

A guide to India's general election

The world's biggest democratic exercise will see around 714 million people voting in a five-phased election over several weeks at more than 800,000 polling stations, watched over by 2.1 million security personnel

LEADING CANDIDATES



Main battle between coalition headed by **Indian National Congress**, led by current Prime Minister **Manmohan Singh** (left), and coalition headed by Hindu-nationalist **Bharatiya Janata Party**, led by **LK Advani**

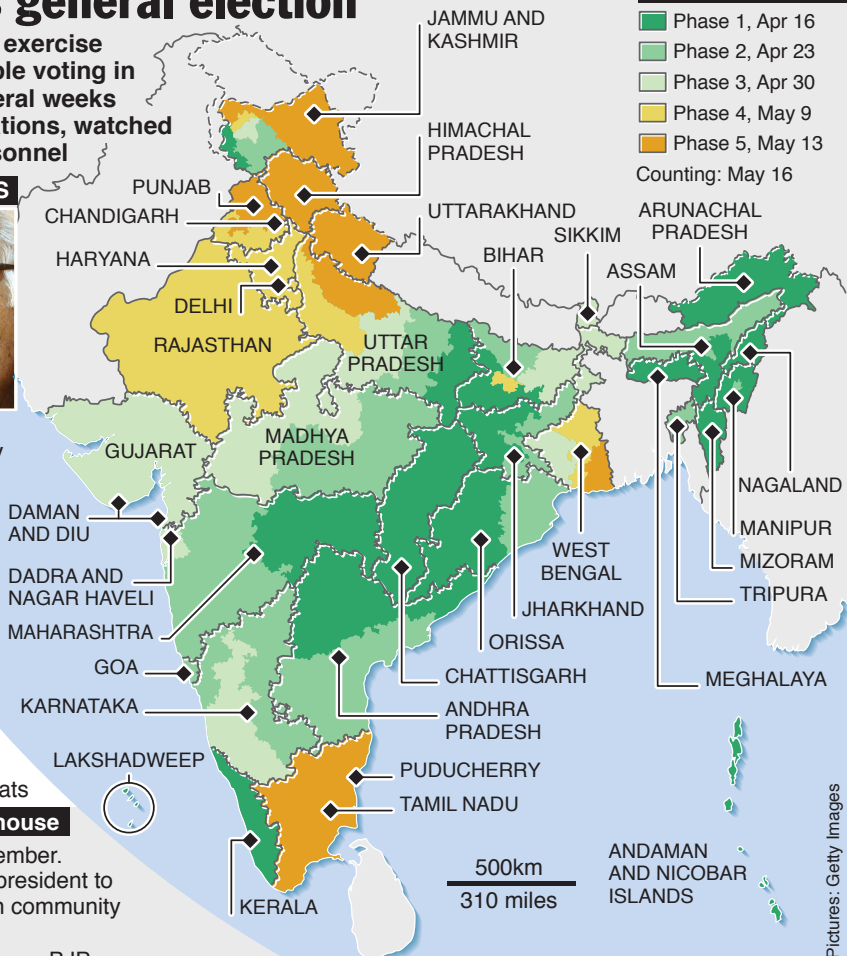
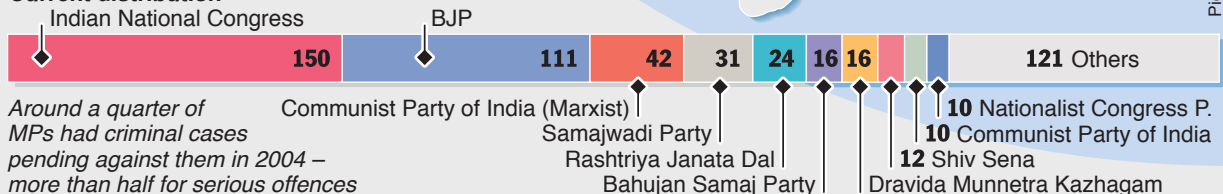
Bahujan Samaj Party leader **Mayawati**, representing low-caste Dalits, could emerge at head of alliance of left-wing and regional parties – “Third Front” – if both main coalitions fail to gain enough seats



LOK SABHA – Parliament's lower house

543 constituencies each elect one member. Two more MPs can be appointed by president to ensure representation of Anglo-Indian community

Current distribution



Pictures: Getty Images