesn’t it question the foundational principle of the NTA that was supposed to conduct entrance exams according to international standards? Their objective was to achieve excellence in assessment. Now even after securing a full score, one has to pass through a lottery system to get a seat at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi,” says Kapil Gupta, founder of NEET Prep, one of the very few coaching institutes that—unlike the market biggies—stood by its students. When *Outlook* reached out to Allen, a popular coaching institute, for a comment, it declined citing “policy constraints”.

\* \* \*

The decision of the NTA to conduct re-examination only for those students who got grace marks has satisfied neither the students nor the parents. Shikha, a student

belonging to the Other Backward Class (OBC) community, says that the exams should be re-conducted for everyone. "I scored 617 and in normal times, as per my category's cut-off, I would have definitely got into a government college. But now I hardly see any chance," says the daughter of a shopkeeper. Last year, the cut-off for the OBC community was 605.

Another student Arfa says that her only ambition since childhood was to be a doctor. In her second attempt, she scored 624 and was ranked 51,000. "Last year, with this score, students got a rank of around 16,500 and got into a government college," she says. Arfa's father used to work in a company, but after the COVID-19 pandemic, her family has been dependent on a tiffin service business. "I will never be able to afford a private college and would have to prepare for another year," says Arfa. However, she will not be able to join coaching classes like she did last year. The average fees of big coaching centres ranges from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh per annum, depending on the 'discounts'.

"When people invest everything they have to secure a seat in a government medical college, they look for social mobility. The people from villages and poor families consider it as one of the major ways to climb the social and economic ladder," says Gupta.

To get into a government college is also a matter of social status, says Shikha. "There is social stigma, apart from the affordability factor, that bars one from joining private medical colleges. But if there is no option, how can one take a risk with their career?" asks Shikha. At present, there are 108,940 MBBS seats offered by 700 colleges across the country—around half of which are in government colleges.

Appearing for exams year after year also takes a mental toll on the students. "After this year, I thought of never touching the NEET books again. You just don't feel like opening the same thing," says Ayesha, who took a year off only to prepare for NEET. Moreover, there was confusion about the syllabus throughout the year. Though the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) introduced new books in the beginning of the session, there was no clarity from the NTA. "It was only in December 2023, five months before the scheduled exam, that the NTA issued a notification saying that the new books had to be followed. Till then, we were preparing from the old books," says Arfa.

A teacher from a renowned coaching centre, on condition of anonymity, says, "They mixed the old and new books while preparing the syllabus. It increased the burden of the students instead of reducing it."

\* \* \*

NEET has been marred by controversy from the beginning of this year. Soon after the exams were conducted, there were allegations of a paper leak in Bihar. Though the Bihar police arrested 13 people and transferred the investigation to the Economic Offences Wing (EoW), the NTA has denied any leak. But the students think that it was one of the major

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## SOON AFTER THE EXAMS WERE CONDUCTED, THERE WERE ALLEGATIONS OF A PAPER LEAK IN BIHAR. THOUGH THE BIHAR POLICE ARRESTED 13 PEOPLE, THE NTA HAS DENIED ANY LEAK.

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reasons for such rank inflation.

Ayesha's mother Nabila recalls how it has become the norm to deny justice to the meritorious students. "In 1995, when I appeared for the Pre-Medical Test (PMT) in Bihar, the papers got leaked and I couldn't secure a rank for a few marks. After almost 30 years, my daughter is facing the same fate. I tried my best to not leave any gap in her preparations. But in the end, you cannot control the system," she says.

The layers of problems don't seem to end. There are allegations that eight students among the top 100 are from the same centre located in Haryana's Jhajhar. *Outlook* independently looked into the list published by the NTA and found that eight students from serial numbers 62 to 69 had the same centre code, 230701. Six of them have scored full marks. Interestingly, two of these students opted to appear from Haryana despite being residents of Rajasthan and Delhi. Opposition parties, including the Congress and the Samajwadi Party (SP), have already questioned the integrity of the NTA, citing this instance. The NTA is yet to respond to this.

