

# THE REPUBLIC & STATES OF INDIA AT A GLANCE

*(Updated: December 2008)*

**Disclaimer:** The guide is not, and does not purport to be, exhaustive in scope or conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for a visa arising under the [Migration Act 1958](#).

**Introduction:** This guide provides the following types of information: an overview of the Republic of India, comprising short extracts on the Indian Constitution and Government, and civil and political rights under the Constitution; information on elections to the *Lok Sabha* (National Assembly or People's House) since 1951 and information on the composition of the current government. The guide also provides information on the issues of justice, law and order; terrorism and terrorist groups; and the media and press freedoms. A new section on political parties provides information on six National and thirty-three State political parties. As with previous editions, the current guide provides information on India's individual states and union territories. Extracts on all topics continue to be updated as required.

Members are encouraged to contact the Research & Information Services Section for enquiries not answered by this product. Members are also invited to make suggestions with regard to improving this product.

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# The Republic of India

## Indian Constitution & Government

“India’s frequently amended [constitution](#) of January 26, 1950 provides for a republican form of parliamentary government in a union that currently embraces 28 states 7 centrally administered territories. The national government is headed by a [president](#) who serves a five-year term; the head of state is chosen, under a weighted voting system, by an electoral college comprising the elected members of both the bicameral parliament and the state legislatures. The vice president is elected by the members of the full parliament; he serves as *ex officio* chairman of the upper house of the legislature, the Council of States ([Rajya Sabha](#)), and presides over its meetings. The lower House of the People ([Lok Sabha](#)) is presided over by a speaker elected by its members. He must be a Member of Parliament but by convention divests himself of party affiliations while serving as presiding officer. The prime minister is elected by the parliamentary members of the majority party or coalition of parties and heads a government that is collectively responsible to the legislature.

“Each of the States has a governor, who is appointed by the president for a term of five years, and a popularly elected legislature. The legislatures may be bicameral or unicameral, but all are subject to maximum terms of five years. Administration is carried out by a chief minister heading a cabinet subject to parliamentary responsibility. In the event that constitutional processes in a state are rendered inoperative, the Union constitution provides for the institution of direct presidential rule, with the concurrence of both houses of parliament. The president can also appoint an agent to act in his name, while the prime minister can call for new state elections.

“The [Union Territories](#), some of which are former foreign territories or located in outlying regions, are administered by appointed officials (called lieutenant governors or administrators) responsible to the president. Pondicherry and the National Capital Territory of Delhi, like the states, also have elected assemblies and chief ministers”.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Civil and Political Rights under the Constitution

[Part III](#) of the [Indian Constitution](#), entitled “Fundamental Rights”, guarantees “individual rights” that are “common to most liberal democracies”. They include: “Equality before the law” (Art. 14); “Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth” (Art. 15); “Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment” (Art 16); freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association, movement, and profession (Art. 19); “and the right to constitutional remedies for the protection of civil rights such as habeas corpus” (Art. 20-22).<sup>[2]</sup>

The “Fundamental Rights” “go beyond conventional civil liberties” as they are “aimed at overturning the inequities of past social practices”. They seek, for instance, to abolish “Untouchability” (Art. 17), “titles” (Art. 18), and the “traffic in human beings and forced labour” (Art. 23). And more than this, they aim to protect the “cultural and educational rights of minorities by ensuring that minorities may preserve their distinctive languages and establish and administer their own education institutions” (Art. 29 and 30).<sup>[3]</sup>

“Originally, the right to property was also included in the Fundamental Rights; however, the

Forty-fourth Amendment, passed in 1978, revised the status of property rights by stating that ‘No person shall be deprived of his property save by authority of law.’<sup>[4]</sup>

“Freedom of speech and expression, generally interpreted to include freedom of the press, can be limited ‘in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence’”.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Elections

### (Information Last Updated April 2007)

Elections to the [Lok Sabha](#) and various state assemblies have been held in India since 1951. Statistical Reports for all are published online by the [Election Commission of India](#).

India uses the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system.

“The Indian Constitution provides that all adult citizens who are 18 years or more of age, and who are not otherwise debarred from voting, can exercise their right to the franchise. Voters elect a 544-member [Lok Sabha](#), or lower house, from single-member constituencies, and each of India’s 25 states have adopted a similar systems. By contrast, the upper house of parliament, the [Rajya Sabha](#), or Council of States, as well as the corresponding upper houses of the states, are indirectly elected by members of the state legislative assemblies. There is also a (non-executive) President and Vice-President elected by the members of parliament and state legislative assemblies.

“General elections are held once every five years, but the President may dissolve the [Lok Sabha](#) on the advice of the Prime Minister before its term is over, as in 1971 and in 1997, or if he or she is convinced that no stable government can be formed, as in 1991. The Prime Minister holds office for as long as he or she can command a majority in the [Lok Sabha](#)“. The Indian National Congress, which led India to Independence, “ruled India continuously until 1977.” Since then, “governments have been less stable, and a number of Prime Ministers have had to resign as a result of party splits or no-confidence votes before completing their full term”.<sup>[6]</sup>

The following table provides a summary of elections to the [Lok Sabha](#), prime ministers and their terms, and government formation since 1951.

### Elections Summary 1951-2004

Election	Date	Government(s)	Prime Minister/Government Formation
<a href="#">Election to the 1<sup>st</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1951	Indian National Congress (INC)	Jawaharlal Nehru <sup>[7]</sup>
<a href="#">Election to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1957	Indian National Congress (INC)	Jawaharlal Nehru
<a href="#">Election to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1962	Indian National Congress (INC)	Jawaharlal Nehru
<a href="#">Election to the</a>	1967	Indian National	Jawaharlal Nehru (died 27 May 1964).

<a href="#">4<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>		Congress (INC)	Lal Bahadur Shastri (9 June 1964—died 11 January 1966). Gulzari Lal Nanda served as interim prime minister, between 27 May 1964 and 9 June 1964, and 11 and 24 January 1966, following the death of Nehru and then Shastri Indira Gandhi served as prime minister, between 24 January 1966 and the election to the 5 <sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in March 1971.
<a href="#">Election to the 5<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1971	Indian National Congress (INC)	Indira Gandhi returned to power as head of a faction of the INC initially known as Congress (R).
<a href="#">Election to the 6<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1977	1. Janata Party (JP) alliance (made up of the Congress (O), the Jana Sangh, the Bharatiya Lok Dal, the Samajwadi Party, a handful of imprisoned Congress dissidents, and the Congress for Democracy—a group led by Scheduled Caste leader Jagjivan Ram which had broken off from the Indian National Congress during the election campaign.  2. Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD)	At the 1977 election, which marked the end of Indira Gandhi's emergency (1975-1977) and political domination of the INC, the Janata Party (JP) alliance came to power under the prime ministership of Morarji Desai. Desai's government collapsed on 28 July 1979. Desai was briefly replaced by Charan Singh, the leader of the Bharatiya Lok Dal, who attempted, unsuccessfully, to form government with the promised backing of the [Indian National] Congress (I), a new and dominant faction of the congress party headed by Indira Gandhi. Charan Singh served as caretaker prime minister from July 1979 until fresh election were held in January 1980. Singh's bid for power was thwarted by the Congress (I), which withdrew its promised support days after he assumed office on 28 July 1979.
<a href="#">Election to the 7<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1980	[Indian National] Congress (I)	Indira Gandhi was returned to power as head of a Congress (I) government. Rajiv Gandhi, her son, assumed the office of prime minister on the day of her assassination on 32 October 1984.
<a href="#">Election to the 8<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1984/1985	[Indian National] Congress (I)	Rajiv Gandhi returned to power with an overwhelming majority. National opposition to the Congress (I) "was reduced to 44 seats among five parties out of 508 seats contested".
<a href="#">Election to the 9<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1989	1. Janata Dal-led National Front  2. Janata Dal (S)	At the 1989 election, the Janata Dal (JD), with only 141 seats in the national assembly, formed India's first minority government, the National Front, with the backing of the communist parties and the

			<p>Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) (with 88 newly acquired seats, a new power on the political scene). V.P. Singh was elected to lead the Janata Dal in parliament and thus became prime minister. His government collapsed in November 1990, after 344 days in power, when the Bharatiya Janata Party withdrew its support.</p> <p>With the backing of the Congress (I), a new government was formed in November 1990 under the premiership of Chandra Shekhar, “the erstwhile President of the Janata Dal who had defected from the party with a small group of supporters to form the Janata Dal (S)”. The new government last 244 days before the Congress (I) withdrew its support in March 1991.</p>
<a href="#">Election to the 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1991/1992	[Indian National Congress (I)]	<p>At the 1991 election, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated “after the first day’s polling had taken place...while campaigning in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu”. The final election result gave the Congress (I) 227 of the 511 contests seats. Narasimha Rao, a long-standing Gandhi family loyalist, assumed the leadership of the Congress (I), and the premiership (even as his party failed to command a majority in the <i>lok sabha</i>).</p>
<a href="#">Election to the 11<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1996	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led coalition</li> <li>2. United Front (UF)</li> </ol>	<p>“The results [of the 1996 election], as had been widely predicted, gave no party or group an overall majority”. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which won the largest share of votes (160 seats), was invited by the president to form a new government and to prove its majority within two weeks. It formed a short-lived government, with the support of its allies, under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. After only 16 days, Vajpayee resigned from office on 28 May 1996 “in anticipation of his Government’s inevitable defeat in a parliamentary vote of confidence”.</p> <p>“In the meantime, the National and Left Fronts had merged to form an informal coalition known as the United Front (UF), which comprised a total of 13 parties, with the Janata Dal, the Samajwadi Party, the two communist parties [the Communist Party of India and the Communist Party of</p>

