संवाद
BULLETIN
of Political Science Department
P.G.D.A.V. College, University of Delhi

Content

Message

Respected faculty members and students of the Department of Political Science, I am pleased to learn that the Department is about to launch its monthly newsletter. This academic initiative marks an important step towards fostering intellectual discourse within our college. True to its name, संवाद aims to bridge communication gaps and stands as a positive step in that direction.

In this age of information, establishing a monthly newsletter is not only appropriate but essential. I hope this newsletter will provide a platform to highlight developments in political discourse, academic achievements, and departmental activities, enriching the intellectual vibrancy of our college. This newsletter will be an informational resource and will serve as a platform for students and faculty to share their analyses, perspectives, and thoughts on contemporary political debates.

I am delighted that through this initiative, our students will develop their research and writing skills while staying attuned to shifts in the political landscape. By offering a platform for dialogue and exchange of ideas, this publication aligns with our commitment to analytical thinking, civic awareness, and academic development.

Prof. Krishna Sharma

Principal

It's a privilege to mark the launch of our monthly academic platform, the संवाद Bulletin, which reflects the collaborative intellectual engagements between mentors and mentees.

The inaugural volume cover aspects of Indian politics, foreign relations, and Indian political thought. I am sure, it would be a vantage point for involving trans-institutional scholarships in subsequent volumes.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all esteemed colleagues, the editorial board, and the student office bearers of Political Science Society for their commitment and support in anchoring this intellectual endeavour.

I wish the beginning of this platform gives ample academic space for forging creative knowledge processes of all hues.

Last but not the least I acknowledge and appreciate sincere institutional support of our Principal- Prof Krishna Sharma for providing such a platform for those who aspire, and are, invested in the enterprise of knowledge.

Prof. Abhay Prasad Singh

Teacher-in-Charge

Dialogue in the Rigveda: Foundations of Indian Intellectual Tradition

✎ **Bhanu Kumar**

On August 5, 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking via video conference at the "Samvad - Global Initiative on Conflict Avoidance and Environment Consciousness," emphasized that dialogue is the only way to break through deeply rooted religious stereotypes and prejudices that divide communities worldwide and foster conflict between nations and societies. He further stressed, "As the interconnected and interdependent world of the 21st century faces numerous global challenges, from terrorism to climate change, I am confident that solutions will be found through Asia's oldest traditions of dialogue and debate." Modi described himself as "a product of the ancient Indian tradition that firmly believes in dialogue on difficult issues." Given our Prime Minister's focus on the importance of dialogue since assuming office, it is our responsibility to research and present this concept to the current generation.

In this spirit, I have undertaken research on the concept of dialogue in the Rigveda, beginning with this article. I intend to continue this exploration, examining why dialogue is even more crucial today than it was in the past. Therefore, this article attempts to explore the concept of dialogue.

The Rigveda's 'संवाद सूक्त' occupy a pivotal space in early Indian texts, shedding light on ideological exchanges and internal debates within Vedic society. These hymns not only enrich our understanding of early Vedic thought but also reveal the formative role of dialogue in establishing normative views on divinity and authority within the Vedic educational and philosophical tradition. Approximately twelve hymns in the Rigveda explore philosophical themes, though their categorization as dialogue hymns remains complex due to a blend of rhetorical and dialectical forms.

Theological Exploration

A significant example of theological exploration appears in Rigveda VIII.100, where a conversation between the sage Bhargava and the god Indra introduces a tone of theological scepticism. The sage's inquiry, "There is no Indra; who has seen him? To whom should we address our song of praise?" raises doubts around divine authority, challenging Indra's position. Indra's response, "Here I am, O singer; look at me. I surpass all beings in greatness," serves as a rhetorical reaffirmation of divine supremacy, emphasizing his role within the Vedic hierarchy. Such dialogues reflect early shifts in ideological perspectives on the multiplicity of gods and the efficacy of rituals, suggesting developments within Rigvedic thought. myth and legend also serve as foundational

elements in these dialogues, creating narratives that underpin theological and social frameworks. Myth functions here as a codifying mechanism for belief systems and traditions, providing theological and cosmological explanations that solidify social norms and "sacred history."

Samvaad Suktas.

The Rigveda is particularly noted for its samvada suktas, or dialogic hymns, wherein exchanges unfold between various entities, animate and inanimate alike. These hymns represent early forms of Sanskrit literary expression, blending poetic and dramatic elements that later shaped Sanskrit poetics and dramaturgy. The samvada style, marked by expressive language and emotional nuance, became an influential mode for conveying philosophical ideas, acting as a precursor to Indian dramaturgy by merging historical narrative with poetic imagination. Dialogue, as a philosophical and reflective method, finds its earliest expression in the Rigveda, one of the world's oldest sacred and scientific texts. Far from being solely a religious text, the Rigveda is an intellectual archive that exemplifies the Indian tradition of inquiry, debate, and philosophical engagement. The dialogic structure, seen in exchanges between deities, sages, and cosmic forces, allows for a reflective and multi-perspective exploration of existence. A striking example is the Nasadiya Sukta (Hymn of Creation), which contemplates the origin of the cosmos with an openness that avoids definitive conclusions. This inquisitive approach exemplifies dialogue as a process where knowledge emerges through interaction rather than absolute assertion. The Rigveda contains twenty-two sections of Samvaad hymns, showcasing conversations among deities, sages, and natural forces in a collective search for wisdom. The 191st hymn in the tenth Mandala begins with::

संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसी जानताम्।

देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे सञ्जानाना उपासते।।

which calls for unity in the pursuit of wisdom, emphasizing harmony of intention and empathy in true dialogue. Such verses feature prominent figures like Indra, Vishvamitra, Aditi, and Yami, advancing philosophical discourses on existence and human conduct while affirming inclusivity. The Rigveda elevates dialogue beyond mere debate, positioning it as a profound method for seeking truth that fosters inclusivity and respect for diverse perspectives. This dialogic ethos, embodying the concept of samanvaya (harmony), supports a cultural framework that values multiple viewpoints as essential for a holistic understanding of truth. This approach set the foundation for philosophical and cultural traditions that would shape later Indian intellectual history, establishing dialogue as a vital means for knowledge and social harmony. In conclusion, today's interconnected world, where global challenges require collaborative solutions, this ancient tradition of dialogue remains highly relevant. It offers a model for intercultural and interfaith conversations that are essential for addressing complex issues such as climate change, social conflicts, and global inequalities, highlighting dialogue as a path to harmony and mutual understanding.