Are these controversies going to discourage future medical aspirants? Senior doctor Ajit Kumar Thakur says, "This is considered a noble profession and if it is dragged into such controversies from the very beginning, it is not good for our health sector. Whichever agency conducts these exams should listen to the grievances of the students." The NTA has also promised a grievance redressal cell to listen to the complaints of the students and their parents.

However, a few students have complained that the NTA officials are telling them that they are unnecessarily harassing their parents. From the rush for government colleges to exorbitant fees charged by the coaching institutes, the medical aspirants are already in despair. "If such controversies crop up, it will affect their aspirations," says Thakur.

Hope, nonetheless, never dies. Arfa is getting ready to open the same books again. Shikha is silent. Ayesha is contemplating joining a private college, but with a question: "Do we deserve this?" 

(\* Name has been changed to protect identity)

# Tech-based Solutions for Healthcare Procurement

Nest Corner emerges as a transformative force in healthcare procurement for small and medium hospitals and enables healthcare professionals to achieve better outcomes



**Suvra Banerjee**  
Founder & CEO  
Nest Corner Healthcare  
Solutions Pvt Ltd

The healthcare industry is undergoing a rapid transformation through digital innovation, and the role of procurement has become more critical. It occupies almost 30% of the overall cost. Nest Corner is revolutionising healthcare procurement by empowering healthcare service providers, intending to establish technology-driven automated procurement processes, with an objective to optimise inventory to enable higher cash flow, enhancing efficiency, reduce cost and foster collaborative partnerships that drive the industry forward.

## Data-driven Decision-making

Procurement technology at Nest Corner includes using SaaS-based customised platform that can help with end-to-end procurement. The various stages of the procurement processes can be handled by the SMART dashboard to make efficient and cost-effective decisions for the business. By actively engaging in digitalisation efforts, Nest Corner positions itself as a contributor to the healthcare industry's transformation. Procurement professionals are no longer passive observers but active enablers of innovation. Their role extends to strategic collaboration, building digital supplier ecosystems, data-driven decision-making, technology adoption, fostering an innovation culture, and risk mitigation.

## Smart Procurement Dashboard

Nest Corner provides a 'ONE-stop customised solution' to its customers, after understanding their regular or monthly procurement pattern. The company's innovative Tech-driven customised dashboard ensures hassle-free medical procurement, creates price transparency and visibility across the value chain and

help to protect against losing money due to pilferage. All types of surgical products, medical devices, equipment, and regular orders are managed within seconds. Appropriate data and tools help in streamlining processes, accessing quality products, controlling inventory levels, Nest Corner takes responsibility for addressing and supplying the required orders by the customers through the smart dashboard.

## Lean Procurement Principles

By applying Lean Procurement Principles (LPP) to purchasing processes, Nest Corner offers multiple benefits throughout the supply chain. A single-click visibility of inventory management across the value chain, operational efficiency, delivery tracking and demand forecasting for consumable purchases to create consistent availability of critical items without oversupply, storage issues, or expiry concerns.

**Lead time:** Implementing inventory reporting and accuracy standards helps in faster decision-making and ordering. Accessibility and availability being important in healthcare, Nest Corner is committed to reaching and on-time

**"Automated Healthcare Procurement helps lean inventory management and transparent visibility across value chain.**

**Data-driven procurement strategies are key to enhancing efficiency and cost-effectiveness"**

delivery in Tier II includes Tier I cities by innovative **Hub & Spoke Model** which minimises the turnaround time or lead time.

## Quality control and higher cash flow:

Inventory optimisation tool helps improve supply performance, bringing higher cash flow which helps to increase the organisation's profitability while maintaining quality standards.

**Lower operational costs:** Nest Corner's end-to-end procurement lowers operational costs and achieves greater savings over time by reducing waste and inefficiencies, controlling inventory levels and providing better pricing to the customers by direct collaboration with large and local manufacturers.

**Improved patient outcomes:** Given a large product range to choose from, strategic procurement improves quality and achieves economies of scale. Nest Corner ensures on-time delivery and creates accessibility to quality products which enables service providers to enhance patient care.