			<p>India (Marxist)] and the regional DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] and Telegu Desam as its major components. With [the Indian National] Congress prepared to lend external support, the UF was able to form a Government at the end of May [1996]”. H.D. Deve Gowda was elected to fill the position of prime minister, before Congress party machinations forced his resignation in April 1997. Dev Gowda was replaced by Inder Kumar Gujral, who served as prime minister until 28 November 1997 when the Congress Party finally withdrew its support for the UF Government, ostensibly “over issues concerning an inquiry into Rajiv Gandhi’s assassination”.</p>
<a href="#">Election to the 12<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1998		<p>The results of the 1998 election again failed to give a single party or group an overall majority. “The biggest winner overall was the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], which increased its tally of legislative seats from 160 to 182. With the support of its pre-election allies, especially the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam], which won 18 seats in Tamil Nadu, the BJP could count on approximately 250 seats, the largest bloc in the legislature but considerably fewer than the 273 seats needed to form a government”. As in 1996, the BJP’s leader, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was invited by the president to form a new government and to prove its majority within two weeks. On 28 March the new government proved its majority, “by 272 votes to 261”, “principally on the basis of the support of the Telegu Desam”, a member of the UF. The government was finally undone by its regional partner, the AIADMK, “which withdrew from the ruling coalition”. The government was defeated by one vote in a parliamentary vote of no confidence on 17 April 1999. The <i>Lok Sabha</i> was dissolved after the new leader of the Indian National Congress (INC), Sonia Gandhi, failed in her bid to assemble a new coalition.</p>
<a href="#">Election to the 13<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	1999	Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National	<p>At the 1999 election “the 24-member BJP-led alliance, known as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and</p>

		Democratic Alliance	comprising numerous minor regional parties with little shared ideology, won an outright majority in the <i>Lok Sabha</i> , with 2999 of the 545 seats”. The BJP’s parliamentary leader, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was returned to power. At these elections, the Indian National Congress (INC) suffered its “worst electoral defeat since Independence”.
<a href="#">Election to the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha</a>	2004	Indian National Congress (INC)-led United Progress Alliance (UPA)	Dr. Manmohan Singh (see below – <a href="#">Current Government 2004-</a> )

### **Current Government 2004- (Information Last Updated April 2007)**

At the last Lok Sabha elections in 2004, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) obtained the largest number of seats in the *Lok Sabha* and formed a minority government under the prime ministership of [Dr. Manmohan Singh](#), the leader of the [Indian National Congress](#) (INC). Requiring additional parliamentary support to govern, the UPA was supported in its bid for power by the Left Front, a group of left-wing parties dominated by the [Communist Party of India \(Marxist\)](#) (CPI (M)). While it remains outside the government, the Left Front continues to support the UPA. The [Indian Elections 2004 – Topical Information Package](#) provides an overview of the 2004 general election to the 14<sup>th</sup> *Lok Sabha*. The [Provisional Statistical Report on General Election to the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha](#), released by the Election Commission of India, provides detailed election results, including information on how the states voted at the national level.

The general election for the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha is scheduled for June 2009.[\[8\]](#) (‘Terms of the Houses’ 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

### **Composition of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government (Information Last Updated April 2007)**

The [Indian National Congress](#) (INC) has the largest single share of seats in the *Lok Sabha*. It heads the minority government, the United Progressive Alliance, which in May 2004 included at least 13 political partners *viz.*, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), the [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam](#) (DMK), the [Nationalist Congress Party](#) (NCP), the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), the Trinamool Rashtira Sangathan (TRS), the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), the Lok Janshakti Party (LJNSP), the [Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam](#) (MDMK), the Jammu & Kashmir People’s Democratic Party (JKPDP), the Republican Party of India (RPI)(A), the All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimmen (AIMIM), the [Indian Union Muslim League](#) (IUML), and the Kerala Congress (KC) (‘UPA Government to adhere to six basic principles of governance’ 2004, India Net website, 28 May <http://www.indianet.nl/cmpupa.html> – Accessed 12 August 2004)

Including the Prime Minister, the new government comprised 29 Cabinet Ministers and 39 Ministers of State (including 10 with Independent Charge). (The August 2004 edition of *The States of India at a Glance* resource guide provides a list of UPA Cabinet Ministers and UPA



Ministers of State as they stood at the time.) (Joshua, A. 2004, 'New Ministers unsure of portfolios', *The Hindu* online edition, 23 May <http://www.hindu.com/2004/05/23/stories/2004052305960801.htm> – Accessed 8 July 2004; Council of Ministers, Government of India' 2004, High Commission of India, London website <http://www.hcilondon.net/india-overview/political-structure/ministers-for-state.html> – Accessed 9 July 2004).

In January 2006, the government added twenty-two new faces to the cabinet by undertaking a major cabinet expansion-cum-reshuffle. Commentators are of the view that the prime minister orchestrated the expansion and reshuffle to redress "regional disparities" ahead of polls scheduled for five key Indian states later in the year, with a view to capturing the minority vote bank (primarily, Muslims and low caste Hindus). Among the most telling changes, A.R. Antulay was promoted to head "the government's first ever minority affairs" ministry. ('Soni, Soz, Deora join Union Cabinet-Bansal, Ashwani Kumar among 19 new faces in Manmohan Ministry' 2006, *The Tribune* online edition, 30 January <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2006/20060130/main1.htm> – Accessed 7 February 2006; 'Manmohan Singh keeps foreign affairs in reshuffle' 2006, Yahoo News, 30 January <http://in.news.yahoo.com/060129/137/6295b.html> – Accessed 7 February 2006; 'Loyalty pays off in cabinet reshuffle' 2006, *Yahoo News*, 29 January <http://in.news.yahoo.com/060129/43/6295j.html> – Accessed 7 February 2006; 'Expansion of Council of Ministers, Portfolios Allocation and Portfolios Re-distribution' 2006, The President of India website, 29 January <http://presidentofindia.nic.in/scripts/prlatest1.jsp?id=513> – Accessed 7 February 2006; 'List of Council Ministers' 2006, Cabinet Secretariat website <http://cabsec.nic.in/coumin.htm> – Accessed 7 February 2006).

The most recent cabinet reshuffle took place in October 2006, after a year of deliberation, and involved changes to the External Affairs portfolio, which went to the senior Congress figure Pranab Mukherjee, and Defence, which went to former Kerala Chief Minister AK Anthony. Other changes were to the Water Resources, Information and Broadcasting, and Labour ministries, and others (Sharma, Vinod & Tikku, Alope 2006, 'Pranab Mukherjee is EAM, Antony defence minister', *Hindustan Times*, 24 October [http://www.hindustantimes.in/news/181\\_1828376.0008.htm](http://www.hindustantimes.in/news/181_1828376.0008.htm) – Accessed 2 April 2007).

The full current list of the Council of Ministers from the Indian Government website incorporates all recent changes (Government of India 2008, 'List of Council of Ministers' Cabinet Secretariat website, 28 April <http://cabsec.nic.in/coumin.htm> – Accessed 1 September 2008).

## **Cabinet Ministers (as at 28 April 2008)**

**Dr. Manmohan Singh** Prime Minister and also in-charge of the Ministries/ Departments not specifically allocated to the charge of any Minister viz:

- (i) Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions;
- (ii) Ministry of Planning;
- (iii) Department of Atomic Energy; and
- (iv) Department of Space;
- (v) Ministry of Coal; and
- (vi) Ministry of Environment and Forests.

**Shri Pranab Mukherjee** Minister of External Affairs.

<a href="#"><u>Shri Arjun Singh</u></a>	Minister of Human Resource Development.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Sharad Pawar</u></a>	Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Lalu Prasad</u></a>	Minister of Railways.
<a href="#"><u>Shri A.K. Antony</u></a>	Minister of Defence
<a href="#"><u>Shri Shivraj V. Patil</u></a>	Minister of Home Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri A.R. Antulay</u></a>	Minister of Minority Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Sushilkumar Shinde</u></a>	Minister of Power
<a href="#"><u>Shri Ram Vilas Paswan</u></a>	Minister of Chemicals & Fertilisers and Minister of Steel.
<a href="#"><u>Shri S. Jaipal Reddy</u></a>	Minister of Urban Development.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Sis Ram Ola</u></a>	Minister of Mines.
<a href="#"><u>Shri P. Chidambaram</u></a>	Minister of Finance.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Mahavir Prasad</u></a>	Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
<a href="#"><u>Shri P.R. Kyndiah</u></a>	Minister of Tribal Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri T.R. Baalu</u></a>	Minister of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Shankersinh Vaghela</u></a>	Minister of Textiles.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Vayalar Ravi</u></a>	Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Kamal Nath</u></a>	Minister of Commerce & Industry.
<a href="#"><u>Shri H.R. Bhardwaj</u></a>	Minister of Law & Justice.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev</u></a>	Minister of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises.
<a href="#"><u>Prof. Saif-ud-din Soz</u></a>	Minister of Water Resources.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh</u></a>	Minister of Rural Development.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Privaranjan Dasmunsi</u></a>	Minister of Information & Broadcasting.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar</u></a>	Minister of Panchayati Raj and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region. .
<a href="#"><u>Smt. Meira Kumar</u></a>	Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Murli Deora</u></a>	Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
<a href="#"><u>Smt. Ambika Soni</u></a>	Minister of Tourism and Minister of Culture.
<a href="#"><u>Shri A. Raja</u></a>	Minister of Communications and Information Technology.

<a href="#"><u>Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss</u></a>	Minister of Health & Family Welfare.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Kapil Sibal</u></a>	Minister of Science & Technology and Minister of Earth Sciences.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Prem Chand Gupta</u></a>	Minister of Corporate Affairs.

### **Ministers of State (with Independent Charge) (as at 28 April 2008)**

<a href="#"><u>Shri Oscar Fernandes</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Labour & Employment.
<a href="#"><u>Smt. Renuka Chowdhury</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Women & Child Development.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Subodh Kant Sahay</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Vilas Muttemwar</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
<a href="#"><u>Kumari Selja</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Praful Patel</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
<a href="#"><u>Shri G.K.Vasan</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation.
<a href="#"><u>Dr. M. S. Gill</u></a>	Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

### **Ministers of State (as at 28 April 2008)**

<a href="#"><u>Shri E. Ahammed</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri B.K. Handique</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilisers and Minister of State in the Ministry of Mines.
<a href="#"><u>Smt. Panabaka Lakshmi</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
<a href="#"><u>Dr. Shakeel Ahmad</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Rao Inderjit Singh</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Naranbhai Rathwa</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways.
<a href="#"><u>Shri K.H. Muniappa</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Kantilal Bhuria</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public

Distribution.