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Integral Humanism and its Relevance in Contemporary Times

✍ **R. Abimathi**

Integral Humanism is a socio – political philosophy proposed by Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay in 1965 with the aim of establishing a harmonious society for India, rooted in her cultural values. He advocated to look upon individual and society as an integrated whole, under a system that seeks to fulfil both material and spiritual needs through the aspects of mutual dependence and co – existence among all forms of life. Further, instead of having to choose between Western ideologies of capitalism and socialism, Upadhyay sought to identify a uniquely Indian approach to issues of economy and governance.

Origins and Purpose

Integral humanism traces its origins to the non – dualistic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, propounded by Adi Shankaracharya, which propagates the concept of oneness, or cosmic unity. Following this tradition, he believed that the individual is not limited to a singular 'I' but is also inseparably related to the plural 'we'. Therefore, integral humanism stresses on the organic relationship between an individual and society.

According to Upadhayay, for centuries India was focussed on driving away British rule, that Post – Independent India lacked a direction for its progress in the world. He claimed that Western ideologies like capitalism & socialism, often conflicted with the Indian cultural ethos, and believed in the need to scrutinise and improve upon them before adopting them as it is. At this crossroad, he proposed to identify a system rooted in Indian values that could address both individual needs and societal responsibilities while prioritizing cultural integrity and national identity.

The Four Purusharthas and Holistic View of Life

Upadhyay argued that unlike Western ideologies that focussed only on material progress and freedom of an individual, Integral Humanism emphasised on holistic development through the fulfilment of Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire), and Moksha (liberation). He viewed the progress of an integrated human being through the simultaneous progress of the body, mind, intellect and soul, and saw Dharma as the guiding principle to pursue them ethically.

Chiti and National Identity

"Chiti" in Upadhyay's Integral Humanism is the innate cultural soul of the nation, integrated with the values of Dharma, Mutual Cooperation, and Unity in Diversity. He defined Nation as a group of persons living with a goal, an ideal, and

a mission, looking upon a particular piece of land as motherland. According to him, Chiti is something the people with common consciousness of a national thought are born with, that drives the Nation to greatness. He proposed to align the national policies resonating with Chiti and believed that neglecting it could lead to disintegration of society and loss of identity.

The Akhand Mandlakar circle indicates how the development of the nation is a multidimensional aspect.

Society, State and Economy

Integral Humanism sees society as an organic and sovereign entity with its own "Self", which has been sustained and protected mutually by practicing Dharma, unlike a State which springs up from Social Contract theory. In Upadhyay's vision, the state plays a limited role of being the enabler rather than a controller. Its duty is to protect and maintain Dharma (law and order) and hence it cannot be NiDharn (without Dharma), or Dharmanirapekha (indifferent to Dharma).

According to him, in order to form an economic structure suited to national genius, there was a need to incorporate the ideals of Decentralization and Swadeshi. Through a balanced approach he emphasised on achieving a minimum standard of living for all while increasing the production of consumables and productive goods as per the carrying capacity of the environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Integral Humanism emerges as a timely framework to address the pressing social, political, and economic challenges of the contemporary era. This philosophy advocates for inclusive and sustainable development, challenging the unchecked consumerism and industrial expansion that often marginalize society's most vulnerable. Integral Humanism aligns with fundamental democratic ideals, promoting social equality, human rights, and respect for diverse faiths and castes. By fostering balanced use of labour, natural resources, and capital, this philosophy seeks to uphold human dignity across all social strata. Moreover, Integral Humanism suggests that embedding these principles within political thought could catalyse transformative reforms, reducing the sway of criminal and financial forces in governance. Emphasizing the foundational role of families and communities, Integral Humanism provides a holistic and enduring model for national development, presenting a pathway toward a more equitable and sustainable societal structure.

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Decoding the Bias: India's Experience with Global Indices

✍ **Dr. Pawan Singh**

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) released on October 10 has sparked widespread discussion in Indian media by ranking India 105th out of 136 countries. This positioning has reignited a long-standing debate about the biases that may underlie global indices, especially for countries with unique socio-political dynamics like India. Among critics of the GHI's methodology is economist Ashok Gulati, who argues that the index presents an inaccurate and overly negative portrayal of India's hunger and nutritional landscape. For instance, India's previous position of 107 in 2022 raised concerns over the GHI's approach, which relies heavily on limited surveys of only about 3,000 respondents and places significant weight on child health indicators such as stunting, wasting, and child mortality. These metrics, while important, reflect more than just food scarcity; they are also influenced by other factors like sanitation, healthcare, and education.

Critique of GHI Methodology

Gulati points out that the GHI does not account for India's major food security programs, such as the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKY), which provided free food to millions during the pandemic and still continue. He proposes that more inclusive metrics, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food balance sheets, could better illustrate India's achievements in combating hunger. Additionally, he advocates for adopting a multidimensional poverty index similar to that used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which could more accurately reflect India's complex socio-economic landscape.

