

Exit Polls Predict Big Win For NDA, 3rd Term For Modi

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- Exit polls on Saturday predicted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will retain power for a third straight term, with the BJP-led NDA expected to win a big majority in the Lok Sabha polls.

The ABP-C Voter has forecast 353-383 seats for the BJP-led alliance and 152-182 seats for the opposition INDIA bloc.

Today's Chanakya predicted a much higher tally for the BJP and its alliance than the 2019 polls. It gave 335 seats to the BJP and 400 to the NDA, with a margin of 15 seats either way. It gave 107 seats to the opposition alliance with a possibility of its tally going up or down by 11 seats.

The BJP had given the slogan of '400 paar' for its alliance in this Lok Sabha polls.

If the exit polls hold true,



Modi will equal the record of the country's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, in leading his party to victory at the

polls for a third straight term. The Times Now-ETG Research's exit poll gave 358 and 152 seats to the NDA and

the INDIA bloc respectively. Many pollsters said the NDA may surpass its 2019 tally of 353 seats. The BJP had won

303 seats in the election. The Congress had bagged 53 seats and its allies 38.

The 'INDIA' bloc was formed by opposition parties to take on the BJP-led NDA in the Lok Sabha elections.

The NDA in all likelihood will open its account in Tamil Nadu and Kerala and sweep Karnataka but may see a fall in its tally in states like Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Haryana, according to most pollsters.

News 18 predicted that the BJP on its own will get 306-315 seats while its alliance will bag 355-370 seats. It gave 125-140 seats to the opposition alliance.

The Republic TV-P Marq poll claimed that the ruling alliance will win up to 359 seats and the opposition INDIA bloc will bag 154 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha. The Republic TV-Matrix poll gave 353-368 seats to the NDA | More on P10

NC, BJP Each Predicted To Win 2 Seats In J&K

Exit polls for Lok Sabha elections 2024 released Saturday evening suggest victory for National Conference on two LS seats while predicting one seat for the PDP. It claims that BJP could possibly win two seats from Jammu division.

Jammu and Kashmir has seen an unprecedented voter turnout in the recent Lok Sabha elections, with 58.46 percent of the electorate participating, the highest in 35 years. Voting for the all contestable Lok Sabha seats concluded on Saturday with the seventh and final phase. The counting of votes will take place on June 4.

Exit polls, released this evening, provide early insights into potential outcomes. Times Now's

exit poll suggests the BJP could win 2 seats, while Congress-NC might secure 2-3 seats, and the PDP could win 1 seat. Specifically, the NC is projected to win the Srinagar and Anantnag seats comfortably, with strong showings in their traditional strongholds. The Anantnag-Rajouri seat is expected to favor NC due to the division of Pahari votes between PDP and Apni Party.

In Baramulla, the competition is intense with Omar Abdullah, Sajad Lone, and Er. Rashid all had strong performances in different regions. Omar has done well in Baramulla and Budgam, Lone in Kupwara and Bandipora, and Rashid has garnered significant support from the separatist | More on P10

Believe in People's Poll, Not Exit Polls: TMC

Rejecting the exit poll predictions about the 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress on Saturday said it believed in people's mandate. Most of the exit polls have predicted that the BJP will get more seats than the TMC in the state. "Most of the exit polls had predicted a victory for the BJP in the 2021 assembly elections. But we

all know what the actual results were - TMC won a two-thirds majority. We believe in people's polls, not opinion polls or exit polls. The TMC will win more than 30 Lok Sabha seats in the state," party leader Santanu Sen claimed. TMC MP Sougata Roy, who is seeking re-election from the Dum Dum Lok Sabha seat for a fourth consecutive term, also | More on P10

PM Modi's Thank You Note As Voting Ends

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday exuded confidence that people have voted in record numbers to re-elect the NDA government and said the "opportunistic INDI Alliance" failed to strike a chord with the voters who rejected their "regressive politics".

As polling ended for the seventh and final phase of the Lok Sabha polls, Modi said the people have seen his government's track record and the manner in which its work has brought



about a qualitative change in the lives of the poor, marginalised and downtrodden. "India has voted! A heartfelt thank you to all those who exercised their franchise. Their active participation | More on P10

PEOPLE HAVE SEEN MY GOVERNMENT'S TRACK RECORD AND THE MANNER in which its work has brought about a qualitative change in the lives of the poor, marginalised and downtrodden."

10 Counting Centres Established In J&K

CEO Asks For Strict Implementation Of ECI Guidelines

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jammu and Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole, on Saturday had a comprehensive review of preparedness of the districts ahead of the final counting of votes for Lok Sabha Elections 2024 here at Nirvachan Bhawan, Jammu.

The meeting was attended virtually by all the District Election Officers along with the concerned Assistant Returning Officers and ARO Migrants (Jammu, Udhampur, and Delhi). The counting of votes is scheduled to take place on 4th June across 9 counting centres.

The meeting was informed that 10 counting centres have been established for Lok Sabha Polls 2024 in Jammu and



Kashmir. These centres included Government Degree College (Boys) Baramulla for Baramulla PC, Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) for Srinagar PC, Government Degree College (Boys) Anantnag and Government PG College Rajouri for Anantnag-Rajouri PC, Government | More on P10

Over 59% Turnout Recorded In Phase 7

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: The voting for the elections to the 18th Lok Sabha ended peacefully on Saturday as voters from 57 constituencies exercised their mandate in the seventh and last phase of Lok Sabha elections 2024. As per the Election Commission of India, in the seventh phase, over 59.46% voting turnout was recorded as of 8:00 PM. However, the final turnout numbers will be released in a couple of days.

Polling was conducted amid a severe heatwave across all 13 constituencies in Punjab and four in Himachal Pradesh, as well as in 13 seats in Uttar Pradesh, nine in West Bengal, eight in Bihar, six in Odisha,



and three in Jharkhand, in addition to Chandigarh. Simultaneously, elections were held for the remaining 42 assembly constituencies in Odisha, and by-elections were conducted for six assembly seats in Himachal Pradesh.