- [Shri Shriprakash Jaiswal](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- [Shri Prithviraj Chavan](#) Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- [Shri Taslimuddin](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- [Smt. Suryakanta Patil](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.
- [Shri Md. Ali Ashraf Fatmi](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- [Shri R. Velu](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways.
- [Shri S.S. Palanimanickam](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance.
- [Shri S. Regupathy](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment and Forests.
- [Shri K. Venkatapathy](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Law & Justice.
- [Smt. Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- [Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Textiles.
- [Smt Kanti Singh](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Tourism and Minister of State in the Ministry of Culture.
- [Shri Namu Narain Meena](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment & Forests.
- [Shri Jay Prakash Narayan Yadav](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources.
- [Dr. Akhilesh Prasad Singh](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
- [Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.
- [Shri Anand Sharma](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- [Shri Ajay Maken](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Urban Development.
- [Shri Dinsha J. Patel](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- [Shri M.M. Pallam Raju](#) Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence.
- [Shri Ashwani Kumar](#) Minister of State in the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

<a href="#"><u>Shri Jairam Ramesh</u></a>	Minister of State in the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Minister of State in the Ministry of Power.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Chandra Sekhar Sahu</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development.
<a href="#"><u>Smt. D. Purandeswari</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
<a href="#"><u>Shri M.H. Ambareesh</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
<a href="#"><u>Smt. V. Radhika Selvi</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri V. Narayanasamy</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Santosh Bagrodia</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Coal.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Raghunath Jha</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises.
<a href="#"><u>Dr. Rameshwar Oraon</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.
<a href="#"><u>Shri Jitin Prasada</u></a>	Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel.

## **Heads of State – President & Vice President** **(Information Last Updated September 2008)**

The Indian head of state is a president, who is “elected by an electoral college consisting of members of the upper and lower Houses of Parliament”. “[Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil](#)...assumed office as the 12th President of India on July 25, 2007. She is the first woman to have been elected to this august office”. Her term of office is scheduled to expire on 24 July 2012 (‘People in Power: India’ 2004, CIRCA: Cambridge International Reference on Current Affairs, 14 July; ‘Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil’ (undated), The President of India website <http://www.presidentofindia.nic.in/profile.html> – Accessed 1 September 2008; Election Commission of India (undated), ‘Terms of the Houses’, ECI website [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 1 September 2008).

The “vice president is elected by the members of the full parliament”. He “serves as *ex officio* chairman of the upper house of the legislature, the Council of States (*Rajya Sabha*), and presides over its meetings”. [Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari](#) is the current Vice President. His term of office is scheduled to expire on 10 August 2012 (‘People in Power: India’ 2004, CIRCA: Cambridge International Reference on Current Affairs, 14 July; Election Commission of India (undated), ‘Terms of the Houses’, ECI website [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 1 September 2008; ‘Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari’ (undated), Vice President of India website <http://vicepresidentofindia.nic.in/profile.asp> – Accessed 1 September 2008)

## Chief Ministers of the States & Union Territories (Information Last Updated July 2008)

Dr. Y.S.Rajasekhara Reddy (INC)	Andhra Pradesh
Gegong Apang (AC)	Arunachal Pradesh
Tarun Kumar Gogoi (APCC)	Assam
Nitish Kumar (JD)(U)	Bihar
Dr. Raman Singh (BJP)	Chhattisgarh
Sheela Dikshit (INC)	Delhi
Digambar Kamat (INC)	Goa
Narendra Modi (BJP)	Gujarat
Bhupinder Singh Hooda (INC)	Haryana
Prem Kumar Dhumal (BJP)	Himachal Pradesh
Ghulam Nabi Azad (INC)	Jammu & Kashmir
Madhu Koda (Ind)	Jharkhand
B.S.Yeddyurappa (BJP)	Karnataka
V.S. Achuthanandan (CPI-M)	Kerala
Shivraj Singh Chouhan (BJP)	Madhya Pradesh
Vilasrao Deshmukh (INC)	Maharashtra
Okram Ibobi Singh (INC)/Secular Front	Manipur
Donkumar Roy (MPA)	Meghalaya
Shri Zoramthanga (MNF)	Mizoram
Neiphiu Rio (DAN)	Nagaland
Navin Patnaik (BJD)	Orissa
Sardar Parkash Singh Badal (SAD-BJP)	Punjab
Vasundhara Raje Scindia (BJP)	Rajasthan
Pawan Chamling (SDF)	Sikkim
Dr. Kalaignar M Karunanidhi (DMK)	Tamil Nadu
Manik Sarkar (CPI)(M)	Tripura
Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri (BJP)	Uttarakhand
Congress/Coalition	<b>Key:</b> Indian National
Kumari Mayawati (BSP)	Uttar Pradesh
Buddhadev Bhattacharya (CPI)(M)	West Bengal
	Bharatiya Janata Party/Coalition
	Other

(The above information is from the government websites of individual states; click on the state for further details.)

The August 2004 edition of [The States of India at a Glance](#) resource guide provides a list of Chief Ministers of the States & Union Territories as they stood at the time.

## Justice, Law & Order

India's constitution, which provides for "a quasi-federal system of government", "limits the law-making power of the Union and State governments in what are known as the Union List [List I], State List [List II] and the Concurrent List [List III] in [Schedule VII](#)". Under the terms of List III, [Schedule VII](#), the Union and State governments "enjoy concurrent responsibility for the administration of justice, jurisdiction and powers of all courts (except the Supreme Court, over which the central [or Union] government retains jurisdiction), criminal law and procedure and

civil procedure.” Lists I and II detail the exclusive competencies of the Union and States with respect to offences against laws over which they have jurisdiction. Under these lists, the Union government “retains exclusive jurisdiction for offences against laws over which it alone has jurisdiction (List I of Schedule 7) and all matters involving the development or use of any armed forces of the Union or the use of civil power. Similarly, [the S]tates have exclusive competence with respect to offences against laws over which states have exclusive jurisdiction (List II of Schedule 7), [and] police and public order”. (Raghavan, R. K. Undated, *India: World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems*, US Department of Justice website <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/ascii/wfbcjind.txt> – Accessed 13 February 2006; International Commission of Jurists 2003, India <http://www.icj.org/IMG/pdf/india.pdf> – Accessed 13 February 2006).

### **Sources of Law**

The main sources of law in India derive from the Constitution, the legislatures of the states and the union, customary law and case law. There is also vast body of laws made under subordinate legislation, including laws made by municipal corporations, municipalities, gram panchayats (village councils) and other local bodies. Superior court decisions serve as important sources of law, while decisions of the Supreme Court, India’s final court of appeal, “are binding on all courts within the territory of India”. “Local customs and conventions which are not against statute, morality, etc., are also recognised and taken into account by courts while administering justice in certain spheres”. In criminal law, apart from a myriad of state laws, the main legal instrument are the *Indian Penal Code*, which divides around 300 offences into cognisable and non-cognisable crimes, and the *Code of Criminal Procedure* (Raghavan, R. K. Undated, *India: World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems*, US Department of Justice website <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/ascii/wfbcjind.txt> – Accessed 13 February 2006; Chapter 26. Justice and Law’ 2000, Embassy of India, Washington website [http://www.indianembassy.org/indiainfo/india\\_2000/chapters/chp26.pdf](http://www.indianembassy.org/indiainfo/india_2000/chapters/chp26.pdf) – Accessed 14 February 2006).

### **Enforcement**

Although public order and policing are state subjects under List II, Schedule VII, of the Indian Constitution, law enforcement is divided between the union and state governments. Union police forces, which include the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), undertake specialised work in which the interests of the Union government are directly involved. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which is among the most important, “is controlled by the Department of Personnel of the Union Government headed by a Minister of State who reports to the Prime Minister. The other forces are controlled by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs headed by a Cabinet Minister”. (Raghavan, R. K. Undated, *India: World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems*, US Department of Justice website <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/ascii/wfbcjind.txt> – Accessed 13 February 2006; Chapter 26. Justice and Law’ 2000, Embassy of India, Washington website [http://www.indianembassy.org/indiainfo/india\\_2000/chapters/chp26.pdf](http://www.indianembassy.org/indiainfo/india_2000/chapters/chp26.pdf) – Accessed 14 February 2006).

Union police personnel account for only a quarter of India’s total police strength. The bulk of the Indian police force is “comprised of forces in the States”. As summarised by R.K. Raghavan:



“Each State has its own force headed by a Director-General of Police (DGP) who is equivalent in rank to his counterpart in the Union Government forces. A number of Additional Directors-General or Inspectors-General of Police (IGP) who look after various portfolios, such as Personnel, Law & Order, Intelligence, Crime, Armed Police, Training, and Technical Services are located at the State Police Headquarters and report directly to the DGP. Major cities in a State are headed by a Commissioner of Police (CP) who, again, reports to the DGP. Areas outside these cities in a State are divided into Districts of varying size. Each district is headed by a Superintendent of Police (SP) and supervised by a Deputy Inspector-General (DIG) whose jurisdiction is called a Range, composed of a group of three or four districts.

“In each District and in the city police force, the basic police unit is a Police Station (PS). A few police stations have an Out-post (OP) which is a mini-station for serving remote or trouble-prone localities. The number of police stations depends on the size of the State and the District. The state of Madhya Pradesh, which is the largest state in terms of area (443,447 square kilometers), has 1,101 Police stations and 554 out-posts. While the larger districts have an average of 22 Police stations, the smaller ones have 15. A medium-sized state such as Tamil Nadu, with an area of 130,058 square kilometers, has 1,090 police stations and 163 out-posts. A medium-sized District covering an area of about 8,000 square kilometers has about 40 police stations.

“Each police station is headed by a Sub-Inspector or Inspector referred to as the Station House Officer (SHO). A designated number of Constables, the lowest rank in the police force, and Head Constables are assigned to each police station. In some States, there are additional ranks, such as Assistant Sub-Inspector or Assistant Police Inspector. While urban police stations often have certain functional divisions such as Law and Order and Crime and Traffic, no such divisions exist in rural or village police stations.

“An Armed Reserve at the District Headquarters, under the command of the Superintendent of Police, handles public disturbance problems, such as religious or caste riots and clashes between political rivals. There are a few battalions of the Special Armed Police (SAP) used for more serious situations. The SAP is deployed by the Director General of Police when the situation warrants it. For example, if during a major breakdown of public peace the State Police are outnumbered and unable to cope with the magnitude of the disorder, a State Government may ask for Central forces, especially the Central Reserve Police Force. The cost of such deployment is usually borne by the State government.