The Role of Global Indices

This debate also highlights the broader issue of how global indices are created and used. Indices like the GHI, the Global Competitiveness Index, and the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) are often compiled by global think tanks like the World Bank and World Economic Forum, and they play a powerful role in shaping global opinion, affecting foreign investments, and influencing policy decisions. India's consistently low rankings in various indices, including the Democracy Index, Press Freedom Index, and Human Development Index (HDI), have led to concerns that these indices may overlook the specific needs and challenges of developing nations. For instance, the Democracy Index, which recently downgraded India to a "flawed

democracy," cites concerns over civil liberties and media freedom without fully considering the governance complexities in India's pluralistic society. Similarly, the 2023 World Press Freedom Index ranked India 161st, overlooking efforts to tackle misinformation and maintain social harmony.

Challenges of Standardized Metrics

Critics argue that these standardized metrics may reflect a Western-centric perspective that inadequately accounts for the social, cultural, and economic diversity in countries like India. This approach, which some describe as neo-colonial, risks creating a one-size-fits-all assessment that may misrepresent India's development. For example, India's Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, aimed at improving sanitation, and its commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070, often go underrecognized in global health and environmental assessments.

Towards Improved Methodologies

To enhance the credibility of global indices, Gulati and others suggest that they should prioritize transparency and contextual relevance, such as providing detailed methodological explanations and direct data sources. Various Indian and third-world scholars recommend moving beyond simple rankings to embrace more meaningful, context-sensitive measures that capture a country's specific progress and challenges. Rather than dismissing these rankings outright, countries like India could actively engage with them by addressing legitimate critiques while advocating for more inclusive frameworks that consider their distinct socio-economic and cultural contexts.

Conclusion

In sum, while global indices offer valuable perspectives on national progress, their reliance on standardized metrics often lacks the cultural and regional specificity needed to assess diverse countries accurately. By revising their methodologies to reflect the realities of pluralistic societies, ranking bodies could offer a more balanced view. This would not only promote fairer assessments of advancements but also support collaborative international development efforts.

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Onam: A Ten-Day Celebration of Harvest and Community in Kerala

✍ **Fatima Fidha**

Onam is an annual ten-day harvest festival celebrated in Kerala during the month of Chingam, which typically occurs between August and September. This vibrant festival highlights the importance of tradition and community, facilitating a collective celebration of cultural heritage and communal joy. As journalist V.S. Krishnan notes in the Times of India, Kerala's cultural essence contrasts sharply with its geographical representation; although the state may resemble a bitter gourd on a map, its culture is characterized by sweetness, natural beauty, and tranquil backwaters. During Chingam, homes are adorned with flowers, and individuals don new attire, collectively enhancing the festive atmosphere.

The Legend of King Mahabali

Onam commemorates the return of King Mahabali, a revered ruler known for his fairness and equitable treatment of all subjects. According to legend, the god Vamana, disguised as a dwarf, approached Mahabali and requested three paces of land. In an act of generosity, Mahabali consented, only to be astonished when Vamana expanded in size, covering the universe in two strides and placing his third step upon Mahabali's head. This act symbolizes liberation rather than conquest, permitting Mahabali to visit his people annually during Onam. The festival embodies Mahabali's spirit, welcoming his presence and reflecting the happiness and prosperity characteristic of Kerala.

Cultural Traditions and Celebrations

The Onam celebrations commence with the Thripunithura Athachamayam, a lively parade featuring elephants, drumbeats, folk dances, and women clad in traditional Kasavu sarees, complemented by men in Mundu, all paying homage to Lord Vishnu in his Vamana form. Families engage in creating Pookkalam, intricate flower carpets elaborated upon each day to honor Mahabali. Traditional events such as Vallamkali (snake boat races), Pulikali (a vibrant dance with bodies painted to resemble tigers), and Kummattikali (a colorful mask dance) serve to celebrate local folklore and cultural heritage.

Culinary Significance

Food plays a central role in the Onam festivities, culminating in a traditional vegetarian feast served on banana leaves. This elaborate meal consists of at least 26 dishes, potentially extending to 64, featuring delicacies such as rice, Sambar, Papad, Payarams, Pachadi, Olan, Rasam, Moru, Thorans, Sarkara upperi, puli, and Karippu kary. The act of sharing this meal symbolizes unity and fosters a sense of community

among participants.

Heritage and National Unity

Onam transcends regional and religious boundaries, uniting individuals across India's diverse population and aiding in reconciling current ethnic tensions. Urban spaces transform into festive gathering sites, strengthening community bonds and instilling hope for a brighter future. In an era where globalization often dilutes cultural distinctions, Onam serves as a poignant reminder of the necessity to preserve and celebrate ancient traditions while adapting to contemporary life. Each year, the festival reflects the values of Mahabali's reign, which emphasized equality, abundance, and shared joy.

Narayana Guru and the Philosophical Underpinnings of Onam

The festival extends beyond private celebrations; events such as long boat races have become significant cultural expressions during Onam. Over time, the festival has evolved into a national celebration, observed with great enthusiasm wherever Malayalis reside. As a harvest festival, Onam coincides with the bountiful yields of paddy, cashew, coconut, and bananas, symbolizing prosperity. This abundance is particularly evident during the feast, where Payasam, a southern variant of sweet kheer, holds a central place and is generously shared during social gatherings. Narayana Guru, a prominent advocate of Vedanta whose birthday coincides with the Onam season, emphasized the virtues of detachment embodied by King Mahabali, famously remarking, "Let us build a society where there is only one caste, one religion, and one God."

Economic Bonanza

According to Economic Times report , Onam has evolved into a significant economic event, with estimated expenditures during this period ranging from ₹10,000 crore to ₹20,000 crore. The economic impact of Onam is apparent across various sectors: the demand for new clothing drives anticipated sales exceeding ₹2,000 crore; traditional meals served on banana leaves bolster the catering industry, generating approximately ₹250 crore in a single day as families host elaborate feasts; gold jewellery remains a favoured gift, resulting in increased sales; the purchase of new electronics rises as families celebrate; and tourism peaks during Onam, benefiting the local tourism industry through an influx of visitors. This surge in spending invigorates local businesses and supports the economy, illustrating Onam's profound influence as a catalyst for economic growth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Onam is more than a festival; it is a celebration of life, culture, and community. It reinforces the values of unity, prosperity, and joy, reminding society of the significance of tradition in an ever-evolving world.