The highest voter turnout was recorded in Jharkhand, where almost | More on P10

Cop Dead As Rifle Goes Off Accidentally

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A policeman died Saturday allegedly after his service weapon went off accidentally at Zewan on the outskirts of Srinagar on Saturday, officials said.

Head constable Bashir Ahmad sustained fire arm injuries while cleaning the weapon, the officials said.

He was rushed to a hospital where he succumbed to the injuries, they said.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance and started an investigation.

PDP Skips INDIA Bloc Meeting

Press Trust Of India

Senior leaders of the INDIA bloc met here on Saturday to discuss their strategy for the counting of votes on June 4, even as the TMC and PDP skipped the meeting.

Senior leaders of the Congress, Samajwadi Party, CPI-M, CPI, DMK, JMM, AAP, RJD, Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP (Sharad Pawar) met at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's residence on Saturday afternoon and held discussions, even as the last phase of polling was underway.

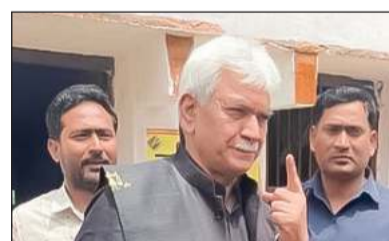
TMC chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had already said they

would not attend the meeting as there were elections in the state, while PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti did not attend the meeting due to personal reasons.

"I may not go as my mom has undergone an eye surgery," she had told PTI.

Opposition leaders who attended the meeting included Sharad Pawar, Akhilesh Yadav, Tejashwi Yadav, Anil Desai, Sitaram Yechury, Arvind Kejriwal, Bhagwat Mann, Sanjay Singh and Raghav Chadha, Champai Soren, Kalpana Soren, T R Baalu, Farooq Abdullah, D Raja and Mukesh Sahani. Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi | More on P10

J&K LG Casts Vote In UP's Ghazipur



Ghazipur: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha cast his vote at a polling booth in Mohanpura village of Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday. "This is a festival of democracy, and I appeal to all the voters for maximum participation in voting," Sinha said after casting his vote in the seventh and final Phase of the Lok Sabha election 2024. | More on P10

India Records 56 Deaths Due To Heat Stroke In Last 3 Months

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India has recorded 56 deaths from 24,849 suspected cases of heat stroke between March and May, according to data by the Union Health Ministry.

According to the data compiled by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), 46 of these deaths were recorded in May alone (till May 30).

Between May 1 and 30, 19,189 suspected heat stroke cases were reported in the country, it said.

The data does not include deaths from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi and the final numbers are expected to be higher, a source said.

Heatwave conditions have gripped large swathes of the country. India on Friday alone

reported at least 40 suspected heat-related deaths, 25 of them of staff deployed on Lok Sabha poll duty in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

According to officials, heat-related deaths were reported from Odisha (10), Bihar (8), Jharkhand (4) and Uttar Pradesh (1) on Thursday also. Rajasthan has reported at least five heat-related deaths so far.

According to health ministry data, Madhya Pradesh saw 14 confirmed deaths due to heat-related illnesses over the last three months followed by Maharashtra with 11.

"Reports on heat stroke deaths are being awaited from states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi. Some states have reported issues in data entry. The data visible may not be final | More on P10

Focus Shifted From Local To Foreign Terrorism: DGP

Says Active Local Terrorists Reduced To Just 20-22

Agencies

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir's Police chief R R Swain Saturday said that the focus of terrorism in the Union Territory has shifted from 'resident terrorism to foreign terrorism' as the number of local terrorists' active is very miniscule.

The Director General of Police (DGP), however, said that the foreign terrorism is emerging as a challenge given the fact that these terrorists infiltrate with a 'poisoned and intoxicated ideology' to instil fear and to kill defenceless civilians.

Talking to reporters on the side-lines of a function in Jammu, the DGP,



said that some four-five years ago, the number of local terrorists' active was between 150 to 200 which has come down drastically to just 20-22. "The security challenges at present are overwhelmingly external. Even though foreign

element was present there earlier as well, the focus of terrorism at present has shifted from resident terrorism to foreign terrorism as we have very few local boys active," he said.

"The challenge is foreign terrorists who infiltrate here with a poisoned and intoxicated ideology to instil fear, intimidate people and to kill unarmed people. At times, they engage with the security forces as well. Most of them are retrieved from jail and tasked to kill people here whom they don't know at all."

He said police along with other security agencies are understanding the modus-operandi of foreign | More on P10

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THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL
ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS
(BOPEE)

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Website: www.jkbopee.gov.in E-mail: coejakbopee@gmail.com/helpdeskjakbopee@gmail.com

Reference: Notice 001-BOPEE of 2024 dated 23-01-2024.

Notification No. 027-BOPEE of 2024
Dated 31-05-2024

Online Applications are invited from the eligible/desirous candidates who intend to appear in
the Common Entrance Test for admission to M.Sc. Nursing Courses for the Academic Session-2024 in
the Government / Private Colleges / Institutions of the UT of J&K.

Important Information:

- 1. Receipt of Online Application Forms w.e.f. 04-06-2024.
2. Last date for filling the Online Application Forms 15-06-2024 (Midnight).
3. Fee of Rs.1500/- (Rupees One Thousand & five hundred only) to be paid online through
National Credit Card/Debit Card/Net Banking.
4. The syllabus for the Entrance Examination Test is available on e-information Broacher.
5. Date of Common Entrance Test (to be Notified Separately).
6. The Common Entrance Test shall be conducted by the Board through offline mode.

Online Application forms:

The procedure for filling up of online Application Form and eligibility etc. of the candidates has
been given in detail in the e- Information Brochure.

Help Desk:

The applicants can also contact the Help Desk of the BOPEE during the office hours on working
days only on Phone Nos. 0194-2437647 / 0194-2433590 / 0191-2470102/0191-2479371 and or e-mail:
at helpdeskjakbopee@gmail.com for any assistance/ guidance in this regard.