“The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is an important arm of every State Police department. Headed by an Additional Director of General Police or Inspector General of Police, it is a specialized agency for conducting sensitive inquiries into allegations against public figures or police personnel. More importantly, it is entrusted with the investigation of important criminal cases which cannot be solved by the District Police “ (Raghavan, R. K. Undated, *India: World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems*, US Department of Justice website <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/ascii/wfbcjind.txt> – Accessed 13 February 2006).

## **Adjudication**

India’s judiciary exists through the Constitution and various pieces of legislation. As summarized by the International Commission of Jurists:

“India’s legal system has developed under the influence of the common law traditions of the United Kingdom, and India remains essentially a common law jurisdiction. The judiciary plays a



central role within the Indian constitutional structure. Article 32 of the Constitution guarantees the right to apply to the Supreme Court for the enforcement of those fundamental rights contained in the Constitution...

“Chapter IV of Part V of the Constitution deals with the union judiciary. Article 124 concerns the establishment and constitution of the Supreme Court, which is the final court. It is composed of 26 justices, one of whom serves as Chief Justice. Its decisions are binding on all lower courts. Article 130 stipulates that the seat of the Court is in Delhi. Article 131 gives the Supreme Court original jurisdiction to hear any dispute between the Government and the states, or between states “if and insofar as the dispute involves any question (whether of law or fact) on which the existence or extent of a legal right depends.” The Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction on any judgement, decree or final order of a High Court, if the High Court certifies that a party can appeal under Article 134A, in the following cases:

- civil, criminal or other proceedings, if the case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution (Article 132);
- civil proceedings that involve a substantial question of law of general importance (Article 133);
- criminal proceedings where the High Court has, on appeal, reversed an order of acquittal, or withdrawn a case from a subordinate court for trial before itself and subsequently convicted the person, and then sentenced the person to death, or if the High Court believes the case to be fit for appeal to the Supreme Court (Article 134).

“Article 136 provides the Supreme Court with discretionary power to grant special leave to appeal from any judgement, decree, determination, sentence or order in any cause or matter passed by or made by a court or tribunal in the territory of India. The President may also request an advisory opinion from the Supreme Court pursuant to Article 143, on a question of law or fact that has arisen or is likely to arise. Cases involving the determination of a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution, and requests for an opinion under Article 143 must be heard by a panel of at least five judges.

“Chapter V of Part VI of the Constitution creates a High Court of Record for each state. Article 241 in Part VIII extends the provisions of Chapter V, Part VI to any High Courts created for union territories as well. Each existing High Court, subject to the Constitution, has the same jurisdiction as it had before the coming into force of the Constitution. All High Courts have such jurisdiction as may be conferred on them by the central or state governments on subject matters within the latter’s legislative competencies. High Courts also have original jurisdiction to issue writs and orders for the enforcement of the fundamental rights contained in Part II of the Constitution. State High Courts have a supervisory power over all subordinate courts and tribunals in areas where they exercise jurisdiction. There are currently 18 High Courts.

“Chapter VI of Part VI of the *Constitution* relates to the creation and jurisdiction over subordinate courts. The power to establish subordinate courts falls under the jurisdiction of both the central and state governments. Article 235 places the administrative control of all district and other subordinate courts in the High Court of that state. Special tribunals and courts are under the judicial control of the High Courts and the Supreme Court.

“Section 6 of the *Criminal Procedure Code* 1973 requires that the following criminal courts, in descending order of superiority, be created in each state: Courts of Sessions, Judicial Magistrates of the First Class, Judicial Magistrates of the Second Class and Executive Magistrates. Similarly, the *Civil Procedure Code* 1908 requires the establishment of a District Court. The Sessions and District Courts are the principal courts of original jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters

subordinate to the High Court. The precise jurisdiction of these courts and their names may vary from state to state” (International Commission of Jurists 2003, India <http://www.icj.org/IMG/pdf/india.pdf> – Accessed 13 February 2006).

## **Terrorism & Terrorist Groups** **(Information Last Updated May 2006)**

The US Department of State, which describes India as a significant partner in the global war on terror, includes a number of organisations with a real or alleged presence in India on its terrorist watch list of proscribed terrorist groups. Relevant groups listed in Appendices B and C of the Department’s 2003 publication *Patterns of Global Terrorism* include several Islamist groups, anti-India militant groups fighting in Kashmir, and two revolutionary Maoist groups – viz., Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM); Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) (Army of Mohammed); Lashkar–Tayyiba (LT) (Army of the Righteous); Al-Badr Mujahidin (al-Badr); Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI) (Movement of Islamic Holy War); Hizbul-Mujahidin (HM); Jamiat ul-Mujahidin (JUM); the Maoist Communist Center of India (MCCI); and Peoples War or Peoples War Group (PWG) (Naxalites). (Kronstadt, K. A. 2003, CRS Report for Congress: International Terrorism in South Asia, Federation of American Scientists website <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RS21658.pdf> – Accessed 1 March 2006; US Department of State 2004, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003 – Appendix B -- Background Information on Designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations*, 29 April <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31711.htm> – Accessed 1 March 2006; US Department of State 2004, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003 – Appendix C -- Background Information on Other Terrorist Groups*, 29 April <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31759.htm> – Accessed 1 March 2006).

At one time or another, using their own anti-terrorism instruments, Indian governments, engaged in their own wars on terror, have branded several groups with the terrorist label. The forty five groups currently attracting the terrorist label under the *Unlawful Activities Prevention Act* (UAPA) 1967 are tabled below. The list expands the number of groups that were proscribed under the previous *Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002*, which the current government repealed upon coming to power in 2004.

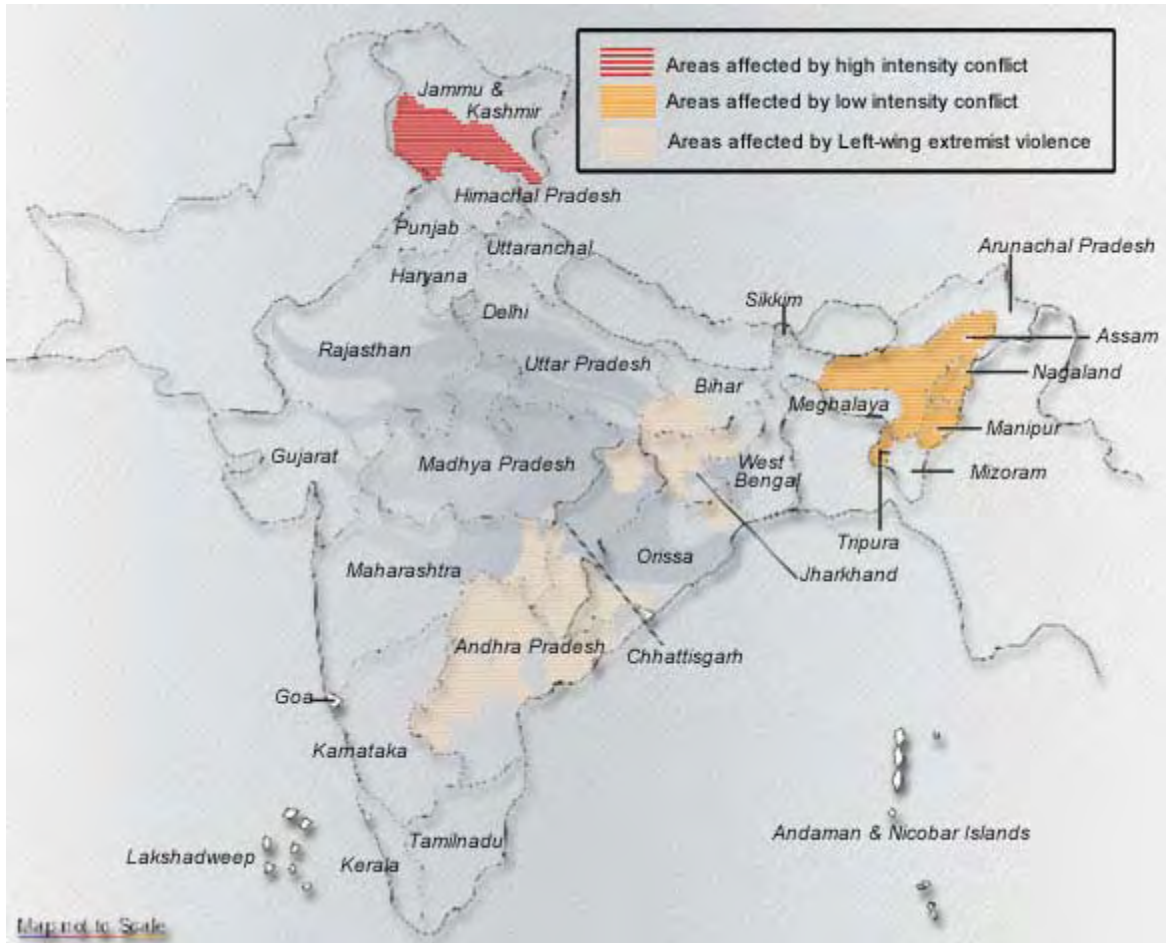
United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)
National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) in Assam
People’s Liberation Army (PLA)
United National Liberation Front (UNLF)
People’s Revolutionary party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)
Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP)
Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL)
Manipur People’s Liberation Front (MPLF)
Revolutionary People’s Front (RPF ) in Manipur
All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)

National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT ) in Tripura
Hynniewtre National Liberation Council (HNLC)
Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC) in Meghalaya
Babbar Khalsa International
Khalistan Commando Force
International Sikh Youth Federation
Lashkar-E-Taiba/Pasban-E-Ahle Hadis
Jaish-E-Mohammed/Tahrik-E-Furqan.
Harkat-UI-Mujahideen/Harkar-UI-Ansar/Karkat-UI-Jehad-E-Islami
Hizb-UI-Mujahideen/Hizb-UI-Mujahideen Pir Panjal Regiment
Al-Umar-Mujahideen
Jammu And Kashmir Islamic Front
United Liberation Front Of Assam (ULFA)
National Democratic Front Of Bodoland (NDFB)
People's Liberation Army (Pla)
United National Liberation Front (UNLF)
People's Revolutionary Party Of Kangleipak (PREPAK)
Kanleipak Communist Party (KCP)
Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL)
Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF)
All Tripura Tiger Force
National Liberation Front Of Tripura
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
Students Islamic Movement Of India
Deendar Anjuman
Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)-People's War, All Its Formations And Front Organisations
Maoist Communist Centre (MCC), All Its Formations And Front Organisations
Al Badr
Jamiat-UI-Mujahidden
Al-Qaida
Dukhtaran-E-Millat (DEM)
Tamil Nadu Liberation Army (TNLA)
Tamil National Retrieval Troops (TNRT)

(‘List of Organisations declared as terrorist organisations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967’ Undated, Indian Ministry of Home Affairs website [http://mha.nic.in/banned\\_org.htm](http://mha.nic.in/banned_org.htm) – Accessed 17 February 2006; Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, Government of India 2002, *The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002: Act No 15 of 2002*, 28 March, South Asia Terrorism Portal website <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/document/actandordinances/POTA.htm> – Accessed 12 August 2004).