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Analysis of the 2024 Haryana Assembly Elections

✍ **Ashish Saini**

The 2024 Haryana Assembly elections provide a rich case study in democratic unpredictability, affirming the adage, "Democracy is full of surprises." Defying expectations and pre-election predictions, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged victorious with 48 seats in the 90-member assembly. This victory not only demonstrates the volatility of electoral politics but also underscores the complexities of voter behaviour, where the intersection of caste dynamics, party strategies, and the limitations of the First Past the Post (FPTP) system collectively shaped the outcome.

Socio-Political Landscape and Electoral Demographics

Haryana's socio-political landscape is characterized by distinct demographic groups that shape voting patterns and party strategies. With a population of around 2.8 crore, Haryana comprises significant caste-based groups: Jats (25%), Dalits (22%), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) (40%). These groups hold considerable influence, with marked regional variations—such as the predominance of Jat voters in the Rohtak-Sonipat belt and Dalit support concentrated in the Ambala region.

The 2024 election saw the BJP secure an unprecedented third consecutive term, marking the first time since Haryana's formation in 1966 that any party has achieved this feat. By appointing Nayab Singh Saini, an OBC leader, as Chief Minister, the BJP strategically tapped into OBC and Dalit voter bases to broaden its appeal. This move helped the BJP increase its vote share despite anti-incumbency challenges, reflecting a calculated shift toward caste-inclusive politics that consolidated the party's electoral strength. The Congress, although optimistic following its success in the Lok Sabha elections (where it won five out of Haryana's ten seats), ultimately secured 37 assembly seats. The election also signified the decline of smaller regional players, with BJP and Congress capturing nearly four-fifths of the total vote share. This significant concentration reflects a shift toward a bipolar political structure in Haryana, mirroring broader trends in India's evolving electoral landscape.

Structural and Strategic Determinants of Electoral Success

The BJP's electoral dominance can be attributed to a combination of structural electoral mechanics and strategic maneuvering. With a nearly equivalent vote share to Congress (39.9% versus Congress's 39%), the BJP's seat advantage (48 vs. 37) illustrates the distortions inherent in the FPTP system. This electoral framework can amplify slight vote differentials, yielding

disproportionate seat distributions—a phenomenon seen in the BJP's more efficient voter distribution across key constituencies.

Strategically, the BJP successfully mitigated internal dissent and harnessed extensive outreach efforts to consolidate OBC support, which constitutes 40% of the state's population. By positioning Nayab Singh Saini, an OBC leader, as the Chief Minister, the BJP strengthened its OBC appeal, while its non-Jat focus enabled it to widen its voter base. Furthermore, by engaging Dalit voters—traditionally fragmented across party lines—the BJP broadened its cross-caste appeal. Unlike rival parties that primarily focused on the Jat vote, the BJP's approach encompassed a more inclusive demographic reach, thereby transcending entrenched caste divisions. Additionally, the party capitalized on its governance record to counter anti-incumbency sentiments, mobilizing resources and effectively communicating its policies through a robust ground-level network.

Congress's Strategic Missteps

The Congress's underperformance, despite a favorable vote share, underscores a series of strategic oversights. The party's decision not to form alliances with other I.N.D.I.A. bloc members may have cost it crucial support in tight races. Additionally, the marginalization of key Dalit leaders, such as Kumari Selja, coupled with an over-reliance on the Hooda family, limited its reach beyond core Jat constituencies. While Congress attracted a significant portion of the Jat vote—approximately 25% of Haryana's population—this support was undermined by competition from independent Jat candidates and internal party rebels, which fragmented votes and led to multipolar contests. Moreover, Congress struggled to effectively communicate its OBC empowerment message, failing to connect with OBC voters who comprise a critical segment of the electorate. Insufficient micro-level planning, inconsistent candidate selection, and a lack of on-the-ground organizational cohesion further hindered Congress's competitiveness. Compared to the BJP's well-coordinated outreach and resource mobilization, Congress's decentralized strategy failed to resonate with voters in key constituencies.

Conclusion

The 2024 Haryana Assembly elections underscore the complex interplay of caste alignments, electoral mechanics, and strategic party behavior in determining electoral outcomes. The BJP's third consecutive victory reflects the efficacy of adaptive strategies in a state where caste diversity demands nuanced political engagement. Conversely, Congress's performance highlights the risks of fragmented leadership and strategic miscalculations in a competitive electoral environment. In sum, the election results reveal the ways in which Haryana's political landscape is evolving, offering insights into broader national trends toward political duopoly and the importance of inclusive, data-driven strategies in India's democratic processes.

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An Analysis of the 2024 Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Elections

✍ **Hemant Yadav**

Elections are fundamental to democratic governance, allowing citizens to shape the policies and decisions that define the state. While all elections hold importance, some attract heightened attention due to their unique socio-political context. The 2024 legislative assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir were one such case, marking the first assembly election since the revocation of Article 370 and the transformation of Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory. This reorganization, initiated by the central government in August 2019, redefined Jammu and Kashmir's relationship with the central government, significantly elevating the symbolic and political weight of these elections.

