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Election Commission of India ✓ added



2 new photos.

21 h •



As per the Article 54, the President is elected by an Electoral College consisting of elected MP of LS/RS and elected MLAs of the Legislative Assemblies of all States including NCT of Delhi and Puducherry.

Value of Votes



Total Number of Electors

MPs – 776
MLAs – 4,033
Total – 4,809

Total Value of Votes

MPs – 5,43,200
States – 5,43,231
Total – 10,86,431

Related Constitutional Provisions:

- Article 54: Election of President
- Article 55: Manner of election of President.
- Article 56 :Term of office of President
- Article 57: Eligibility for re-election.
- Article 58: Qualifications for election as President

With reference to the election of the President of India, consider the following statements: (upsc 2018)

The value of the vote of each MLA varies from State to State.

The value of the vote of MPs of the Lok Sabha is more than the value of the vote of MPs of the Rajya Sabha.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Net zero emission: Assam's possible role



■ Barun Barpujari

India has committed to a headline-grabbing target of achieving net zero emission by 2070, thereby joining major economies like the US, the UK, China, the EU, Japan and an expanding group that have pledged to achieve net zero status within a certain time line. For India, it is certainly an ambitious and challenging prospect given the fact that its economy is at present heavily dependent on coal, which constitutes nearly 70 per cent of its energy mix, its need to lift its burgeoning population out of poverty, an aspirational middle-class and the fact that at present it is the world's third biggest emitter.

Experts have pointed out that the new set of climate pledges outlined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the world platform at the COP 26 at Glasgow is not an endpoint to India's energy transition. Rather, it's the start of a much more challenging journey to get the country ready for decarbonisation of an unprecedented scale.

As its population rises and living standards improve, India is also poised to undergo sharp growth in areas that are particularly hard to decarbonise, such as the construction sector. The International Energy Agency (IEA) says that "nearly 60 per cent of its emissions in the late 2030s will be coming from infrastructure and machines that do not exist today".

India has also pledged to increase the existing non-fossil fuel energy capacity target to 500 GW by 2030, up from the earlier 450 GW target. The Prime Minister also announced that by 2030, 50 per cent of India's electricity will be from renewable sources, and carbon

emissions will be one billion tonnes lower compared with current growth projections. This would be consistent with the government's announcement of an enhanced emissions intensity target, or a reduction of emissions produced for every unit of GDP of 46-48 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, up from 33-35 per cent by the same date.

Is achievement of these targets within the realm of possibility? At the time of the Paris Agreement in 2015, India had pledged to raise its renewable energy capacity to 175 GW by 2022. While in all probability the target shall not be met, India is close to achieving 70 per cent of the target. The 100 GW mark has been breached which very few had thought would be possible! The journey forward will be tougher and will call for the Central and

state governments coming together to draw up strategies and also enact enabling policies to facilitate the decarbonisation efforts.

India is placing production of green hydrogen at the centre stage of its efforts and is aiming to become the global hub of its production and exports. Other thrust areas include ambitious levels of solar and wind power generation, decarbonising automotive fuels - petrol (target to incorporate 20 per cent ethanol advanced to 2025 from 2030) and 5 per cent of biodiesel in diesel by 2030, etc. However, it is incumbent upon each state of the country to join in this national effort and ensure that the challenging target is achieved.

We owe this to posterity.

Assam and the other north-eastern states are at the early end of the infrastructure development spectrum and sectors such as construction are particularly difficult to decarbonise. However, these states can significantly contribute to decarbonising the energy sector, namely, through green power generation.

Assam and the other north-eastern states are at the early end of the infrastructure development spectrum and sectors such as construction are particularly difficult to decarbonise. However, these states can significantly contribute to decarbonising the energy sector, namely, through green power generation (a plant of capacity less than 25 MW would qualify as renewable energy producer) and production of biofuels.

eration (a plant of capacity less than 25 MW would qualify as renewable energy producer) and production of biofuels. Small hydrokinetic power systems or hybrid hydrokinetic power and solar power systems near small consumption centres could effectively power homes, micro-mini industries in remote villages through mini grids thereby taking power to the currently unserved and also contributing to greening the content in the power basket. Hydrokinetic power generated from tailraces of hydro power plants could meet the auxiliary power needs of the power plants. This needs to be pursued with vigour.