For a list of groups banned under the previous Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), see the following source: Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, Government of India 2002, *The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002: Act No 15 of 2002*, 28 March, South Asia Terrorism Portal website <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/document/actandordinances/POTA.htm> – Accessed 12 August 2004).

The government’s list of terrorist groups largely corresponds with the following map which highlights theatres of internal conflict. Appearing on the South Asian Terrorism Portal website, the map highlights areas affected by high and low intensity conflict and areas affected by left-wing extremist violence as at 2002.



(‘India Assessment 2002’ Undated, South Asia Terrorism Portal website <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/index.html> – Accessed 13 February 2006).

## Media, Press Freedom, & Media s

“India has more news media than any other country in the world”; but its media landscape is overwhelmingly dominated by the state-owned radio and television networks, *Akashvani* and *Doordarshan*, which reach 99.1 per cent and 89.6 percent of India’s total population respectively. Published in 85 languages, India’s print media includes 55, 780 registered and 7,156 actual publications, and has a reach of “226 million readers or about 25 per cent of the population”. India’s media landscape also includes over 100 commercial TV stations, commercial radio stations, a growing number of local news websites, over 40 domestic news agencies, and four large publishing groups.

Freedom of press and media coverage is an implied freedom guaranteed by Article 19 of the Indian Constitution, which protects freedom speech and expression. As judicially construed, freedom of press and media coverage “includes not merely the freedom to write and publish what the writer considers proper (subject to reasonable restrictions imposed by law for specific purposes) but also the freedom to carry out business so that information may be disseminated and

excessive and prohibitive burdens restricting circulation may be avoided”. (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung 2005, *KAS Democracy Report 2005: India* [http://www.kas.de/upload/Publikationen/KAF-dem-rep2005\\_3-7.pdf](http://www.kas.de/upload/Publikationen/KAF-dem-rep2005_3-7.pdf) – Accessed 20 February 2006; ‘Constitution of India—Fundamental Rights’ Undated, I Love India website <http://www.iloveindia.com/constitution-of-india/fundamental-rights.html> – Accessed 7 February 2006).

Commentators on press freedoms in Indian generally agree that the press is largely unfettered. According to the French group, Reports Without Borders, India’s print media attempts to “play the role of fourth estate”, and is becoming “more and more independent and vigilant about defending the rights it has carved out over recent decades”. However the group’s 2005 report on India also notes that while “[t]he Congress Party’s return to power...had positive consequences for press freedom...brutal attacks against journalists persisted, on the orders of criminal gangs, political militants and some local authorities”. The report provides a summary of major attacks on journalists during the year (Reporters Without Borders 2005, India – Annual report 2005 [http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id\\_article=13427&var\\_recherche=india](http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=13427&var_recherche=india) – Accessed 1 March 2006).

## Media s

<i>Doordarshan</i>	<a href="http://www.ddindia.com/">http://www.ddindia.com/</a>
<i>National Informatics Centre</i>	<a href="http://www.nic.in/">http://www.nic.in/</a>
<i>Press and Information Bureau</i>	<a href="http://pib.nic.in/">http://pib.nic.in/</a>
<i>Press Trust of India</i>	<a href="http://www.ptinews.com/">www.ptinews.com/</a>
<i>Economic Times</i>	<a href="http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/">http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/</a>
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	<a href="http://www.hindustantimes.com/">http://www.hindustantimes.com/</a>
<i>Times of India</i>	<a href="http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/">http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/</a>
<i>Outlook Magazine</i>	<a href="http://www.outlookindia.com/">www.outlookindia.com/</a>
<i>India Today</i>	<a href="http://www.india-today.com/">www.india-today.com/</a>
<i>Indian Express</i>	<a href="http://www.expressindia.com/">www.expressindia.com/</a>
<i>The Hindu</i>	<a href="http://www.hinduonline.com/">http://www.hinduonline.com/</a>
<i>NDTV</i>	<a href="http://ndtv.com/">http://ndtv.com/</a>
<i>History Talking</i>	<a href="http://www.historytalking.com/">http://www.historytalking.com/</a>
<i>All India Radio</i>	<a href="http://www.newsonair.com">www.newsonair.com</a>
<i>Bharat Daily</i>	<a href="http://www.bharatdaily.com">www.bharatdaily.com</a>
<i>IOL India</i>	<a href="http://www.iolindia.com">www.iolindia.com</a>
<i>Jagaran</i>	<a href="http://www.jagran.com">www.jagran.com</a>
<i>Navabharat</i>	<a href="http://www.navabharat.net">www.navabharat.net</a>
<i>Navbharat Times</i>	<a href="http://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com">navbharattimes.indiatimes.com</a>
<i>Deccan Herald</i>	<a href="http://www.deccanherald.com">www.deccanherald.com</a>
<i>The Asian Age</i>	<a href="http://www.asianage.com">www.asianage.com</a>
<i>The Pioneer</i>	<a href="http://www.dailypioneer.com">www.dailypioneer.com</a>
<i>The Telegraph</i>	<a href="http://www.telegraphindia.com">www.telegraphindia.com</a>
<i>The Tribune</i>	<a href="http://www.tribuneindia.com">www.tribuneindia.com</a>
<i>The Financial Express</i>	<a href="http://www.financialexpress.com">www.financialexpress.com</a>

<i>The Statesman</i>	<a href="http://www.thestatesman.com">www.thestatesman.com</a>
<i>Frontline</i>	<a href="http://www.flonnet.com/">http://www.flonnet.com/</a>
<i>Economic and Political Weekly</i>	<a href="http://www.epw.org.in/showIndex.php">http://www.epw.org.in/showIndex.php</a>
<i>Organiser</i> (RSS Organ)	<a href="http://www.organiser.org/dynamic/">http://www.organiser.org/dynamic/</a>

(‘Media Monitor-South Asia 2003 report:Pakistan worst in press harassment in S Asia’ 2004, *The Daily Times* online edition, 17 May [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story\\_17-5-2004\\_pg7\\_12](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_17-5-2004_pg7_12) – Accessed 1 March 2006; ‘India Media’ 2006, Encyclopedia of the Nations website <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Asia-and-Oceania/India-MEDIA.html> – Accessed 1 March 2006; ‘India at Glance’ Undated, Embassy Avenue website <http://www.embassy-avenue.jp/india/glance2.html> – Accessed 1 March 2006; ‘Country profile: India’ 2006, *BBC News website*, 4 February [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1154019.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1154019.stm) – Accessed 1 March 2006).

## Political Parties

Any “association or body of individual citizens of India calling itself a political party and intending to avail itself of the provisions of Part-IV-A of the *Representation of the People Act*” must be registered with the Election Commission of India to take part in general elections to the national or state legislative assemblies. The Election Commission of India “ensures inner party democracy in their functioning by insisting upon them to hold their organizational elections at periodic intervals” and “a level playing field for the political parties in election fray, through strict observance by them of a Model Code of Conduct evolved with the consensus of political parties”.

Registered political parties are categorised by the Election Commission as National, State, or Registered Unrecognised political parties depending on their length of political activity and performance in elections. “How a party is classified determines a party’s right to certain privileges, such as access to electoral rolls and provision of time for political broadcasts on the state-owned television and radio stations...and also the important question of the allocation of the party symbol.” Subject to the conditions prescribed by the Commission in the *Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order*, 1968:

**1.** A political party shall be treated as a recognised political party in a State, if and only if either the conditions specified in Clause (A) are, or the condition specified in Clause (B) is, fulfilled by that party and not otherwise, that is to say-

(A) that such party –

- has been engaged in political activity for a continuous period of five years; and
- has, at the last general election in that State to the House of the People, or, as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, returned- either ( i ) at least one member to the House of the People for every twenty-five members of that House or any fraction of that number from that State; or (ii) at least one member to the Legislative Assembly of that State for every thirty members of that Assembly or any fraction of that number;

(B) that the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates set up by such party at the last general election in the State to the House of the People, or as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, is not less than six per cent of the total number of valid votes polled by all the contesting candidates at such general election in the State.

**2.** The conditions in Clause (A) or Clause (B) above shall not be deemed to have been fulfilled by a political party, if a member of the House of the People or the Legislative



Assembly of the State becomes a member of that political party after his election to that House or, as the case may be, that Assembly.

3. `State' includes the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

4. If a political party is treated as a recognised political party in four or more States, it shall be known as a `National Party' throughout the whole of India, but only so long as that political party continues to fulfill thereafter the conditions for recognition in four or more States on the results of any subsequent general election either to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of any State.

5. If a political party is treated as a recognised political party in less than four States, it should be known as a `State Party' in the State or States in which it is so recognised, but only so long as that political party continues to fulfill thereafter the conditions for recognition on the results of any subsequent general election to the House of the People or, as the case may be, to the Legislative Assembly of the State, in the said State or States.

A "registered unrecognised party" is a minor political "party which is registered with the Election Commission of India, but is not a State or National party". The classification applies to political parties which are not represented in four or more States and /or Union Territories, or to political parties which do not return a ratio of 1:25 or 1:30 members to the House of the People or a Legislative Assembly, respectively. ('Manual of Election Law—Statutory Rules and Orders: The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968' 1997, Election Commission of India website

[http://archive.eci.gov.in/manuals/part5/stat21\\_4.htm](http://archive.eci.gov.in/manuals/part5/stat21_4.htm) – Accessed 1 March 2006; 'Handbooks' Undated, , Election Commission of India website [http://archive.eci.gov.in/Handbook/returning-officer/ran20/ran20\\_5.htm](http://archive.eci.gov.in/Handbook/returning-officer/ran20/ran20_5.htm) – Accessed 1 March 2006; 'Explanatory note on forfeiture of deposit and types of parties' 1996, Election Commission of India website

<http://www.eci.gov.in/elec96/staticrep/ls24.ht> – Accessed 13 October 2003; 'Political Parties and Elections – Recognition and Reservation of Symbols' 2003, Indian Elections website <http://www.indian-elections.com/electoralsystem/politicalpartiesandelections.html> – Accessed 13 October 2003).