Article 370: A Catalyst for Progress and Prosperity

The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 has ushered in substantial benefits for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. As we approach the 2024 elections, a crucial question arises: will the electorate view these elections as an implicit referendum on the central government's landmark decision, or will local issues take precedence in shaping voter behaviour? The central government firmly asserts that the revocation of Article 370 has resulted in significant socio-economic advancements, including a surge in tourism, robust economic development, and a notable decrease in militant activities. These positive changes highlight the government's commitment to restoring peace and stability in the region. In contrast, opposition parties have attempted to undermine this progress, criticizing the approach taken during the revocation of Article 370. They argue that the decision was made without local consent and that it has led to an infringement of civil liberties. Claims of curfews, internet shutdowns, and restrictions on freedom of movement and expression have been used to paint a grim picture of life in the Kashmir Valley. However, it is essential to recognize that these necessary measures were implemented to ensure security and facilitate a conducive environment for development. The focus should remain on the tangible benefits that have emerged since the abrogation, reinforcing the notion that the central government's decisive actions are paving the way for a brighter future for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Fair and Peaceful Elections

Given the sensitive security environment and the complex political backdrop, the Election Commission

took measures to ensure that polling was conducted peacefully and fairly. Regardless of the electoral outcome, the high level of citizen participation underscored a strong democratic resilience in the region. Voter turnout reached 63.9%, notably higher than the recent Lok Sabha elections, demonstrating a broad commitment to democratic rights. Districts like Srinagar, Pulwama, Shopian, and Baramulla saw historically high voter turnout, a marked shift after decades of lower participation in these areas.

Public Mandate

The election results revealed a decisive public mandate. The I.N.D.I. Alliance, consisting of the National Conference, Indian National Congress, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), emerged as the largest bloc, securing 49 of the 90 seats. This success is attributed to National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, who campaigned on a balanced platform advocating for the restoration of Article 370 while focusing on critical local concerns, including unemployment, poverty alleviation, and social welfare. This dual approach resonated with a diverse range of voters, especially those who desired both economic development and regional autonomy. In contrast, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) obtained 29 seats, suggesting a decrease in its regional influence. Mehbooba Mufti's People's Democratic Party won only 3 seats, and Sajjad Gani Lone's Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference gained 1 seat, reflecting a voter preference for local issues and regional identity.

Naya Kashmir's vision

The priorities expressed by voters illustrate a complex interplay between support for the central government's "Naya Kashmir" vision, which emphasizes national security, and the opposition's emphasis on regional autonomy. This dynamic underscores the tension between regional aspirations and national policy priorities. As Jammu and Kashmir transitions into this new phase, the efficacy of the newly elected administration in fulfilling its electoral promises will be essential. The administration faces substantial challenges in addressing the region's diverse issues while fostering inclusive governance that honours Jammu and Kashmir's historical and cultural uniqueness.

Beyond Electoral Outcomes

Conducting free, fair, and peaceful elections with high public participation is a significant achievement beyond just the electoral outcomes. For the BJP-led central government, holding these elections in a politically challenging environment is commendable, regardless of the results. In Jammu and Kashmir, the story is greater than any single political party—it reflects the resilience of the people, their commitment to democracy, and their continued hope for peace, effective governance, and self-determination. This election symbolizes the strength of democracy and the potential for inclusive governance in Jammu and Kashmir's shifting political landscape.
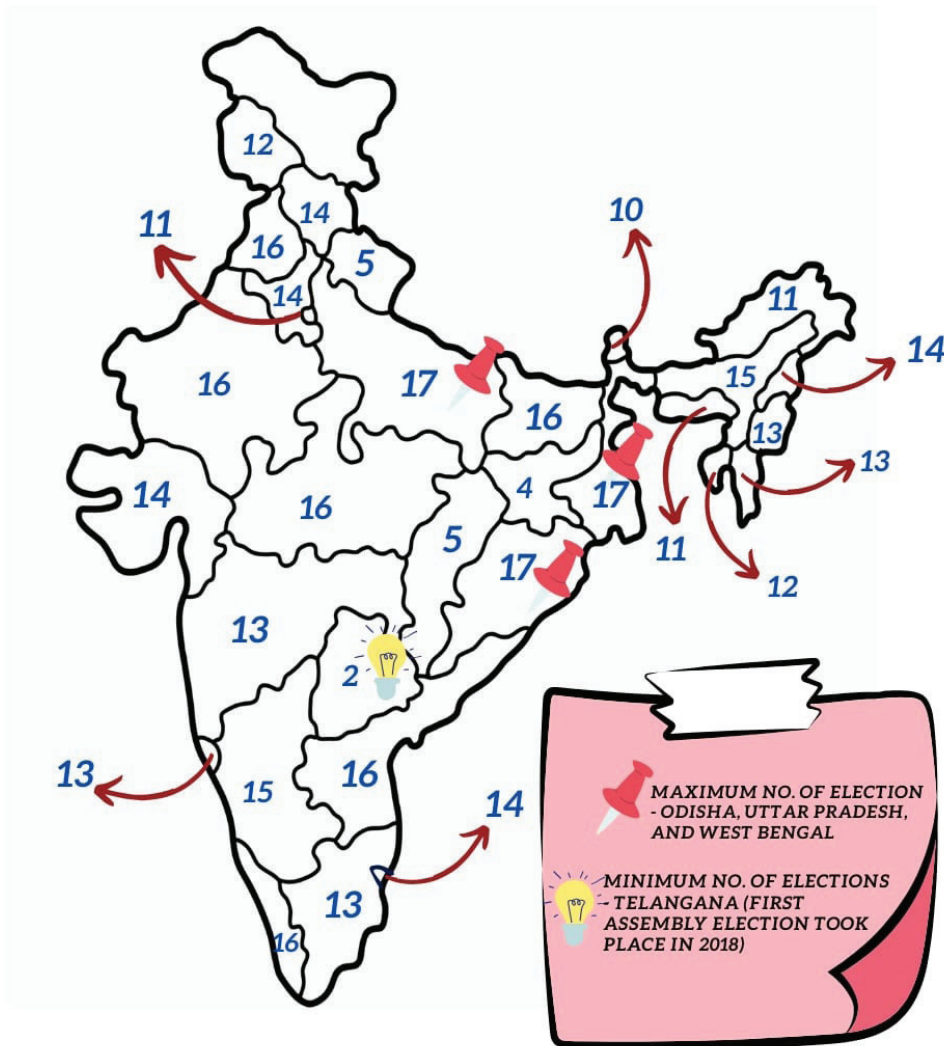
Data Insights