Though solar insolation in Assam

is lower than that available in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu etc., rooftop solar insolation needs to be encouraged. It is also imperative to develop a quality eco-system (there is widespread discontent among citizens towards poor professionalism displayed by some existing service providers). Continued fiscal incentives along with better dissemination of information about the incentives provided would perhaps result in higher deployment.

Furthermore, Assam's agrarian economy could contribute significantly to the government's biofuels agenda. For example, farmers in upper Assam largely grow only one crop of paddy annually and thereafter the land lies fallow. A second crop would mean additional rice to supply to the rest of the north-eastern rice eating states and the crop residue could earn the small farmers some additional revenue. The crop residue could form the feedstock for production of ethanol for incorporation in petrol in line with the national mandate of 20 per cent incorporation at present.

The Assam Ethanol Production Promotion Policy was announced in August, 2021. Now, associated government departments need to stand up and make the necessary effort to ensure successful outcomes.

NRL is setting up a bio-fuel refinery at Numaligarh to produce ethanol from bamboo as the feedstock. The technology, being sourced from Chempolis Oy, Finland is being tried out for the first

time. This could pave the way towards high capacity installation in this bamboo-rich region.

It is essential to put in place an efficient mass transport network, energy consumption-wise and operationally, in Guwahati at the earliest and subsequently in other major towns of Assam.

Development of an extensive and efficient river transport network will also contribute immensely to the net zero emission effort.

Another area that the government needs to pursue is encouraging and mandating green buildings. Initially, large government buildings should mandatorily conform to the National Building Code, the Energy Conservation Building Code, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-India as also commercial buildings above a certain minimum cut-off floor area. This measure would also contribute significantly towards India's net zero endeavour.

Tree plantation in areas earlier unscrupulously denuded of trees continues to be an effort worth pursuing. School children could be engaged in the plantation drive along with the local communities. The children should subsequently be engaged in their upkeep during the initial period. This will help create the requisite and important bond between trees/Nature and the children. This would develop sensitivity in them towards Nature and as adults in due course of time, would guide them to act responsibly. Making local communities stakeholders in the tree plantation initiative would ensure their upkeep, especially if they become beneficiaries of the fruits of their labour. So, planting fruit trees and trees of medicinal value would have an advantage. So would inter-crop, if permitted.

What is net-zero?

Net-zero, which is also referred to as carbon-neutrality, does not mean that a country would bring down its emissions to zero. Rather, **net-zero is a state in which a country's emissions are compensated by absorption and removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.**

- Absorption of the emissions can be increased by creating more carbon sinks such as forests, while removal of gases from the atmosphere requires futuristic technologies such as carbon capture and storage.

Why does India need a fundamental shift for achieving Net Zero by 2070?

Despite accounting for 17% of the world's population, India has the lowest per capita emissions of the world's major economies. According to the World Resources Institute, India's total greenhouse gas emissions were about 3.3 billion tonnes in 2018..

To achieve Net Zero by 2070, India must reduce the net carbon emissions to 2 billion tonnes by 2050. These last 2 billion tonnes of emissions would be associated with the agriculture sector which will require considerable time and effort to reduce.

Rhino reintroduction a hit in Assam reserve

Manas National Park rhinos need translocation support, reveals latest census

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

The one-horned rhinos of western Assam's Manas National Park, bordering Bhutan, are expected to have high life expectancy and significant growth in population, the 14th Assam rhino estimation census has revealed.

But on the flip side, the 500-sq.-km park does not have "a wider representation of calves and sub-adults" to sustain the population structure unless it is supplemented through conservation translocations.

Manas, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a tiger reserve, had about 100 resident rhinos prior to 1990, but a prolonged ethno-political conflict thereafter took a heavy toll with extremist groups known to have traded the horns of the herbivores for weapons.