As listed by the Election Commission of India, in 2004/2005 there were 6 National Parties, 55 State Parties, and around over 800 Registered Unrecognised Parties. National and State lists of registered unrecognised parties are available on the website of the [Indian Election Commission](#) and in the *Provisional Statistical Report on General Election to the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha*. The following list provides only a brief description of India's six National Parties and some of the main State Parties.

## National Parties



### **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)**

**Election Symbol:** Lotus

The Bharatiya Janata Party, or Indian People's Party, was formed as a separate political entity in 1980 after internal differences in the Janata Party resulted in the collapse of its government in



1979. The party is the dominant component of the National Democratic Alliance and has close ties to the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) organization. The party is led by Atal Behari Vajpayee (parliamentary leader) and Shri Lal Krishna Advani, Leader of the Opposition in the *Lok Sabha* (Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 244 – MRT/RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).  
[Click here to visit the party's website](#)



### **Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)**

**Election Symbol:** Elephant, except in the States of Assam and Sikkim, where its candidates choose another symbol from a list of free symbols

The Bahujan Samaj Party was founded in 1980 as the champion of the the “Untouchable” or “scheduled castes”. It is strongest in the state of Uttar Pradesh, where it briefly formed Government in alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1996. The party is lead by Kanshi Ram and Mayawati Kumari. (Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 244 – MRT/RRT Library; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **Communist Party of India (CPI)**

**Election Symbol:** Ears of Corn and Sickle

The Communist Party of India was “founded in 1925 and advocates the establishment of a socialist society led by the working class, and ultimately of a communist society.” “On the national level it supports the Indian National Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government, but without taking part in it”. The party is lead by A.B. Bardhan (general secretary) (Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 244 – MRT/RRT Library; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M)**

**Election Symbol:** Hammer, Sickle and Star

“Formed in 1964, as a breakaway faction of the Communist Party of India because of what it describes as the latter’s revisionism and sectarianism. In October 2000, the Election Commission demoted CPI-M’s status from that of a national party to a State party. CPI (M) took 5.5% of vote in last legislative election (May 2004) and it has 43 MPs. They support the Indian National Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government but without taking part in it. In West Bengal and Tripura it participates in Left Front. In Kerala the party is part of Left Democratic Party. In Tamil Nadu it is part of the Progressive Democratic Alliance. General-Secretary: Harkishan Singh Surjeet. The CPI (M) MP Somnath Chatterjee is the speaker of the Lok Sabha (2004)” (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **Indian National Congress – Congress (I) (INC)**

**Election Symbol:** Hand

“Party of Indian independence, then of Government for 45 of the following 50 years under Nehru, his daughter Indira Gandhi (Congress I) and grandson Rajiv Gandhi. Had support throughout India, but suffered massive losses in the North and partially in the West in 1998 and lost the confidence of traditional voters such as Muslims and scheduled castes. Sonia Gandhi, widow of Rajiv Gandhi, took over as President of Congress (I) in April 1998. In December 2003, Congress began actively seeking alliance partners. The 2004 national elections ended governance by the BJP and brought in a new left-leaning coalition government, the United Progressive Alliance led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh after Sonia Gandhi declined the post. The INC with its allies won 217 seats (35.8% of the votes) in the parliamentary election” (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)**

**Election Symbol:** Clock

“Formed in 1999 by Sharad Pawar, a senior Congress (I) leader from Maharashtra, and others expelled from Congress (I) for being unwilling to accept Sonia Gandhi, a non-Indian born citizen, as Congress’ candidate for Prime Minister. Formed coalition Government with Congress (I) after

State elections in Maharashtra. The NCP won half of the 18 seats it contested in the 2004 elections”. The party is lead by Sharad Pawar (president) (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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## State Parties



### **All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) (Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry)**

**Election Symbol:** Two leaves

The India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, or All Indian Dravidian Pressive Federation, “was formed in 1972 by a breakaway faction of the Dravidan Progressive Federation (DMK), and became one of the dominant regional parties in Tamil Nadu state form 1977”. The party “reflects Tamil nationalist sentiment” and has at times formed alliances with both the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The party is lead by a former film starlet, Jayalalitha Jayaram (Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 244 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **All India Forward Bloc (ALFB) West Bengal)**

**Election Symbol:** Lion

Founded in 1940, the All India Forward Bloc (ALFB) “has socialist aims, including nationalisation of major industries, land reform and redistribution.” It is a minor ally of the Communist Party India –Marxist in West Bengal”, where it is based. Debabrata Biswas is the party’s reigning General Secreatry (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 244 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) (West Bengal, Meghalaya)**

**Election Symbol:** Flowers and Grass

“The Trinamool Congress originated in 1997 as a break away from the West Bengal organization of the Indian National Congress – Congress (I) under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee and in opposition to the local alliance of the Congress (I) with Communists. It was renamed as the All-India Trinamool Congress in 1998 although predominantly based in West Bengal”. (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October – ; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 244 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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### **Arunachal Congress (AC) (Arunachal Pradesh)**

**Election Symbol:** Two Daos Intersecting

The Arunachal Congress was set up in September 1996 as a splinter-group of Indian National Congress after the local party leader and State Chief Minister, Gegong Apang, revolted against the then Congress leader P.V. Narasimha Rao. Factionalism has reduced the party’s size in the current state assembly to two seats and seen Apang return to the INC. (Talukdar, S. 2004, ‘Uphill task for Apang’, *Frontline* online edition, Volume 21, Issue 22, 23 October – 5 November <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2122/stories/20041105006001900.htm> – Accessed 3 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) (Assam)**

**Election Symbol:** Elephant

The Asom Gana Parishad or Assam’s People Council was founded in 1985 “two months after the signing of the Assam Accord (15 August 1985), which brought to an end the six-year-long Assam agitation led by the All Assam Students’ Union (AASU) and an alliance of small regional political parties and other ‘non-political’ structures under the name of All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP). The central demand of the agitation was the expulsion of foreign nationals illegally staying in Assam... Another two months later, the AGP won a decisive victory in the elections to the State Assembly and formed the first government by a regional party in Assam”.

(Prabhakara, M. S. 2004, ‘From agitation to governance’, *Frontline* online edition, Volume 21, Issue 08, 10-23 April <http://www.flonnet.com/fl2108/stories/20040423005602700.htm> –

Accessed 2 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)



**Biju Janata Dal (BJD) (Orissa)**

**Election Symbol:** Conch

The Biju Janata Dal is comprised “of almost the entire Janata Dal unit of Orissa, which formed the BJD because of neglect by the Janata Dal national leadership”. It is ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the “main Government party in Orissa”. The party is led by Naveen Patnaik (Chief Minister of Orissa)” (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



**Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Liberation) (CPI (ML) (Liberation)) (Bihar, Jharkhand)**

**Election Symbol:** Flag with Three Stars

The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Liberation) is a faction of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist). Information appearing on the party’s website indicates that the Liberation group was born of the factionalism that plagued the CPI (ML) in the 1970s. The party has a claimed membership of around 74,000. (‘Party organisation” Undated, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Liberation) website <http://cpiml.org/pgs/polorgreport/13.htm> – Accessed 3 March 2006; ‘CPI(ML) – The Firm Defender of the Revolutionary Legacy of Indian Communists’ Undated, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Liberation) website [http://www.cpiml.org/archive/vm\\_swork/54cpi\\_ml\\_the\\_firm\\_defender.htm](http://www.cpiml.org/archive/vm_swork/54cpi_ml_the_firm_defender.htm) – Accessed 3 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).

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**Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) (Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry)**

**Election Symbol:** Rising Sun

Founded in 1949, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam “supports greater federalism” and “resents northern domination”. The party is “exclusive to Tamil Nadu and [is] supported primarily by locally dominant scheduled castes”. “In 1972, a faction of the party broke away to form the AIADMK”. The party was a member of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance in the last Lok

Sabha. The party is led by Muthuvel Karunanidhi (President). (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)

[Click here to visit the party's website](#)



### **Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) (Haryana)**

**Election Symbol:** Spectacles

The Indian National Lok Dal is based in Haryana where won the 2000 election to the state's legislative assembly and formed an alliance government with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The alliance fell apart before the 2005 election to the state's legislative assembly, at which the party was defeated by the Indian National Congress. Its standing in the state's legislative assembly was reduced, out of a total of 90 seats, to 9 seats from 47 in 2000. The party is led by Om Prakash Chautala. (Election Commission of India 2000, *Statistical Report on General Election 2000 to the Legislative Assembly of Haryana*, Election Commission of India website <http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2005, *Statistical Report on General Election 2005 to the Legislative Assembly of Haryana*, Election Commission of India website <http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Rajalakshmi, T. K. 2005, 'Assembly Elections: Haryana's dilemma', *Frontline* online edition, Volume 22, Issue 03, 29 January – 11 February <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2203/stories/20050211003902800.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) (Jammu & Kashmir)**

**Election Symbol:** Plough

The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference is "opposed to Hindu communalism" and advocates "the maintenance of Jammu and Kashmir's status as an integral part of the India Union but with internal autonomy and self-government. It was the dominant party in Kashmir for most of the period from independence until 1990, when communal violence led to the imposition of President's rule in the state". The party was formally known as the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. It was founded in 1931, renamed in 1939, and reactivated 1975. The party is led by Farooq Abdullah. (Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).