✍ **Prepared by Student Editorial Board**

STATES/UNION TERRITORIES	TOTAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS	FIRST ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS
Andhra Pradesh	16	1955
Arunachal Pradesh	11	1978
Assam	15	1951
Bihar	16	1951
Chhattisgarh	5	2003
Goa	13	1967
Gujrat	14	1962
Haryana	14	1967
Himachal Pradesh	14	1951
Jammu and Kashmir	12	1962
Jharkhand	4	2005
Karnataka	15	1957
Kerala	16	1957
Madhya Pradesh	16	1951
Maharashtra	13	1962
Manipur	13	1967
Meghalaya	11	1972
Mizoram	13	1972
Nagaland	14	1964
Odisha	17	1951
Punjab	16	1951
Rajasthan	16	1951
Sikkim	10	1979
Tamil Nadu	13	1967
Telangana	2	2018
Tripura	12	1967
Uttar Pradesh	17	1951
Uttarakhand	5	2002
West Bengal	17	1951
Delhi	11	1951
Puducherry	14	1964

This data chart presents a yearly overview of total assembly elections in Indian states and Union Territories. Most states have conducted 10 to 17 elections, reflecting a strong commitment to democracy. Older states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Rajasthan began elections in 1951, showcasing their extensive electoral history, while newer states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Uttarakhand have fewer elections due to their recent formation. There have been 18 general elections in the country, exceeding the number of assembly elections in any single state.

NUMBER OF ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS ACROSS STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES

India-Maldives: Strengthening Economic and Maritime Partnership

✍ **Mukul Anand**

On October 7, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu convened in Hyderabad House in New Delhi, marking a significant step in bilateral relations following recent diplomatic tensions. The five – day diplomatic visit included talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, focusing on reinforcing economic cooperation and maritime security, leading to several key agreements.

Trade, Development and Economic Cooperation

Recognizing untapped potential in bilateral trade, the leaders agreed to explore a Bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and to conduct trade in local currencies to reduce reliance on foreign currency exchanges. India and Maldives aim to enhance investment and economic linkages, particularly through tourism promotion and closer collaborations between business chambers aligning with Maldives' diversification goals.

Catering to partnership on infrastructural development the Greater Malé Connectivity Project and Thilafushi commercial port, alongside social housing initiatives and airport expansion plans, India demonstrates her commitment to Maldives' economic diversification and development.

In the economic sphere, India announced substantial financial support through a bilateral currency swap agreement worth USD 400 million and INR 30 billion. The State Bank of India's decision to roll over USD 100 million in treasury bills provided crucial fiscal stability to the Maldives.

Maritime Security and Defence Cooperation

Acknowledging the strategic importance of maritime security in the Indian Ocean, India committed to supporting the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) through asset provisions, training, and infrastructure improvements, including the timely completion of the 'Ekatha' harbour project. Joint measures to tackle piracy, illegal fishing, and other maritime threats will enhance both countries' security. Additional support will include radar systems and cooperation in hydrography and disaster response capabilities, reinforcing stability in the region.

Digital, Energy, and Health Initiatives

Both leaders agreed on the transformative potential of digital and energy cooperation. India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and RuPay systems are set to launch in the Maldives, enhancing tourism-related transactions and everyday commerce. In energy, the Maldives welcomed India's assistance in renewable energy projects, particularly solar, to lower energy costs and help meet climate goals. On the healthcare front, India offered infrastructure investments, affordable generic medicines, and medical training programs to support the Maldives in building resilient healthcare services.

People-to-People Ties and Regional Cooperation

Cultural and educational exchanges form the backbone of the India-Maldives relationship, with both nations committing to deepening people-to-people connections. New consulates, enhanced travel routes, and expanded education initiatives aim to strengthen these ties. Additionally, as founding members of the Colombo Security Conclave, India and Maldives reaffirmed their commitment to a stable Indian Ocean region, promoting collaborative maritime and security strategies.

Through the establishment of a new High-Level Core Group, India and Maldives intend to track the implementation of these shared priorities, advancing a strategic partnership that reflects mutual goals for security, development, and regional harmony. In essence, India and Maldives are embarking on a revitalized partnership that strengthens economic ties, enhances maritime security, and deepens people-to-people connections. This collaboration reflects a shared vision for stability and growth in the Indian Ocean region, reinforcing both countries commitment to regional peace and prosperity.

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Academic Session 2024: A New Era for Samvaad

✑ **Sangini Singh**

In the academic session 2024-25, Samvaad, the student-run Political Science Society, has entered a new era of transformation. This session has witnessed a complete restructuring of Samvaad's organizational framework. Previously, the society had roles like President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Joint-Secretary, organized in a top-down hierarchy. Traditionally, third-year students held the President role, with second-year students serving as Vice President and Secretary.

Constitutional Mandate for Samvaad :

Under the new system, a 30-member legislature has been introduced, comprising students from all three years in equal representation. Members of the legislature were chosen through a group discussion-based selection process, in which participating students, former office bearers, and faculty members collectively scored participants. Based on these scores, legislature members were elected, and from among them, those with the highest scores and relevant expertise were appointed to the Executive Department. The work was divided into ten departments, with third-year students as Executive Heads,

second-year students as Associate Heads, and first-year students as Assistant Heads, each taking on specific departmental responsibilities. This new approach aims to foster a democratic and transparent operation of Samvaad's activities. In support of these changes, faculty members have prepared a constitution for Samvaad, which incorporates majority rule for any amendments. Following this constitution, the legislature was elected through group discussions on September 25, and the executive committee was formed thereafter.