A rhino reintroduction programme under the Indian Rhino Vision 2020 was started in 2006. This entailed the translocation of rhinos from Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary besides orphans hand-reared at the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation at Kaziranga. The current rhino population in the park

was estimated at 40 after the census on April 1 and 2.

A detailed census report by Vaibhav C. Mathur, the field director of Manas, said the park's rhinos have a male-female sex ratio of 1:1, arrived at without considering 10 calves and five sub-adults. But such a population may suffer losses if not supplemented through translocations, the report warned. "A suitable strategy to bring in more rhinos from other rhino-bearing areas is required so as to have a wider representation of calves and sub-adults over time," the census report said.

Speed limit

Meanwhile, the Kaziranga National Park authorities have restricted the speed of vehicles on the highway adjoining the park to 40 km per hour. This is an annual step taken to prevent vehicles from hitting animals that move out of the park during floods.

Officials said six sensor-based cameras have been installed at nine designated animal corridors of the park to measure the speed of vehicles and impose fines on those who violate the order.

The cameras are equipped with automatic number plate recognising system with radar for determining speed, a divisional forest officer said.

As per the orders of the National Green Tribunal, owners of vehicles that do not adhere to the speed limit will be penalised.

Indian Rhino Vision 2020

- **Objective:** to attain a wild population of at least 3,000 greater one-horned rhinos spread over seven protected areas in the Indian state of Assam by the year 2020.
- Seven protected areas are Kaziranga, Pobitora, Orang National Park, Manas National Park, Laokhowa wildlife sanctuary, Burachapori wildlife sanctuary and Dibru Saikhowa wildlife sanctuary.
- **Stakeholders:** International Rhino Foundation, Assam's Forest Department, Bodoland Territorial Council, World Wide Fund - India, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Greater One-Horned Rhino:

- Protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- IUCN status : Vulnerable
- Appendix I of CITES

Javan and Sumatran Rhino are critically endangered (IUCN).



EXPLAINER

The battlefield for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections

The biennial Rajya Sabha polls are scheduled for June 10 and a close contest is expected in Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Karnataka

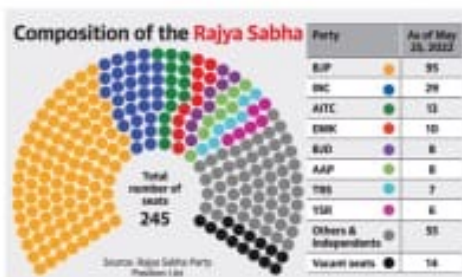
DEBORA MINGALA

The story so far: While 41 candidates have been elected unopposed out of the 57 Rajya Sabha seats up for election across 15 States, the contest for the 16 remaining seats will be witnessed on June 10 in Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Karnataka, where parties have fielded more nominees than their legislative strength in the State Assemblies. The race for the biennial Rajya Sabha polls in these four states intensified as parties traded allegations of poaching or horse-trading.

How are Rajya Sabha members elected?

Only elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies can vote in a Rajya Sabha election. Polls are held to send a batch of new members to the Upper House every two years for a six-year term. A third of Rajya Sabha MPs from each State retire once in two years and polls are held to fill up the vacancies. The Rajya Sabha is a permanent House and is not subject to dissolution.

Candidates of a particular party can be elected to the Upper House based on their party's strength in the State.



Legislative Assembly: Voting is by single transferable vote which means elector can vote for any number of candidates in order of their preference. A candidate requires a specified number of first preference votes to win and each vote has a value of 100.

The number of first preference votes required for a single MP varies in each State based on the size of the Legislative

Assembly and the number of seats for which elections are taking place.

Polling will be held from 9 am to 4 pm in the respective State Assemblies and votes would be counted from 5 pm on June 10.

What is the current composition of the Rajya Sabha?