Submission of Online Application Forms:

- The interested candidates are required to upload the following scanned Original / Certificates in
the PDF format with size from 100-200 KB along with the Application Form: -
(i) Domicile Certificate of UT of J&K/UT of Ladakh as the case may be (For Candidates of UT
of Ladakh), ST certificate issued by the Competent Authority of Ladakh shall be treated as
Domicile Certificate),
(ii) Qualifying marks card of B.Sc. Nursing/ B.Sc. (Hons.) Nursing /Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing,
(iii) Registration Certificate issued by Nursing Registration Council of any State/ UT
(iv) One-year work experience after B.Sc. Nursing
(v) One-year work experience prior to or after Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing
(vi) Valid Reserved Category Certificate, if any.

However, it is for the information of all the concerned that afore titled documents as required
for submission of online application form shall be considered provisional and subject to change(s), if
any, as may be notified by the Competent Authority.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ADMISSION:

- A candidate must:
(i) be a domicile of UT of J&K/UT of Ladakh as the case may be (For Candidates belonging to UT
of Ladakh, ST certificate issued by Competent authority of Ladakh shall be treated as
Domicile certificate),
(ii) have passed B.Sc. Nursing/ B.Sc. (Hons.) Nursing /Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing with minimum of
55% aggregate marks,
(iii) should be a registered Nurse and Registered Midwifery or equivalent with any State/UT
Nursing Registration Council.
(iv) have minimum of one-year work experience after B.Sc. Nursing
(v) have a minimum of One-year work experience prior to or after Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing
(vi) Valid Reserved Category Certificate, if any.

Syllabus etc.:

The examination shall be conducted in one sitting of two hours' duration and the paper shall
contain 120 questions comprising of different sections.

Tentative Intake

Table with 7 columns: S. No., Name of M.Sc. Nursing Courses/Institutions, Madra Meherban Institute of Nursing Srinagar, Bibi Halima College Srinagar, Bee Enn College of Nursing Jammu, Rajiv Gandhi College of Nursing Jammu, Stephen College of Nursing Jammu, Total.

Note - I

The eligibility is bare minimum/provisional and shall be subject to such changes/bench marks as may be
fixed by the Indian Nursing Council. The Board shall on receipt of any such communication from the
concerned Authority notify the same, which shall govern the eligibility criteria.

Original Documents required to be submitted in the Institution at the time of Admission: -

- a) Marks card of B.Sc. Nursing/B.Sc. (Hons.) Nursing /Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing
b) Domicile Certificate for candidates belonging to UT of J&K and ST certificate as a Domicile for
candidates belonging to UT of Ladakh;
c) Registration Certificate issued by any State/UT Nursing Registration Council
d) minimum of one-year work experience after B.Sc. Nursing
e) minimum of one-year work experience prior to or after Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing
f) Category Certificate, if any;
g) Any other document as may be required by the Institution.

Venue for Conduct of Examination:

The Common Entrance Examination shall be conducted by the Board through offline mode at
Jammu / Srinagar Centres simultaneously as may be decided by the Board.

Issuance of Admit Cards and Date of Test (if test is conducted):

Information with regard to availability of Online Admit Cards, Venue and Time of the Common
Entrance Test will be issued separately in due course of time.

Note-II

- 1. The submission of online Application Form is purely provisional and is liable to be cancelled at
any stage subject to the final verification of the documents and even at any stage, where such a
document is proved to be fake/false
2. The candidature of those candidates, who may have submitted incorrect/wrong application
form during online process, shall be liable to be rejected without any further notice to such
candidates. However, they can rectify their error(s), if any, by submitting a representation
physically at BOPEE office Jammu / Srinagar on or before last date fixed by Board for filling up of
online application forms.
3. Mere submission of the Application Form and appearance of the aspiring candidate in the
Common Entrance Test shall not confer any preferential right/claim for admission upon the
intending applicants, but shall be subject to the fulfillment of the eligibility criteria and the
qualification prescribed for the said course.
4. The seats shall be provisionally allotted to the candidates purely on the basis of the online
information filled by the candidates (including category) during online application form. In case
the candidates have filled /uploaded wrong category during online application form, the seat
shall be allotted accordingly & the Board shall not be responsible for the same. Hence the
candidates are advised to rectify the mistake before the allotment of the seats.

E & O E

Sd/-
Controller of Examinations
J&K, BOPEE

No. BOPEE/Exam-23/2024(7491522)
DIPK-NB-271/24
Dated: 01-06-2024

What Are Nootropics And Do They
Really Boost Your Brain?

The Conversation

Humans have long been searching for a magic elixir to make us smarter, and improve our focus and memory. This includes traditional Chinese medicine used thousands of years ago to improve cognitive function.

Now we have nootropics, also known as smart drugs, brain boosters or cognitive enhancers. You can buy these gummies, chewing gums, pills and skin patches online, or from supermarkets, pharmacies or petrol stations. You don't need a prescription or to consult a health professional.

But do nootropics actually boost your brain? Here's what the science says. What are nootropics and how do they work? Romanian psychologist and chemist Cornelius E. Giurgea coined the term nootropics in the early 1970s to describe compounds that may boost memory and learning. The term comes from the Greek words nōos (thinking) and tropein (guide). Nootropics may work in the brain by improving transmission of signals between nerve cells, maintaining the health of nerve cells, and helping in energy production. Some nootropics have antioxidant properties and may reduce damage to nerve cells in the brain caused by the accumulation of free radicals. But how safe and effective are they? Let's look at four of the most widely used nootropics.

1. Caffeine
You might be surprised to know caffeine is a nootropic. No wonder so many of us start our day with a coffee. It stimulates our nervous system.



Caffeine is rapidly absorbed into the blood and distributed in nearly all human tissues. This includes the brain where it increases our alertness, reaction time and mood, and we feel as if we have more energy. For caffeine to have these effects, you need to consume 32-300 milligrams in a single dose. That's equivalent to around two espressos (for the 300mg dose). So, why the wide range? Genetic variations in a particular gene (the CYP1A2 gene) can affect how fast you metabolise caffeine. So this can explain why some people need more caffeine than others to recognise any neuro-stimulant effect. Unfortunately too much caffeine can lead to anxiety-like symptoms and panic attacks, sleep disturbances, hallucinations, gut disturbances and heart problems. So it's recommended adults drink no more than 400mg caffeine a day, the equivalent of up to three espressos.