**Better resource allocation:** By leveraging data-driven insights, there is a precise count of the volume of goods needed to run departments effectively and freedom from complex vendor management. This reduces unnecessary spending without compromising patient care. Analytics tools help assess total healthcare supply chain costs and free up resources for other areas.

## BOYHOOD

# Diary



**DURGA PRASAD PANDA**  
is a bilingual poet  
and critic

## *A Place, Lost and Found*

Boyhood is a many-splendoured country I visit in my mind, a grotesque town I return to often; though 'remote', I tend to reach there as soon as I close my eyes and take a deep breath. A place lost and found many times over, across the dark, dingy attic of my memories. Summer noon in boyhood seemed endlessly long, a perfect time for misadventures. Thwarting the efforts of my mother to put me to sleep, I'd sneak out, tiptoeing to join my friends waiting outside. Within minutes we'd find ourselves in the mango grove with branches drooped heavy, laden with raw mangoes. Our rich, hard-earned exploits were meagre mangoes. But during the onset of adolescence when the sinuous vines of sensual desire had just started creeping into our bodies and minds; slices of raw mango laced with salt and red chilli powder provided us the best way to woo girls in the classroom. April sweat beads shining on our foreheads, we braced ourselves to face the horror of exams in May. Growing up in the seventies, a boyhood unsullied by mobile phones, etc. had a vintage charm.

## *The Dog that I Failed*

I had befriended a dog who would wait for my return from school, wagging her tail so fast that her entire skeletal body shook. I used to feed her and her puppies. One day while returning from school I spotted her inside the municipality dog-catcher van. She looked at me and kept wagging her tail from within the cage, little knowing her own fate. I was in tears. She seemed to understand the helplessness of a nine-year-old boy and must have forgiven my incompetence to save her. They dragged away the van creating an earth-shattering noise. I have never forgotten those shining eyes of hers that kept looking at me. That was probably one of my early lessons on the pangs of separation from loved ones.

## *A Surreal Sight*

One of the earliest memories that has remained etched on my mind. Even now it gives me goosebumps. Our school was near a police barrack that frequently saw training camps when platoons of police from other parts of the State pitched tents in rows across the field. A big open-air kitchen was set up beneath a huge banyan tree. During recess, we used to loiter around the area only to be shooed away by the



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tough, moustached cook, a man with menacing red eyes, beads of sweat gleaming on his bare body. He would pull out a chicken from the coop, his left hand holding the tiny head and the right clutching the rest of the feathered body, would slice the neck with a big kitchen cutter, dropping the severed head in a bucket and releasing the shaking body of the bird into the open. The sight of a headless chicken running around with its decapitated wings for quite some distance before falling down and becoming still, haunts me even now. The very last of the faltering steps the winged bird took virtually resembled the dance of death. It was a gory sight, so spine-chilling to my innocent eyes; also painfully surreal and nightmarish. That was when death, loss, fragility and the utter vulnerability of life began to seep into the soft, impressionable landscape of my consciousness.

## *Books, Early On*

To escape such vicissitudes as life began to unfold slowly before me, and as innocence became the prime casualty of growing up, books became the much-needed 'emotional anchor' and kept me in a permanent state of 'wonder'; an escape, a flight of fancy and imagination. At eleven, my father gave me a slim Macmillan volume of *Tales from Tagore* which he had bought from a pavement seller at Rs 2. The book survived the massive flood of 1982 that hit our town, Sambalpur; a series of moves, and is still with me, completing forty-odd years. I faintly remember that dreadful August night as a rainstorm kept pounding our roof and the wind rattled the windows; half asleep, I saw my school box floating in knee-deep water. I wasn't all that concerned about the text books but I was worried about 'Tagore' who was in that box, rubbing shoulders with other 'dry' course books. Engrossed for hours, reading tearjerkers such as 'The Postmaster' and 'Kabuliwala' made me feel less alone. I realised that one is never alone in pain, and that someone somewhere, may be far away, is suffering as much, at times, much more than you do. 

### Remembrance of Things Past

Boyhood is a many-splendoured country one often returns to in memory

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