The strength of the Rajya Sabha is 245,

out of which 95 seats are held by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as of May 25. The Congress (INC) holds the second-highest number of seats at 28, followed by the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) at 12, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) at 10, and the Raja Janata Dal (RJD) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) at eight each.

Notably, while its current tally is 35, the BJP had reached a tally of 100 in the Rajya Sabha last month, after winning three seats in the North East. The tally came down to 95 in early May as the terms of five of its MPs ended.

Out of the 57 seats in the current round, 11 are in Uttar Pradesh; six seats each from Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu; five from Bihar; four each from Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka; three each from Madhya Pradesh and Odisha; two each from Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Punjab, and Haryana; and one from Uttarakhand.

The BJP held 24 of the 57 seats that became vacant; new were Congress seats, and four held by the long-reigning party SP. Of the BJP's 24 seats, it is likely to retain only 20 seats in the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls, potentially bringing its

current total of 88 members down to 68.

Prominent parties in States

The contest in Rajasthan is set to be tricky as both the Congress and the BJP have fielded candidates beyond their legislative strength in the Rajasthan Assembly. While the Congress is well placed to secure two seats as it has a majority of 106 seats in the 200-member Legislative Assembly, the BJP, with 71 seats in the Assembly, has the strength set to secure one Upper House berth.

In Maharashtra, of the six seats being contested, the Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition comprising the Shiv Sena, NCP, and Congress is set to secure three of the six Upper House berths. The BJP, which is numerically the single largest party (with 106 seats) is set to comfortably get two seats but has decided to contest for a third seat.

In Karnataka, the contest for the fourth seat is expected to be tricky. While three seats were left vacant due to the retirement of Union Minister Nirupama Sitharaman, BJP MP K.C. Ramamurthy and senior Congress member Jagan Kanade, the fourth seat has been vacant since 2021, following the death of former Union Minister Oscar Fernandes.

THE GIST

■ Rajya Sabha polls are held to send a batch of new members to the Upper House every two years for a six-year term. A third of Rajya Sabha MPs from each State retire once in two years.

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■ The BJP held 24 of the 57 seats that became vacant; new were Congress seats, and four held by the Samajwadi Party (SP).



- Vacancies that arise due to resignation, death or disqualification are filled up through bypolls after which those elected serve out the remainder of their predecessors' term.
- The Rajya Sabha polls have a system of open ballot.

- NOTA not applicable in Rajya Sabha election.
- An elected MP/MLA can vote in a Rajya Sabha election even before taking oath as legislator because voting is a nonlegislative activity.
- Candidates fielded by political parties have to be proposed by at least 10 members of the Assembly or 10% of the party's strength in the House, whichever is less. For independents, there should be 10 proposers, all of whom should be members of the Assembly.

MSP AND MORE

Price boost could bolster government's cereal stocks. But it must keep sight of crop diversification, the long-term reform measure

THE NARENDRA MODI government has hiked the minimum support price (MSP) for this year's paddy crop by Rs 100 per quintal over 2021-22. It is higher than the Rs 72, Rs 53 and Rs 65 per quintal increase during the preceding three years, while below the Rs 180-200 of 2018-19, which was in the run up to the 2019 general election. This time's MSP raise has less to do with politics. The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) has estimated the average production cost of paddy (all paid-up expenses plus an imputed value of unpaid family labour) for 2022-23 at Rs 1,360 per quintal. The MSP of Rs 2,040 per quintal for common paddy, then, translates into a 50 per cent return over cost. Last year's MSP of Rs 1,940 also delivered the same return over a projected cost of Rs 1,293 per quintal. Farmers, thus, are only being compensated for higher cultivation costs.