### **Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party (JKNPP) (Jammu & Kashmir)**

**Election Symbol:** Bicycle

The Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party is part of Jammu & Kashmir's ruling coalition and claims to represent displaced Kashmiri *pandits* in the state. The party is led by Bhim Singh. ('Pandits and Kashmir politics' 2003-2005, KashmirWatch website <http://www.kashmirwatch.com/pandits.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006; 'Jagmohan, Mufti masterminded KPs exodus' 2005, Institute of Peace of Conflict Studies website, sourced from *Greater Kashmir*, 15 December [http://www.ipcs.org/Dec\\_05\\_kashmir.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/Dec_05_kashmir.pdf) – Accessed 6 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party (JKPDP) (Jammu & Kashmir)**

**Election Symbol:** Ink Pot and Pen

The Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party states that the "party's top priority" is "to ensure the return of Kashmiri Pandits to the valley with dignity and honour". ('Migrants' return top priority: PDP' 2002, *The Tribune* online edition, 19 September <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2002/20020920/j&k.htm#11> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Janadhipathya Samrakshana Samithi (JSS) (Kerala)**

**Election Symbol:** Bus

Based in Kerala, the Janadhipathya Samrakshana Samithi was founded by KR Gauri, "a prominent figure in the Communist movement in Kerala", after she "was expelled from [the Communist Party of India (Marxist)] [CPI (M)] on charges of anti-party activities". The party struggles "to provide social justice to socially backward sections in society, such as Adivasis, backward communities and minorities" and is critical of "the growing predilection shown by the United Progressive Alliance Government at the Centre towards the U.S". The party is led by A.N. Rajan Babu (President) ('JSS plenary session' 2006, *The Hindu* online edition, 13 February <http://www.hindu.com/2006/02/13/stories/2006021309200400.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; 'KR Gauri' 2000, Keral.Com website <http://www.keral.com/celebrities/gowri/index.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006)



**Janata Dal (United) (JD-U) (Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka)**

**Election Symbol:** Arrow

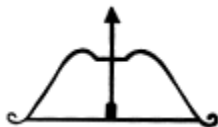
The Janata Dal (United) was “formed on the eve of the 1999 Lok Sabha election due to a split in the Janata Dal over whether to ally with the BJP in the National Democratic Alliance. The JD (U) favoured the alliance.” The party is led by George Fernandes (President) (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October ; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; ‘Know your party: Janata Dal (United)’ 2004, Rediff.Com website, 29 April <http://www.rediff.com/election/2004/apr/29espec1.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006).



**Janata Dal (Secular) (JD-S) (Karnataka, Kerala)**

**Election Symbol:** A Lady Farmer Carrying a Paddy on Her Head

“A smaller section of the Janata Dal did not agree with an alliance with the BJP and formed the Janata Dal (Secular)”. The party is led by former Prime Minister, H.D. Deve Gowda. (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



**Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) (Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand)**

**Election Symbol:** Bow and Arrow

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha was “founded in 1980 to represent the interests of the tribal people of the state of Bihar, where it won about 5% of the seats in the 1995 legislative assembly”. The party was instrumental “in achieving the creation of a new Jharkhand regional state – carved out of Bihar and Orissa – in 2000, where it currently heads a coalition government”. (Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).





### **Kerala Congress (KC) (Kerala)**

**Election Symbol:** Bicycle

The Kerala Congress is broadly “concerned with the interests of the Christians of Kerala”. Broken up into at least five competing factions, the party “has failed to emerge” as a force in the state. Previously, it had been “a participant in the Left Democratic Front coalition government, headed by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which came to power in Kerala in May 1996”. (‘Kerala Congress factions urged to merge’ 2004, *The Hindu* online edition, 9 October <http://www.hindu.com/2004/10/09/stories/2004100905330300.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP) (Goa)**

**Election Symbol:** Lion

The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party, Goa’s oldest regional party, ruled Goa for nearly 17 consecutive years after the state’s liberation from Portuguese colonial in 1961. Limited by a narrow Hindu agenda, the party’s standing in the state has diminished. The party has also recently shifted from supporting the Bharatiya Janata Party to supporting the Indian National Congress. The party is led by Surendra Sirsat. (Sharma, R. 2005, ‘Another government in Goa’, *Frontline* online edition, Volume 22, Issue 13, 18 June – 1 July <http://www.flonnet.com/fl2213/stories/20050701003502900.htm> – Accessed 6 March 2006; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; ‘MGP is battling for its existence’, *Goa.Com Daily News Clippings*, *Goa.Com* website, 10 April <http://www.goacom.com/news/getStory.php?ID=517> – Accessed 6 March 2006).



### **Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) (Tamil Nadu)**

**Election Symbol:** Top

The Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam or Marumalarchi Dravida Progressive Federation is “a breakaway faction of the Dravidian Progressive Federation (DMK)”. The party has frequently exchanged alliances with other political parties in Tamil Nadu, most recently with

the AIADMK. The party is identified as a “strongly Tamil nationalist grouping” and is led by Thiru Vaiko (president). (‘AIADMK, MDMK meet to identify constituencies’ 2006, Rediff.Com website, 6 March <http://in.rediff.com/news/2006/mar/06tn.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2006; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; Banks, A. S. *et al eds.* 2003, *Political Handbook of the World 2000-2002*, CSA Publications, New York, p. 492 – RRT Library)  
[Click here to visit the party’s website](#)



### **Mizo National Front (MNF) (Mizoram)**

**Election Symbol:** Star

The Mizo National Front “was legalised in 1986 (upon the conferment of statehood in Mizoram), having earlier waged an underground campaign for national determination”. The party was returned to power for a second time in Mizoram at the 2003 election to the state legislative assembly. The party is led by Pu Zoramthanga, Mizoram’s current Chief Minister. (‘The Mizo National Front (MNF) is back in power for the second time in Mizoram 2003, *The Hindu* online edition, 2 December

<http://www.hindu.com/2003/12/03/stories/2003120308970100.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2006; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)



### **Mizoram People’s Conference (MPC) (Mizoram)**

**Election Symbol:** Electric Bulb

“The MPC, a human rights organisation-turned political party in 1973, had been at the helm of Mizoram state government during the late seventies and into the early eighties.” The party is a constituent member of the Mizoram Secular Force, “a political front in Mizoram launched ahead of the 2004 Lok Sabha elections”, which includes the Indian National Congress and the Zoram Nationalist Party. The party is led by Brig T.Sailo, the party’s founder and former chief minister. (‘Former CM to lead Mizoram People’s Conference party again’ 2006, New.Kerala.Com website <http://www.newkerala.com/news.php?action=fullnews&id=95707> – Accessed 7 March 2006; ‘Mizoram\_Secular\_Force’ Undated, Gateserver website [http://www.gateserver.net/Topicdetails.aspx?Topicid=72307&name=&catid=349&topicname=Mizoram\\_Secular\\_Force](http://www.gateserver.net/Topicdetails.aspx?Topicid=72307&name=&catid=349&topicname=Mizoram_Secular_Force) – Accessed 7 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



**Muslim League Kerala State Committee (Kerala) (a.k.a. Indian Union Muslim League)**

**Election Symbol:** Ladder

Known nationally as the Indian Union Muslim League, the party contests elections in Kerala as the Muslim League Kerala State Committee where it is led by Shri Syed Mohammedali hihab Thangal (president). ('Introduction: Aims and Objectives' 2003, Indian Union Muslims League website <http://www.indianunionmuslimleague.com/intro.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2006; 'Track Record' 2003, Indian Union Muslims League website

<http://www.indianunionmuslimleague.com/track.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)

[Click here to visit the party's website](#)



**Nagaland Peoples Front (NPF) (Nagaland)**

**Election Symbol:** Cock

After the 2003 election to Nagaland's legislative assembly, the Nagaland Peoples Front became the major partner in the state's alliance government, the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland, which includes the Bharatiya Janata Party. The party is led by Dr. Shurhozelie (president) ('Shurhozelie hopes DAN Govt not only completes full term but to continue for next 10 to 15 years' 2005,

*Asian Tribune* online edition, 5 March [http://www.asiantribune.com/show\\_news.php?id=13609](http://www.asiantribune.com/show_news.php?id=13609) – Accessed 9 March 2006; 'NPF-BJP combine confident of forming govt in Nagaland' 2003, *Asian Tribune* online edition, 2 March [http://www.asiantribune.com/show\\_news.php?id=2844](http://www.asiantribune.com/show_news.php?id=2844) – Accessed 9 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



**Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) (Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry)**

**Election Symbol:** Mango

The Pattali Makkal Katchi is caste based political party. It represents the "large Vanniya caste which is prominent in north Tamil Nadu". The party has frequently exchanged alliances with

Tamil Nadu's two main political parties, the AIADMK and the DMK. The party was founded and is led by Dr S Ramadoss. (Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in Political Parties of the World, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; 'From a sectarian leader, Ramadoss has come a long way' 1999, Rediff.Com website, 30 August <http://www.rediff.com/election/1999/aug/30pmk.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006).



### **Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) (Jharkhand, Bihar)**

**Election Symbol:** Hurricane Lantern

The Rashtriya Janata Dal or National People's Party was founded in 1997 "by a breakaway group of former Janata Dal MPs from Bihar". The party coalesced "around the erstwhile JD leader Laloo Prasad Yadav" following his "indictment for corruption and subsequent forced resignation as Bihar chief minister". The party's stronghold is in Bihar, where it is supported by Muslims and the "backward Yadav caste". The party, which ruled Bihar for 15 consecutive years, was ousted from power at the 2005 election to Bihar's legislative assembly. The party is led by Laloo Prasad Yadav. (Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in Political Parties of the World, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in Political Parties of the World, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 248 – RRT Library; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; 'Bihar's new leader takes office' 2005, *BBC News*, 24 November [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4464396.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4464396.stm) – Accessed 9 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) (Uttar Pradesh)**

**Election Symbol:** Hand Pump

The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) is heir to the Lok Dal, an anti-Congress party founded by the late Charan Singh in the late 1970s. Its support base is confined to the "Jat belt" in "western Uttar Pradesh. The party has been known to exchange alliances and is currently led by Ajit Singh. ('Ajit Singh's forays' 2001, *The Hindu* online edition, 25 July <http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/2001/07/25/stories/05252512.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006; 'NDA to decide P.C. Thomas' political future' 2001, *The Hindu* online edition, 31 July <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/2001/07/31/stories/0431211d.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007).



### **Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) (West Bengal)**

**Election Symbol:** Spade and Stoker

The Revolutionary Socialist Party is a “minor Marxist-Leninist party”. It is allied with Communist Party of India (Marxist) and supported in West Bengal. The party is led by Debarata Bandopadhyay and Abani Roy. (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October;

Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)



### **Samajwadi Party (SP) (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal)**

**Election Symbol:** Bicycle

The Samajwadi Party or Socialist party was founded in October 1992 in Uttar Pradesh, emerging out of the Janata Dal “as an aggressive champion of specific backward castes and Muslims”. Among its policies, the party supports “reservation in jobs and education” and “favours a confederation of India-Pakistan-Bangladesh”. Since its founding, the party has been led by Mulayam Singh Yadav. (‘Know the Samajwadi Party’ 2004, Rediff.Com website, May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2004/may/07espec2.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October – ; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)

[Click here to visit the party’s website](#)



### **Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) (Punjab)**

**Election Symbol:** Scales

“The SAD is the main political organization of India’s Sikh community, which is concentrated in Punjab. In support of its demands for Sikh self-determination, the SAD became increasingly militant in the early 1980s and has since been subject to [rampant] factional rivalry and division”. Its main faction, led by Prakash Singh Badal, represents moderate Sikh interests and “supports greater federalism”. It is also a “strong ally” of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 246 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) –

Accessed 3 April 2007; Banks, A. S. *et al eds.* 2003, *Political Handbook of the World 2000-2002*, CSA Publications, New York, p. 492 – RRT Library).