2. L-theanine
L-theanine comes as a supplement, chewing gum or in a beverage. It's also the most common amino acid in green tea.

Consuming L-theanine as a supplement may increase production of alpha waves in the brain. These are associated with increased alertness and perception of calmness. However, it's effect on cognitive functioning is still unclear. Various studies including those comparing a single dose with a daily dose for several weeks, and in different populations, show different outcomes. But taking L-theanine with caffeine as a supplement improved cognitive performance and alertness in one study. Young adults who consumed L-theanine (97mg) plus caffeine (40mg) could more accurately switch between tasks after a single dose, and said they were more alert. Another study of people who took L-theanine with caffeine at similar doses to the study above found improvements in several cognitive outcomes, including being less susceptible to distraction. Although pure L-theanine is well tolerated, there are still relatively few human trials to show it works or is safe over a prolonged period of time. Larger and longer studies examining the optimal dose are also needed.

3. Ashwagandha

Ashwagandha is a plant extract commonly used in Indian Ayurvedic medicine for improving memory and cognitive function.

In one study, 225-400mg daily for 30 days improved cognitive performance in healthy males. There were significant improvements in cognitive flexibility (the ability to switch tasks), visual memory (recalling an image), reaction time (response to a stimulus) and executive functioning (recognising rules and categories, and managing rapid decision making).

There are similar effects in older adults with mild cognitive impairment. But we should be cautious about results from studies using Ashwagandha supplements; the studies are relatively small and only treated participants for a short time.

4. Creatine
Creatine is an organic compound involved in how the body generates energy and is used as a sports supplement. But it also has cognitive effects.

In a review of available evidence, healthy adults aged 66-76 who took creatine supplements had improved short-term memory. Long-term supplementation may also have benefits. In another study, people with fatigue after COVID took 4g a day of creatine for six months and reported they were better able to concentrate, and were less fatigued. Creatine may reduce brain inflammation and oxidative stress, to improve cognitive performance and reduce fatigue. Side effects of creatine supplements in studies are rarely reported. But they include weight gain, gastrointestinal upset and changes in the liver and kidneys.

Scholarships
This Week

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir.



Scholarship Name
HOPE Engineering Scholarship by Schaeffler India

Description: Schaeffler India invites applications from first-year engineering female students (preference will be given to students with physical disabilities) to provide them with financial support for their engineering studies. Eligibility: The scholarship is open to female students and preference will be given to students with physical disabilities. The applicants must have scored more than 60% marks in Class 12 (science) in the academic year 2023-24. They must be enrolled in the first year of an engineering program at any recognized college in India. The annual family income of the applicants should be less than INR 5 lakh.

- Prizes & Rewards: Scholarship of INR 50,000
Last Date to Apply: 30-07-2024
Application mode: Online applications only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/SIHE15

Scholarship Name
JM Sethia Merit Scholarship Scheme 2024

Description: JM Sethia Merit Scholarship Scheme 2024 is an opportunity offered by the JM Sethia Charitable Trust (NGO) to students enrolled in Class 9 to 12, graduation, postgraduation, and professional courses. This scheme aims to support students at various educational levels in pursuing their academic goals.

Eligibility: Open for students enrolled in full-time courses from Class 9 to postgraduate and professional degrees. Applicants must have passed the previ-

ous qualifying examination with a specified minimum aggregate score. The score requirement varies depending on the course categories and streams.

- Prizes & Rewards: Up to 1,000 per month for course duration
Last Date to Apply: 31-07-2024
Application mode: via post at - JM Sethia Charitable Trust 133, Biplabi Rash Behari Basu Road, 3rd Floor, Room No. 15, Kolkata - 700 001 OR Gandhi House, 5th Floor, 16, Ganesh Chandra Avenue, Kolkata-700 013, Email ID: jms_trust@yahoo.in | Mobile Number: (+91)-93397 9
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/JMSM4

Scholarship Name
Aadhar Kaushal Scholarship Program for Youth with Disabilities

Description: An initiative of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) to ensure equal educational opportunities for all physically disabled students, irrespective of their geographical location, gender, or socio-economic condition.

Eligibility: Students with physical disabilities pursuing general or professional undergraduate courses across India. Pan-India students can apply. Students must have achieved a minimum of 60% marks in the preceding academic year. Applicants with a gross annual family income of up to INR 2.5- 3 lakh are eligible to apply.

- Prizes & Rewards: Scholarship between INR 10,000 - INR 50,000
Last Date to Apply: 23-07-2024
Application mode: Online applications only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/AKSP1

Advertisement for OBC Scholarship, featuring text about merit-based scholarships and contact information.

Advertisement for Aashiyah Khumsar Scholarship, featuring text about merit-based scholarships and contact information.

Advertisement for Aashiyah Khumsar Scholarship, featuring text about merit-based scholarships and contact information.

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Waiting for the Day

The INDIA Alliance's spirited campaign has injected unpredictability into what initially seemed a straightforward contest

RIYAZ WANI

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The election is at a critical juncture. The INDIA Alliance's spirited campaign has injected unpredictability into what initially seemed a straightforward contest. As both sides grapple with complex voter sentiments, the final outcome remains uncertain, making this election one of the most closely watched in recent history

As the general election draws to a close, the outcome has become increasingly uncertain. Initially, the BJP appeared to be on a clear path to victory, due largely to the widespread popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. However, the dynamics seem to have shifted, albeit not entirely, due to the vigorous campaign led by the INDIA Alliance, a coalition of opposition parties led by the Congress.

The opposition's resurgence is evident in the campaign discourse, where their focus on pressing issues like unemployment and inflation has struck a chord with large sections of the electorate. But it may still fall short of getting the alliance across the line. Rahul Gandhi, the 53-year-old leader of the Congress party, has been drawing impressive crowds. A recent rally in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, attracted tens of thousands of attendees, reflecting a significant groundswell of support. Uttar Pradesh, with its 80 parliamentary seats, is crucial for any party aspiring to form the government. In the 2019 election, the BJP won 62 seats here, which significantly contributed to its overall tally of 302 seats.