Production cost going up — probably more than the CACP's 5.2 per cent estimate — is not the sole reason for the Modi government granting an above-trend MSP hike in paddy. A more pertinent factor has to do with public foodgrain stocks, which, at 311.42 lakh tonnes (lt) for wheat as on June 1, are the lowest in 14 years for this date. Although rice stocks, at 496.76 lt, are above last year's corresponding level of 491.50 lt, the government clearly isn't taking any chances. With the next wheat crop arriving only in April 2023, there will be that much added dependence on rice now to meet the requirements of the public distribution system. Hence, the need to ensure adequate stocks and procurement of paddy, whose plantings take off in June and marketing from October. Barely three months ago, the country had enough grain for free distribution through ration shops and also for exports. The post-March heat wave that took a toll on wheat crop yields and more

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by the Prime Minister finalises MSP before the onset of Kharif/Rabi season every year based on the recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).
- *Objectives of MSP:* Price assurance for farmers + increase agricultural productivity + food security
- Currently it is announced for 23 commodities.
- MSP for a crop is the price at which the government is supposed to procure/buy that crop from farmers if the market price falls below it.
- *Determinants of MSP :* Demand and supply + cost of production + price trends in the market, both domestic and international + inter-crop price parity + terms of trade between agriculture and non-agriculture + a minimum of 50 percent as the margin over cost of production + likely implications of MSP on consumers of that product

How the President is elected



The Election Commission has notified the election of India's next President on July 18. A look at the voting procedure, how the votes of MLAs and MPs are weighted, and how previous elections have played out.

MANOJ CG

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

ON JULY 18, elected MLAs and MPs across the country will vote to elect India's 15th President. Under Article 62(1) of the Constitution, "an election to fill a vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of office of President shall be completed before the expiration of the term". President Ram Nath Kovind's tenure ends on July 25.

A look at the process for electing the President, parties' relative strengths currently, and how previous elections have played out:

What is the election process?

The President is elected by an electoral college consisting of MPs of both Houses of Parliament and MLAs of the states and Delhi and Puducherry. Nominated members of Rajya Sabha, Lok Sabha and the Assemblies, and members of state Legislative Councils, are not part of the electoral college.

The votes are weighted, their value determined by the population of each state as per Census 1971. The value of each MLA's vote varies from a high of 208 in Uttar Pradesh to a low of 7 in Sikkim. This means that UP's 403 MLAs contribute $208 \times 403 = 83,824$ votes to the electoral pool, while Sikkim's 32 MLAs contribute $32 \times 7 = 224$ votes. The weighted votes from all the Assemblies add up to 5.43 lakh.

The process demands that the 776 MPs (543 in Lok Sabha, 233 in Rajya Sabha) should contribute the same total of votes as the MLAs. Thus, the value of each MP's vote is 5.43 lakh divided by 776, rounded off to 700. The combined electoral pool from the Assemblies and Parliament adds up to 10.86 lakh.

How are the ruling alliance and the opposition placed?

The BJP-led NDA is far ahead of the Congress and its allies, but still short of the halfway mark at the moment. Adding up the votes of the MLAs and MPs on either side, but not counting the 57 vacant Rajya Sabha seats (16 of which go to polls on Friday while the other 41 have had MPs elected unopposed), the NDA has 48% of the votes (BJP 42% and allies 6%), while the Congress (13.5%) and its allies (10.58%) have 24%. These allies include the DMK, Shiv Sena, NCP, JMM and smaller parties like the Muslim League, VCK, RSP and MDMK.

Beyond the two alliances, the Trinamool Congress has 5.4%, YSRCP 4%, Biju Janata Dal 2.85%, and the Left parties 2.5%, with the rest of the votes held by various parties.

The BJP is banking on the YSRCP and the BJD and some other parties to support its candidate. Support from either YSRCP or BJD would take the NDA candidate beyond the halfway mark. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 30, and Andhra Pradesh CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy called on the PM last week.