New Initiatives for Student Engagement:

To increase student involvement, the Executive Members and faculties have initiated a writing activity, inviting students to submit essays on notable personalities, which are then shared on social media. On relevant commemorative days, students contribute articles on well-known figures, which are reviewed by faculty and Samvaad officials, and a final selection is posted on social media. Each month, the authors of selected pieces are honoured for their contributions. The following articles, Mahatma Gandhi: The Architect of Nonviolent India by Bhawesh Binwal, Kahani Abdul Kalam Ki by Khushi, Avul

Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam: Journey from Rameshwaram to the Stars by R. Abimathi, and Sardar Patel: The Iron Man of India by Nakul were posted on social media."

Samvaad Events in October:

After taking office on September 26, Samvaad organized an orientation event on October 4, 2024, in celebration of Gandhi Jayanti and Lal Bahadur Shastri Jayanti. This event was held in the college's Old Seminar Hall, with Principal Prof. Krishna Sharma, Teacher-in-Charge Prof. Abhay Prasad Singh, faculty members, first-year students, and members of the Samvaad legislature in attendance. Samvaad also hosted an formal gathering, along with an honour ceremony for alumnus Gaurav Verma, who was recently appointed as a judge in the Haryana Judicial Service on October 24. The event was attended by the Principal, Teacher-in-Charge, faculties, and students. Overall, Samvaad has been progressing steadily towards its mission since the beginning of this term.

Friday Talk Series:

The Friday Talk series has been one of Samvaad's popular programs, though it was on hiatus last year. Recognizing its significance, Samvaad has reintroduced the series this year and established a dedicated department for its management. Mukul Anand has been appointed to lead this department as a Executive Head, and the first Friday Talk of the term was held on India-Maldives Relation of October 18, with the Teacher-in-Charge, faculty, and students in attendance.

Legislature Meetings:

In keeping with Samvaad's commitment to democratic processes, all society activities are approved by consensus within the legislature. The first meeting of the legislature was held on October 3, where upcoming plans were reviewed and approved by majority consensus. In the second meeting on October 24, reports of completed activities were presented, and future plans were reviewed and agreed upon. Through these structured discussions, Samvaad's members have recognized the importance of democratic principles in ensuring the society's success and fostering a sense of collective ownership among students.

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SAMVAAD 2024

Members of the Legislative Body:

Sr. No.	3rd Year	2nd Year	1st Year
1.	Muskan Ahmed	Nakul	Harshit Nailwal
2.	Roqaiya	Krishan Kumar	Vaedahi Rani
3.	Sangini	Rashi	Aditya Gaba
4.	Muskan Kumari	Navya	Supriya jha
5.	Deepak Yadav	Sidra Rahman Siddiqui	Vanshika
6.	Mukul Anand	Arshad Malik	Simran
7.	Sana Usman	M. Vignesh	Pinki Jha
8.	Ashutosh	Bhawesh Binwal	Kanak Saini
9.	Anshika	Vacant	Anirudh singh
10.	Vacant	Vacant	Nisha Bhorani
11.			Soni

Executive Members with Their Portfolios

Departments	Executive Head	Associate Head	Assistant Head
PUBLIC RELATIONS (PR), ALUMINI COORDINATION & COORDINATOR	Sangini Singh	krishan	Aditya
ANCHORING AND STAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM & EVENT MANAGEMENT TEAM	Roqaiya	Arshad	Harshit
CREATIVE TEAM & BUGDET MANAGEMENT TEAM	Muskan Ahmed	Nakul	Vanshika
SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM & PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM	Deepak Yadav	Vignesh	Simran
TOUR MANAGEMENT TEAM & FRIDAY TALK MANAGEMENT TEAM	Mukul Anand	Rashi	Anirudh

स्वच्छ भारत मिशन :एक दशक यात्रा

✍ **Khushi**

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी और सबसे सफल सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य पहलों में से एक है। इसे 10 साल पूरे हो चुके है। जो इसके सफलता का सबसे बड़ा द्योतक है। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने 15 अगस्त, 2014 को लाल किले के प्राचीर से इस अभियान की घोषणा की थी। इसके बाद 2 अक्टूबर, 2014 को इसे देश भर में राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन के रूप में शुरू किया। यह अभियान ने भारत में स्वच्छता को क्रांति में बदल दिया।जिसका सबसे अधिक लाभ आम जनों को हुआ। 12 करोड़ से अधिक शौचालयों का निर्माण किया गया है। लगभग ढाई लाख से अधिक सार्वजनिक स्थानों पर भी शौचालयों का निर्माण इस अभियान के अंतर्गत हुआ है। इस अभियान का व्यापक प्रभाव शिशु मृत्यु दर को कम करने में देखा गया है। आज महिलाओं की स्वास्थ्य और सुरक्षा में सुधार करके, इस अभियान ने भारतीयों के जीवन पर गहरा प्रभाव डाला है। 'स्वच्छ भारत अभियान' की घोषणा करते हुए, प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा था : 'स्वच्छ भारत 2019 में महात्मा गांधी की 150वीं जयंती पर भारत द्वारा उन्हें दी जाने वाली सबसे अच्छी श्रद्धांजलि होगी।'