The shift in voter sentiment is critical. During its previous term, the BJP implemented major constitutional and legal changes, including the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's semi-autonomous status, the introduction of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and the construction of a temple dedicated to pre-eminent Hindu deity Ram. These moves, aligning with the party's nationalist agenda, were initially well-received by the BJP's base. However, the lack of a clear wave in favor of the BJP this time suggests these actions might not suffice to galvanize the elec-



torate as before.

The INDIA Alliance's persistent focus on economic issues presents a formidable challenge to the BJP. Despite the saffron party's efforts to leverage nationalism, the opposition's narrative on economic hardships is gaining traction. This has introduced a significant degree of uncertainty into the electoral outcome. Modi's enduring popularity remains a formidable factor, yet even this seems to be providing only a marginal advantage for the BJP. More so, this time, when as against 2019, people have been less visible and vocal in the expression of their support.

The current election, therefore, represents an interesting moment for India. Swathes of the public are unhappy over the BJP's governance style, characterized by what some see as a plutocratic authoritarian approach. However, several factors might prevent this discontent from translating into votes.

Analysts are thus divided on the likely outcome. Yogendra Yadav, a renowned activist and psephologist,

predicts significant losses for the BJP, estimating they could fall short by 65 seats from their previous tally, leading the NDA to be 80 seats short. This scenario would force the BJP to seek coalition partners, unlike in 2019 when they secured a majority independently. Yadav's prediction, based on direct engagement with voters across states, resonates with several other analysts.

Conversely, political strategist Prashant Kishor offers a more favorable outlook for the BJP, suggesting they might match or slightly exceed their 2019 performance. Kishor's forecast, however, does not eliminate doubts about the BJP's footing. Observers interpret the BJP's increasingly divisive rhetoric as a sign of underlying challenges. The highly polarizing campaign has led to questions about whether the party is suffering losses.

The historical context adds another layer of complexity. In 2004, despite favorable exit polls, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government failed to secure a second term. Both

Yadav and Kishor have previously misjudged election outcomes, testifying to the unpredictability of Indian elections.

What sets this election apart is the BJP's struggle to control the narrative. Despite the party's polarizing statements, they have not succeeded in setting the agenda as they did in the past. As the election campaign nears its conclusion, the BJP's dominance seems less assured, yet the opposition's prospects remain uncertain.

The strident nationalist rhetoric that has characterized the BJP's past campaigns is present, but its effectiveness appears diminished. The BJP is not having an easy time this election, but whether the opposition will be able to capitalize on this is still an open question.

The election is at a critical juncture. The INDIA Alliance's spirited campaign has injected unpredictability into what initially seemed a straightforward contest. As both sides grapple with complex voter sentiments, the final outcome remains uncertain, making this election one of the most closely watched in recent history. The coming days will be crucial in determining whether the BJP can maintain its hold on power or if the opposition can leverage the public's economic concerns to secure a victory. The outcome of this election will significantly impact India's political future, setting the course for the nation's governance and policies in the years to come.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

The author is the Political Editor at Kashmir Observer

India's Growth Story And A Vision For 2047

Bibek Debroy, Aditya Sinha

India will mark 100 years of independence in 2047. Reflecting on the journey from 1947 to 2021, the celebrations of the 75th Independence anniversary, termed Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, set the tone for a future-focused India. The events that spanned from March 12, 2021, to August 15, 2023, were a prelude to the ambitious goals envisioned for 2047.

In his address from the Red Fort on August 15, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invoked the words of Swami Vivekananda from his speech "The Future of India", where he spoke of drawing strength from India's rich history to build a future of unparalleled greatness. Vivekananda's words, "Drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind, and after that, look forward, march forward and make India brighter, greater, much higher than she ever was", resonate with the ethos of India's journey towards its centenary of independence.

Predicting the exact state of India in 2047 is challenging, yet certain trends and aspirations can be projected based on current trajectories and indicators like GDP, per capita income, and other broader economic metrics.

The gross domestic product (GDP) remains a critical, albeit imperfect, measure of economic progress. As of 2024, India's per capita income stands at approximately \$2,700, with the purchasing power parity (PPP) per capita income around \$10,120. The aggregate size of India's GDP is about \$3.9 trillion (official exchange rates) and around \$14.6 trillion. These figures underline India's substantial economic footprint.

The Economic Survey of 2018-19 articulated a vision for India to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25, necessitating a real annual GDP growth rate of 8% alongside 4% inflation. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted this trajectory, effectively setting back India's economic progress by two years. Nonetheless, the aspirations remain, with a focus on achieving sustainable and inclusive growth.

Looking ahead to 2047, several economic and developmental projections can be made. By that year, India's per capita income is expected to reach at least \$10,000, with the economy's size approaching or exceeding \$20 trillion. Such growth will likely transition India from a lower-middle-income country to an upper-middle-income category, nearing high-income status. It will also bring about significant socio-economic changes, including a sharp decline in poverty levels and a substantial rise in human development indicators.

By 2047, India aims to transition from its current medium human development category, with an HDI value of 0.645, to a high human development

category. As of 2024, India's life expectancy is 70.8 years, the mean years of schooling is 6.5 years, and the GNI per capita (PPP) stands at \$10,120. By 2047, projections indicate life expectancy will exceed 78 years, mean years of schooling will rise to over 10 years, and GNI per capita (PPP) will surpass \$20,000. This progress will be driven by advancements in healthcare, educational reforms, and economic policies promoting industrialisation and the growth of the digital economy. Higher human development will reflect improved quality of life, attract foreign investment, and strengthen social equity, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Strategic investments in healthcare, education, and economic diversification, alongside effective governance, will be critical to achieving these targets, positioning India as a major global player with robust economic growth and social development.

Achieving this vision requires a comprehen-

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Tax reforms will be pivotal in propelling India towards its 2047 vision. A streamlined GST system that encompasses all goods and services, including traditionally exempted sectors such as petroleum, real estate, and alcohol, will significantly enhance economic efficiency. Implementing stable and predictable GST rates, ideally consolidated into three primary rates (6%, 12%, and 18%), will reduce compliance costs and curb unnecessary classification disputes and litigation. On the direct tax front, eliminating exemptions and broadening the tax base will enhance equity and compliance. This reform will prevent tax avoidance and ensure that all income categories contribute fairly to the national revenue, which is crucial for funding public services and infrastructure. Additionally, integrating personal and corporate taxation under a simplified, exemption-free regime will reduce complexities and litigation, fostering a more transparent and efficient tax environment. These comprehensive tax reforms are essential for increasing the tax-to-GDP ratio from the current 18% to a targeted 23%, providing the government with the necessary resources to invest in public goods and services, ul-

imately driving sustainable economic growth and social development.