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE: 4,809 VOTERS, 10.86 LAKH VOTES



House	Members	Value	Total	House	Members	Value	Total
Andhra	175	159	27825	Odisha	147	149	21903
Arunachal	60	8	480	Punjab	117	116	13572
Assam	126	116	14616	Rajasthan	200	129	25800
Bihar	243	173	42039	Sikkim	32	7	224
Chhattisgarh	90	129	11610	Tamil Nadu	234	176	41184
Goa	40	20	800	Telangana	119	132	15708
Gujarat	182	147	26754	Tripura	60	26	1560
Haryana	90	112	10080	Uttarakhand	70	64	4480
Himachal	68	51	3468	UP	403	208	83824
Jharkhand	81	176	14256	West Bengal	294	151	44394
Karnataka	224	131	29344	Delhi	70	58	4060
Kerala	140	152	21280	Puducherry	30	16	480
MP	230	131	30130	Assembly total	4033		5,43,231
Maharashtra	288	175	50400	Lok Sabha	543	700	3,80,100
Manipur	60	18	1080	Rajya Sabha	233	700	1,63,100
Meghalaya	60	17	1020	Parliament total	776		5,43,200
Mizoram	40	8	320	Grand total	4809		10,86,431
Nagaland	60	9	540				

On the Opposition side, it remains to be seen which way the TRS, Samajwadi Party and AAP will vote. The TRS, which was once considered a fence-sitter and even backed the government on some key Bills, has been attacking the BJP of late. The AAP is at loggerheads with both the Congress and the BJP.

How keenly contested have previous elections been?

1952: The first election was a no-contest. Rajendra Prasad won with 5,07,400 votes. Chaudhary Hari Ram polled 1,954, contesting because he did not want Prasad to be elected unopposed. The Left fielded KT Shah, a former alumnus of the London School of Economics and a member of the Constituent Assembly, who got 92,827 votes. The fray also had Thattai Lakshman Ganesh (2,672) and Krishna Kumar Chatterjee (533).

1957: Prasad was fielded for a second by the Congress. It was again a no-contest: he got 4,59,098 votes against Nagendra Narayan Das (2,000) and Chowdhury Hari Ram (2,672).

1962: The Congress fielded Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, who was Vice President during President Prasad's tenure. He got 5,53,067 votes against Chowdhury Hari Ram (6,341) and Yamuna Prasad Trisulia (3,537).

1967: The Congress candidate, Vice President Zakir Hussain, won 4,71,244 votes against Kota Subbarao (3,63,971). Subbarao, who retired as Chief Justice of India that year,

was the Opposition's consensus candidate.

1969: This election, necessitated by the sudden passing of President Hussain, was the most controversial of them all. Under Article 65(1) of the Constitution, Vice-President V V Giri assumed office as acting President, but resigned in July 1969 as Vice President and also as acting President. Tensions within the Congress — between Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and a group of veterans known as the Syndicate — came to a head when the party officially fielded Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy while Gandhi threw her weight behind Giri, contesting as an independent. She famously called on party MPs and MLAs to vote according to conscience. Giri won with 4,01,515 votes to Reddy's 3,13,548. The Congress split after then party president S Nijalingappa expelled Gandhi. Among other candidates, C D Deshmukh, fielded by Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh, polled 1,12,769. There were 12 more in the fray, and the law was changed to prevent non-serious candidates from contesting.

1974: The Congress fielded Fakrudin Ali Ahmed, and the opposition veteran Tridib Chaudhuri, a Lok Sabha MP from the Revolutionary Socialist Party. Ahmed polled 7,65,587 votes to Chaudhuri's 1,89,196.

1977: Following Ahmed's death, Vice President B D Jatti took over as acting President. When the poll was held, 37 candidates filed their papers but on scrutiny all but one were rejected. The only valid one was Congress's

Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, who was elected.

1982: The Congress's Giani Zail Singh (7,54,113 votes) won against H K Khanna (2,82,685). Nine opposition parties had fielded Khanna, a Supreme Court judge who had resigned in protest against the appointment of M H Baig as CJI in 1977. Khanna had come into prominence a year before, when he disagreed with majority judges that Article 21 can be suspended by the declaration of Emergency.

1987: The Left parties fielded legal luminary and former Supreme Court Justice V R Krishna Iyer against incumbent Vice President R Venkataraman, who won comfortably (7,40,148 votes against Iyer's 2,81,550). The third contestant Mithilesh Kumar, an independent candidate from Bihar, got 2,223 votes. The elections became politically interesting as incumbent President Singh, whose equations with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had hit a low, was prodded to contest as an independent candidate by some Congress dissidents and Devi Lal of the Lok Dal (B), but he declined.