ऐसा नहीं था कि भारत में स्वच्छता की अवधारणा बाद में आई, भारत के प्राचीन ग्रंथ, सामाजिक व्यवस्था और मंदिर संस्कृति की परंपराएं स्वच्छता की भारतीय धारा की गवाह हैं। हां, यह कह सकते हैं कि बाद के दिनों में भारतीय स्वच्छता सिर्फ 'व्यक्तिगत स्वच्छता' तक सीमित रह गयी थी। शायद ही कोई भारतीय घर होगा, जहां रोज झाड़ू ना लगती हो। स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के पहले होता यह था कि झाड़ू लगती तो थी, लेकिन कूड़ा गली में या सड़क पर या सार्वजनिक जगहों पर फेंक दिया जाता था। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के शुरू करने के बाद इस सोच में बदलाव आया है। लोगों का ध्यान सार्वजनिक स्वच्छता पर जाने लगा।इस प्रकार स्वच्छ भारत अभियान का यह पहला कदम था। महात्मा गांधी ने कहा था, 'मैं किसी को भी अपने दिमाग से गंदे पैर लेकर नहीं गुजरने दूंगा।' इस दर्शन पर चलते हुए प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने स्वच्छ भारत अभियान शुरू करते हुए कहा था, 'न मैं गंदगी करूंगा, न मैं गंदगी करने दूंगा।' स्वच्छ भारत अभियान को कामयाब बनाने में अन्य योजनाएं जैसे मिशन अमृत,नमामि गंगे परियोजना, गोवर्धन योजना,भूजल योजना, सिंगल यूज प्लास्टिक, उदिता योजना जैसी अन्य योजना का भी योगदान रहा है। स्वच्छ भारत अभियान से अधिसंख्य लोगों ने प्रेरणा ली है।

अभियान की एक दशक की यात्रा में खुले में शौच की कुप्रथा तकरीबन खत्म हो गयी है। हाल में विश्व प्रसिद्ध पत्रिका 'नेचर' में स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के बाद आये बदलावों पर एक लेख छपा था। यह आलेख कैलिफोर्निया विश्वविद्यालय के अंतरराष्ट्रीय खाद्य नीति अनुसंधान संस्थान और ओहायो स्टेट यूनिवर्सिटी के एक शोध पर आधारित है। इससे पता चलता है, कि खुले में शौच की कुरीति खत्म होने और शौचालय क्रांति से देश में शिशु मृत्यु दर में कमी आयी है। शोध पत्र में कहा गया है कि हर वर्ष करीब 60 से 70 हजार शिशुओं की मृत्यु रोकने में सफलता मिली है। 2000 और 2015 के बीच की तुलना में बाद के वर्षों में शिशु मृत्यु दर में 10 प्रतिशत तक की गिरावट आयी। साल 2014 में शिशु मृत्यु दर जहां 39 अंक थी, वह साल 2020 में घटकर 28 रह गयी।

स्वच्छता अभियान की सफलता की कहानी विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन की एक रिपोर्ट भी कहती है, जिसके अनुसार, स्वच्छता अभियान के चलते 2014 से 2019 के बीच डायरिया से होने वाली मौत के करीब तीन लाख मामले कम हुए। खुले में शौच की कुरीति खत्म होने से हर परिवार के स्वास्थ्य पर होने वाले करीब 50 हजार रुपये सालाना के खर्च की बचत हुई है। इसके साथ ही भूजल की गुणवत्ता भी पहले की तुलना में बेहतर हुई है। शौचालय क्रांति के चलते अब करीब 93 प्रतिशत महिलाएं ज्यादा सुरक्षित महसूस करती हैं, क्योंकि अब उन्हें शौच के लिए बाहर नहीं जाना पड़ता परंतु, स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के दौरान कुछ चुनौतियों का भी सामना करना पड़ा जैसे :–सांस्कृतिक तथा व्यवहारगत प्रथाओं को बोलने में कठिनाई।शहरी क्षेत्र में ठोस अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन और अपशिष्ट जल उपचार का मुद्दा।अभियान की जानकारी को दूर दराज के क्षेत्र तथा पिछड़े समुदायों तक पहुंचाना में मुश्किले। स्वच्छता अवसंरचना की स्थिरता सुनिश्चित करना।शौचालयों में गुणवत्ता की कमी।लोगों को स्वच्छता के बारे में जानकारी या शिक्षा का अभाव। शहरी क्षेत्रों में सीवरेज का प्रबंधन। विभिन्न चुनौतियों के बावजूद भी स्वच्छ भारत अभियान भारत के लिए सदैव एक सफलतापूर्वक अभियान होगा।स्वच्छ भारत अभियान को लेकर भविष्य में निम्नलिखित संभावनाएं हैं, स्वच्छ भारत अभियान से देश की छवि सुधरेगी और पर्यटन को बढ़ावा मिलेगा, जो देश के विकास के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है। इस अभियान से देश में स्वच्छता संबंधी आदतें अपनाने में मदद मिलेगी। स्वच्छ भारत अभियान से ग्रामीण इलाकों में जीवन की गुणवत्ता में सुधार होगा। इससे पर्यावरण अनुकूल स्वच्छता की अवधारणा को बढ़ावा मिलेगा। इससे स्वास्थ्य और स्वच्छता संबंधी मुद्दों के प्रति जागरूकता बढ़ेगी। इस प्रकार स्वच्छ भारत अभियान हमारे देश के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम होगा, जिसकी भारत में ही नहीं संपूर्ण विश्व में सराहना की जाएगी। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी को स्वच्छ भारत अभियान के लिए बिल एंड मेलिंडा गेट्स फाउंडेशन द्वारा 24 सितम्बर 2019 को 'ग्लोबल गोलकीपर' पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया था। इस प्रकार हम कह सकते कि स्वच्छ भारत अभियान को संपूर्ण रूप से सफलतापूर्वक बनाने के लिए हमें निरंतर कार्य करने की आवश्यकता है, जिससे हम महात्मा गांधी जी और देश के प्रत्येक नागरिक के स्वच्छ भारत का सपना साकार कर सके।

We invite our dear readers to write articles for the next edition of the newsletter. Articles should include footnotes with authentic sources. The topics for the upcoming edition will cover the US election, the politics of indices, policy analysis, and other contemporary issues.