Investment and export growth are critical for India's economic trajectory. Sustaining high investment rates, particularly in the private sector, is essential for driving economic expansion. As of 2024, India's gross fixed capital formation is approximately 28% of GDP, with private investment playing a significant role. Enhancing productivity, currently growing at about 5% annually, and leveraging the demographic dividend—where 62% of the population is in the working-age group—will further fuel this growth. However, this demographic advantage will begin to diminish post-2035, necessitating urgent action to maximise current opportunities. Increasing exports, which contribute around 20% to the GDP, is also vital. Policies focused on improving infrastructure, easing business regulations, and entering into beneficial trade agreements

are expected to boost exports and attract foreign direct investment (FDI), currently standing at approximately \$60 billion annually. Labour market reforms are also essential for driving productivity. As of 2024, India's labour force participation rate stands at approximately 46%, with female participation significantly lower at 23%. Increasing overall participation, particularly among women, is vital for harnessing the full potential of the workforce. Implementing skill development programs is crucial, given that 53% of the workforce lacks formal skill training. Formalizing the informal sector, which constitutes about 80% of employment, will improve job security and productivity. Efficient intermediation between labour supply and demand through technology-driven platforms can match skills with market needs, reducing unemployment and underemployment rates. By addressing these areas, India can improve its labour productivity growth from the current 5% annually to higher levels, contributing significantly to economic expansion.

land records through digital cadastral surveys will ensure transparent land use and reduce disputes. Streamlined land use policies will facilitate better planning and development. Empowering local governments is crucial.

Enhancing public expenditure efficiency is vital for maximising resource utilisation and achieving sustainable development. As of 2024, public expenditure accounts for approximately 27% of India's GDP. Prioritising expenditure based on clear cases of market failure and focusing on essential infrastructure and social services, such as health and education, will ensure better outcomes. Establishing a Public Expenditure Council, akin to the GST Council, can coordinate and rationalise spending across different government levels, enhancing effectiveness and reducing redundancies. Such a council would evaluate and prioritise expenditure programmes, ensuring that resources are allocated to the most impactful areas. This strategic allocation can improve infrastructure, with a current focus on projects like the Bharatmala and Sagarmala initiatives, and social services, ensuring broader access and quality. These measures will enhance the efficiency of public spending, contributing to higher economic growth and improved social indicators.

Privatisation and market reforms are essential for fostering a competitive economic environment. Implementing the New Public Sector Enterprise (PSE) Policy, which aims to reduce the number of sectors reserved for state enterprises to four, will drive efficiency and innovation. The current weighted average of MFN-applied tariff rates on manufactured products stands at 6.8%; rationalising import duties and reducing tariffs will enhance competitiveness. Lowering tariff barriers, particularly for raw materials and intermediate goods, will reduce production costs and boost exports. Privatising non-strategic PSEs will increase efficiency in sectors like telecommunications and aviation. Rationalising the number of sectors and focusing on critical areas such as defence and infrastructure will protect strategic interests while promoting private sector growth. These reforms are expected to attract greater FDI.

India's journey towards 2047 is one of transformation and opportunity. By embracing comprehensive reforms, fostering inclusive growth, and leveraging its demographic and economic potential, India can realise its vision of a prosperous, developed nation that celebrates 100 years of independence with pride and progress.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by NDTV.com

KASHMIR'S FOOTBALL FAD

Mohammad Hanief

Football is a game that millions of people around the world play and love. It can be called a universal game because every small and big nation plays it. Moreover, it's a great relaxer, stress reliever, teacher of discipline and teamwork. Apart from that, it keeps the body and mind fit and healthy. It's a team game that makes it a more enjoyable game as it teaches people the importance of sportsmanship, leadership, and unity.

The football game is gaining popularity among masses in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in Kashmir division. The emergence of some football players on national scene is a testimony to this fact.

The popularity of football in Kashmir Valley is witness to the passion and love of sports lovers. Despite all the challenges they face, people have embraced football and made it a part of their culture. Historically, Football has remained a popular game in Kashmir. That is the key reason, why the football matches draws huge audiences to the stands.

The history of football can be traced back to the ancient times of the Greeks. Everyone knows that the Greeks were great sportsmen and have invented many games.

Football happens to one of them. A similar game like football is played in many countries but the latest version of football that we knew originates in England. Likewise, England formulated the first rule of the game. From that day onwards the football has progressed in ways we can't imagine.

It was the autumn of 1891 when Mr Biscoe Tyndale returned from Bombay with Mrs. Tyndale Biscoe that amongst their luggage they brought a 'Football' the first thing boys of mission school had seen with great pleasure. When the Principal Tyndale Biscoe arrived at school at the set time and held up this football in the students view, it was expected it would evoke enthusiasm among students, but 'alas' it did not arouse any interest or pleasure or enthusiasm amongst the students.

Biscoe introduced the game to his students and was successful in organising the first ever football match in Srinagar. The sports gained popularity in the region and soon football clubs were made and tournaments were organised across the Valley.



Back in the day when the maharajas ruled Kashmir, football was a source of entertainment for the people after toiling all day at work. The accessibility of the game made it popular among the masses—all that was needed was a ball that they could chase in many fields.

It was all building up to what is considered the golden period of football in the Valley. Between 1976 and 1988, Kashmir hosted Junior and Senior Nationals, the All India University Championship, and tournaments for the civil services and the police, in addition to the Federation Cup.

But, in recent years, football has become even more popular in the valley. With the emergence of professional football clubs, such as Real Kashmir FC, the profile of the sport in the region has risen and Real Kashmir FC has become a household name in Kashmir.