1992: The Congress's Shanker Dayal Sharma (6,75,804 votes) won comfortably against the opposition's George Gilbert Swell (3,46,485), a former Lok Sabha Deputy Speaker, a former Ambassador Norway and Burma, and a tribal who was a force behind the movement that culminated in statehood for Meghalaya. His candidature was pushed by former Prime Minister V P Singh and the BJP backed him. Two others were in the fray: Karanjeet Malhotra (2,704 votes) and the famous Kaka Joginder Singh aka Dharti-Palak (1,135), who contested — and lost — over 300 elections during his lifetime.

1997: K R Narayanan, fielded by parties in the United Front government and the Congress and backed by the opposition BJP, won one of the most one-sided polls ever, polling 956,290 votes against former Chief Election Commissioner T N Seshan's 50,361. Seshan had the support of the Shiv Sena and some independent MLAs.

2002: The Congress and most opposition parties decided to back scientist A P J Abdul Kalam, the BJP's choice. The Left fielded Captain Lakshmi Sahgal. Kalam (9,22,884) won a one-sided contest against Sahgal (1,07,366).

2007: Pratibha Patil, the UPA-Left nominee, became India's first woman President with 6,38,116 votes against BJP candidate Bhairon Singh Shekhawat (3,31,306). The Shiv Sena, then part of the NDA, chose to back Patil, who is from Maharashtra.

2012: UPA candidate Pranab Mukherjee became the 13th President, polling 713,763 votes against the BJP's P A Sangma (3,15,987).

2017: In the last election, the Opposition fielded former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar against Kovind. She had the support of 17 Opposition parties but the JDU (U) chose to support Kovind. Kovind bagged 7,02,044 votes, and Kumar 3,67,314.

WITH INPUTS FROM ANISHA DUTTA



Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, right, during a news conference in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

The electoral college for the poll will comprise 4,809 members – 233 Rajya Sabha and 543 Lok Sabha members and 4,033 MLAs of the Assemblies of the States and the Union Territories of Delhi and Puducherry. The total

value of votes will be 10,86,431 (5,43,200 for MPs or 700 votes each and 5,43,231 for MLAs based on the 1971 Census population figures).

This Presidential election will be the first to be held

Test of unity for Opposition

With the date set for the Presidential polls, Congress President Sonia Gandhi has deputed Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge to reach out to the Opposition parties. Sources said that after informal talks with all parties, a joint meeting will be scheduled in Delhi. ► PAGE 12

since the State of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh in 2019. The MLAs of J&K are no longer part of the electoral college. During the previous Presidential poll in 2017, the 87

MLAs of the State of J&K had 72 votes each, taking the total value of their votes to 6,264 out of the total of 10,98,903 votes.

Mr. Kumar said each candidate would require 50 members of the electoral college to propose their name and another 50 to second it. The polling would be carried out in the Parliament House for MPs and at the respective State Assemblies for MLAs, with the Rajya Sabha Secretary General declared as the Returning Officer.

The electors would cast their ballots using the pen provided by the EC as has been the norm, he said. Protocols regarding COVID-19 safety would be followed, he added.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 11



Agni – IV Missile

- Recently, India successfully tested the **Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM)** Agni-4.
- Agni-4 is an **Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile**.
- It is developed by **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.
- The missile has a **range of over 3,500 km**, can carry a **1,000-kg payload** and can go as high as **900 km**.
- It is **surface to surface missile**
- **WARHEAD: Nuclear or conventional**

Daily MCQ for APSC CCE

Recently, India commenced Exercise Bongo Sagar with which of the following countries?

- A. Bhutan
- B. Bangladesh
- C. Myanmar
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer is: **B. Bangladesh**

Exercise Bongosagar is a bilateral naval exercise between India and Bangladesh aimed at developing a high degree of interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations between the two navies.

History *(Optional)*

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