From their warm hospitality to their passion for football, the only thing cold about Jammu and Kashmir is its winters. When you see youngsters practicing their skills tirelessly on cold mornings, you will warm up to the idea that there's a Kashmir that was hiding in the fog until now. There are no off-sides when it comes to football in Kashmir. It travers-

es all ideologies, communities, opinions and the shadows of political history. The only lines drawn here are on a green field pitching 11 versus 11 over a common goal.

To become a successful performer in a competitive field like football, players not only need to become players with exceptional skill but to understand football at its core. They have to develop tactical abilities and be highly dedicated to the game, giving an extensive amount of time to practice in order to improve gameplay and to understand the physiological requirements of the professional level of the sport.

In the backdrop of rising popularity of football in the Valley and players' interest in sweating out the game, the local authorities of Jammu and Kashmir are focusing on improving soccer facilities in the union territory.

Valley has had a craze for football since the 90s. There were some top football teams at the time, like JK Bank, JK Police, and SRTC. They would always be supported by a huge crowd during their matches.

Before Kakroo, players such as Mohammed Yousuf Dar and Farooq Ahmad Bhat had drawn a lot of attention from

the football fraternity. Teams such as the State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC, later just RTC) and Jammu and Kashmir Bank (J&K Bank) were considered the nursery of Kashmiri football, and enjoyed a lot of success in those days, despite the lack of anything in the way of quality infrastructure.

Since I-League matches are played in Srinagar, many talented youngsters from Kashmir Valley are coming forward and participating in I-League matches, which is a great thing. Such platforms like I-League where local players are getting opportunities to play with foreign players are helping in bringing back the craze of football among the youth of Kashmir Valley.

Breaking out the decades-old taboo, Kashmiri girls are now exploring the prospects of choosing football as a career. Just a few years back, there were no platforms for Kashmiri girls to learn and play football but with some positive change in the Kashmir valley, new football clubs are being opened to harness the raw talent of the young girl footballers.

But footballers from other parts of the world believe that there is a lot more to be done for football in Kashmir. There is a need to build more professional training centers here and invite players from outside to play here so that players from this region can learn and play together to enhance their skills in the game.

The union territory has a strong connection to football having produced many legendary soccer players like Abdul Majeed Kakroo, Mehraj ud Din Wadoo, Ishfaq Ahmed in the past. The improved level of facilities is a step towards inspiring more youths to join football matches and kick it off for a better future in the Valley.

Football is an important game from the point of view of the spectator as well as the player. This 90 minutes game is full of excitement and thrill. Moreover, it keeps the player mentally and physically healthy, and disciplined. And this ninety-minute game tests their sportsmanship, patience, and tolerance.

The popularity of football in Kashmir Valley is witness to the passion and love of sports lovers. Despite all the challenges they face, people have embraced football and made it a part of their culture.

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Delhi nears 50 degrees Celsius: What's causing extreme heat in capital?

Nisha Anand

Delhi on Tuesday nearly reached 50 degrees Celsius at three of its weather stations, highlighting the extreme heat wave conditions affecting northern India. The city's official weather station at Safdarjung recorded a temperature of 45.8 degrees Celsius. However, the outskirts of Mungeshpur, Narela, and Najafgarh reported temperatures above 49 degrees Celsius.

In Mungeshpur and Narela, 49.9 degrees Celsius was recorded. This is nine notches above the normal temperature for this time of the year. Najafgarh was recorded at 49.8 degrees Celsius, while Pitampura and Pusa recorded 48.5 degrees.

The extreme heat in Delhi has prompted the authorities to make the necessary arrangements to mitigate health risks like heatstroke and dehydration, heart strain among others.

Why is the temperature soaring in Delhi?

Experts have attributed headwaves from Rajasthan as a key contributing factor for the extreme heat in Delhi. Mahesh Palawat, vice-president of Meteorology and Climate Change at Skymet Weather said, "In open areas with vacant land, there is increased radiation. Direct sunlight and lack of shade make these regions exceptionally hot."

"Parts of Delhi are particularly suscep-



tible to the early arrival of these hot winds, worsening the already severe weather. Ar-

eas like Mungeshpur, Narela and Najafgarh are the first to experience the full force of

these hot winds," Kuldeep Srivastava, the regional head of the India Meteorological

Department (IMD) said.

How is heatwave measured?

A heatwave is declared over a region "when actual maximum temperature remains 45 degrees Celsius or more irrespective of normal maximum temperature," the Centre says.

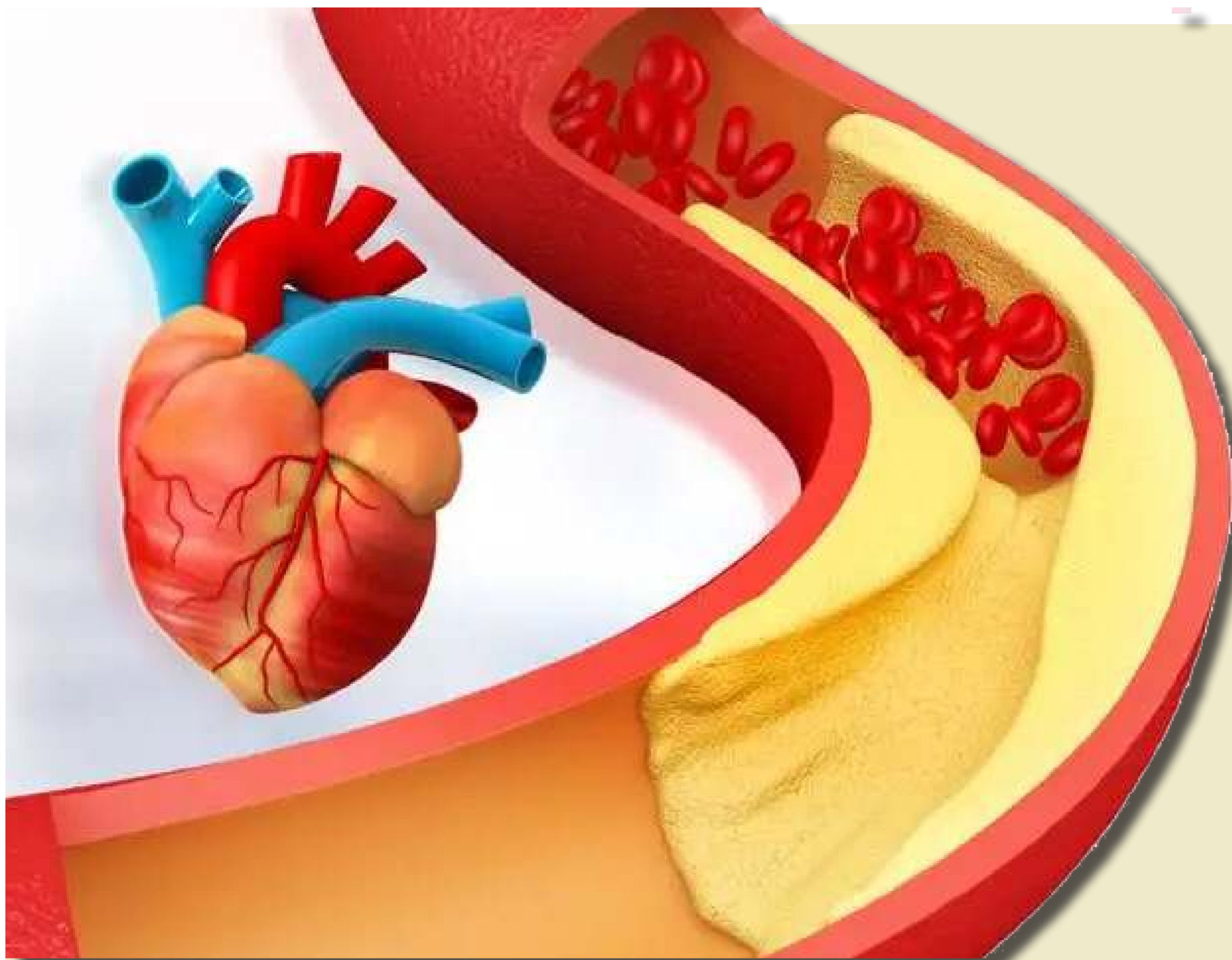
According to the IMD, a heatwave is declared "if the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40 degrees Celsius or more for plains, 37 degrees Celsius or more for coastal stations and at least 30 degrees Celsius or more for Hilly region" for two or more days.

IMD weather forecast for May 29

Other than Delhi, many places in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh also reported their highest maximum temperature for this season on Tuesday. In view of the conditions, the weather body has declared a red alert in the national capital, Haryana-Chandigarh, parts of Rajasthan, Punjab, UP and other north Indian cities till May 29.

Heat wave to severe heat wave conditions are likely to gradually reduce over central and northwest India from May 30, the weather body predicted, adding that warm night conditions will continue to prevail in Delhi and adjoining regions till June 2.

The article was originally published by Business Standard



Formed from DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, RNA converts information present in DNA into proteins involved in all bodily functions and processes. The RNA material present in the drugs binds with the RNA naturally present in the body and prevents it from making proteins known to play roles in regulating 'bad' cholesterol levels.

Studies Show Gene-Based Drugs To Lower Cholesterol In People With Naturally High Levels

Press Trust Of India

Gene-based drugs could help lower cholesterol levels in patients with naturally high levels of the lipid in their blood, according to new studies published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Researchers of the two studies said that the drugs can be given to patients by injection four times a year. The studies analyse the performance of two gene-based drugs, plozasiran and zodasiran, in early stage (phase-2b) clinical trials in terms of safety and efficacy.

These drugs are RNA-based, meaning they are made using small pieces of ribonucleic acid, which is present in all living organisms.

Formed from DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, RNA converts information present in DNA into proteins involved in all bodily functions and processes. The RNA material present in the

drugs binds with the RNA naturally present in the body and prevents it from making proteins known to play roles in regulating 'bad' cholesterol levels, the researchers explained.

While plozasiran helps limit the formation of the protein apolipoprotein C3, zodasiran reduces the production of the protein angiotensin-like 3 (ANGPTL3), according to the authors.

Both the drugs, developed by US-based Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals, were found to significantly lower triglyceride levels in patients with mixed hyperlipidemia, a congenital disease in which an individual has naturally higher levels of cholesterol and fat in their body. These patients were already taking cholesterol-lowering drugs, known as statins.

High triglyceride levels increase the chances of high 'bad' cholesterol in the body.

Plozasiran was trialled in a total of 353 participants, who were divided into cohorts. Two doses of 10 milligrams (mg), 25

mg, or 50 mg of plozasiran were administered once every 12 weeks or once every 24 weeks, the researchers said.

At week 24, triglyceride levels were found to have lowered by almost 50 per cent in the patients given the 10-mg-quarterly dose, whereas the levels were cut down by 56 per cent in the patients administered the 25-mg-quarterly dose.

Further, in the patients given the 50-mg quarterly dose, triglyceride levels fell by 62.4 per cent, while in the patients given the 50-mg-half-yearly dose, these levels fell by 44.2 per cent, the researchers found.

Zodasiran was trialled in a total of 204 participants. Eligible patients were randomly assigned to receive subcutaneous injections of the drug (50, 100, or 200 mg) or placebo on day 1 and week 12 and were followed through week 36.

At week 24, the researchers observed "substantial" lowering in levels of ANGPTL3 protein, lower levels of which are linked

with lower levels of cholesterol.

"Other differences in change from the baseline as compared with placebo included the following: for non-HDL cholesterol level, minus 29 percentage points with 50 mg, minus 29 percentage points with 100 mg, and minus 36 percentage points with 200 mg; and for LDL cholesterol level, minus 16 percentage points, minus 14 percentage points, and minus 20 percentage points, respectively," the authors wrote.

Zodasiran was also associated with lowered liver fat at week 24, with no adverse events related to liver function test changes reported so far, Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals said in a statement.

Further, plozasiran continued to show a favourable safety profile to date, according to the statement.

Arrowhead Pharmaceuticals develops RNA-based medicines for treating intractable diseases by silencing the genes that cause them, according to their website.



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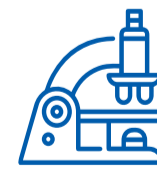
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