[Click here to visit the party's website](#)



### **Shiv Sena (SS) (Maharashtra)**

**Election Symbol:** Bow and Arrow

The Shiv Sena, or the Army of Shivaji, was founded in 1967 and is based in Maharashtra state. It is “a right-wing Hindu communalist party” and allied to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The party was originally founded “to promote the interests of [the] ‘sons of the soil’”, local Maharashtrian youth who were being squeezed out of Maharashtra’s workforce by “migrants from south India”. The party “dumped its anti-South Indian stand in 1970 and drifted to Hindutva after a long spell in the wilderness in the 1970s”. The party was founded and is led by “a former newspaper cartoonist turned populist orator”, Balashaheb (Bal) Thackeray. His son, Uddhav Thackeray, is the “Working President”. (Banks, A. S. *et al eds.* 2003, *Political Handbook of the World 2000-2002*, CSA Publications, New York, p. 493 – RRT Library; Day, A. J. 2002, ‘India’, in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 246 – RRT Library; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; ‘Know your party: Shiv Sena’ 2004, Rediff.Com website, 23 April <http://in.rediff.com/election/2004/apr/23espec3.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006).



### **Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) Sikkim)**

**Election Symbol:** Umbrella

The Sikkim Democratic Front was formed under the leadership of Mr. Chamling on 4 March 1993 and has been in power in the state of Sikkim for more than eleven years. The party joined the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) at the Centre in February 2006. It is led by Sikkim’s chief minister, Pawan Kumar Chamling. (‘Sikkim Democratic Front becomes United Progressive Alliance’ 2006, New Kerala website, 16 February <http://www.newkerala.com/news2.php?action=fullnews&id=10998> – Accessed 9 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January [http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007)



### **Telugu Desam Party (TDP) (Andhra Pradesh)**

**Election Symbol:** Bicycle

The Telegu Dasam is an “Andhra Pradesh-based leftist party”. It was founded in 1982 by N.T. Rama Rao, “the Telugu film industry’s most popular actor”, and was “catapulted to power with an absolute majority” at the 1993 election to the legislative assembly of Andhra Pradesh when it



won 198 of the state's 294 legislative assembly seats. The party was ousted from power in the 2004 state assembly election. The party is an ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party, and is led by Nara Chandrababu Naidu. (UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; Day, A. J. 2002, 'India', in *Political Parties of the World*, 5th Edition, John Harper Publishing, p. 247 – RRT Library; 'Know the Telegu Dasam Party' 2004, Rediff.Com website, 14 April <http://www.rediff.com/election/2004/apr/14espec3.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006)

[Click here to visit the party's website](#)



### **Uttarakhand Kranti Dal (Uttarakhand)**

**Election Symbol:** Chair

#### **Uttarakhand Kranti Dal or Uttarakha Revolutionary Party was founded in 1979**

The Uttarakhand Kranti Dal was founded in 1979 to fight for a separate state comprising the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh. This demand was partially achieved in 2000 with the creation of Uttaranchal. The party, however, failed to achieve notable results in the new state's first ever state assembly elections in 2002, when it won only 4 out of 70 seats. The party is led by Shri Bipin Chandra Tripathi (President) ('Uttarakhand' Undated, US Library of Congress, Country Studies website <http://countrystudies.us/india/77.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006; Election Commission of India 2007, *Political Parties And Election Symbols as on 06-01-07*, 6 January

[http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols\\_notification\\_06-01-07.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/ElectoralLaws/OrdersNotifications/symbols_notification_06-01-07.pdf) – Accessed 3 April 2007; 'Uttarakhand Kranti Dal' 2005, Election Commission of India website, October <http://www.eci.gov.in/Oct2005/parties/state/UKKD.htm> – Accessed 9 March 2006).

## **Other Political Organisations**

### **All India Sikh Student Federation (AISSF)**

The All India Sikh Students Federation (AISSF) was formed in 1944 by Sardar Swarup Singh and was the first Sikh body to formally enunciate aspirations for a separate Sikh homeland in India; its objectives included propagating "Sikhism among the college-going Sikh students." The organisation was briefly banned between 19 March 1984 and 11 April 1985, and is now riven with factionalism. Currently, the Federation's main faction is led by Harminder Singh Gill (President). (Immigration and Refugee Board 2003, IND41011.E – *India: The All India Sikh Students Federation (AISSF) and the treatment of its members by the authorities (2001-present)*, 27 March – ; UK Home Office 2004, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, October – ; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) 1994, *DFAT Report – India: RRT information request: All India Sikh Students Federation*, 10 August – CISNET CX3079).

### **Bajrang Dal (BD)**

The Bajrang Dal (BD) is the militant youth wing of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) or World Hindu Council. It was formed in 1984 under the leadership of Vinay Katiyar, a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) functionary, during the *Babri masjid – Ramjanambhoomi* agitation



“in order to mobilize youth for the Ayodhya campaign”. The group is accredited with committing numerous acts of communal violence, including ongoing attacks against India’s Christian and Muslim communities. The group was briefly banned in 1992/1993 for its role in the destruction of the Babri *masjid* (mosque) in Ayodhya and subsequent wave of communal violence throughout India. The group is currently headed by Prakash Sharma (national convener). The group is part of the Sangh Parivar (see below) (Human Rights Watch 1999, *Politics By Other Means*, September pp 5, 10-11 – <http://www.indhrw99v11n6.doc>; Jaffrelot, Christopher 1993, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, Columbia University Press, New York, pp. 363, 457-466 – RRT Library; ‘Bajrang Dal to launch agitation’ 2006, Outlook online edition, 8 March [http://www.outlookindia.com/pti\\_news.asp?id=369026](http://www.outlookindia.com/pti_news.asp?id=369026) – Accessed 9 March 2006)  
[Click here to visit the organisation’s website](#)

### **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) (Association of National Volunteers)**

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) or Association of National Volunteers has been described as “the ideological fountainhead of various Hindu groups”. It was founded in 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, a medical doctor from Maharashtra, with the objective of making Indian a “Hindu nation”. The association heads a large family of affiliated organisations known collectively as the Sangh Parivar. Among a variety of groups, the so-called family (parivar) includes the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and the Bajrang Dal. The RSS has at times been banned by the union government. (‘Analysis: RSS aims for a Hindu nation’ 2003, BBC News website, 10 March [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/south\\_asia/655722.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/south_asia/655722.stm) – Accessed 24 May 2006; UK Home Office 2003, *India Assessment – Annex B: Political Organisations*, April).

[Click here to visit the organisation’s website](#)

## **Chronology of Major Events**

**1858** – India comes under direct rule of the British crown after a failed Indian mutiny.

**1885** – The Indian National Congress is founded as a forum for emerging nationalist feeling.

**1920-22** – Nationalist figurehead Mahatma Gandhi launches anti-British civil disobedience campaign.

**1942-43** – The Indian Congress launches the “Quit India” movement.

**1947** – End of British rule and partition of sub-continent into mainly Hindu India and Muslim-majority state of Pakistan.

### **Newly independent**

**1947-48** – Hundreds of thousands die in widespread communal bloodshed after partition.

**1948** – Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu extremist.

**1948** – War with Pakistan over disputed territory of Kashmir.

**1951-52** – The Indian National Congress wins the first general election to the Lok Sabha under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru.

## **Regional tensions**

**1962** – India loses brief border war with China.

**1964** – Death of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

**1965** – Second war with Pakistan over Kashmir.

**1966** – Nehru's daughter Indira Gandhi becomes prime minister.

**1971** – Third war with Pakistan over the creation of Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan.

**1971** – Twenty-year treaty of friendship signed with Soviet Union.

**1974** – India explodes first nuclear device in an underground test.

## **Democratic strains**

**1975** – Indira Gandhi declares a state of emergency after being found guilty of electoral malpractice.

**1975-1977** – Nearly 1,000 political opponents are imprisoned and a programme of compulsory birth control is introduced.

**1977** – Indira Gandhi's Congress Party loses the general election.

**1980** – Indira Gandhi returns to power heading a Congress party splinter group, Congress (Indira).

**1984** – Indian troops storm the Golden Temple, Sikhism's most holy shrine, to flush out Sikh militants pressing for self-rule.

**1984** – Indira Gandhi is assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards, following which her son, Rajiv, takes over.

**1984** – December – Gas leak at Union Carbide pesticides plant in Bhopal. Thousands killed immediately, many more subsequently die or are left disabled.

**1987** – India deploys troops for peacekeeping operation in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

**1989** – Falling public support leads to Congress defeat in the general election.

**1990** – Indian troops withdrawn from Sri Lanka.

**1990** – Muslim separatist groups begin campaign of violence in Kashmir.

**1991** – Rajiv Gandhi assassinated by suicide bomber sympathetic to Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers.

**1991** – Economic reform programme begun by Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.

**1992** – Hindu extremists demolish the Babri masjid (mosque) in Ayodhya, triggering widespread Hindu-Muslim violence.

### **BJP to the fore**

**1996** – The Indian National Congress suffers its worst ever electoral defeat as the Hindu nationalist BJP emerges as largest single party.

**1998** – The BJP forms a coalition government under Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

**1998** – India carries out nuclear tests, leading to widespread international condemnation.

**1999 February** – Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee makes a historic bus trip to Pakistan to meet Premier Nawaz Sharif and to sign bilateral Lahore peace declaration.

**1999 May** – Tension in Kashmir leads to a brief war with Pakistan-backed forces in the icy heights around Kargil in Indian-held Kashmir.

**1999 October** – Cyclone devastates eastern state of Orissa, leaving at least 10,000 dead.

### **Population: 1 billion**

**2000 May** – India marks birth of its billionth citizen.

**2000** – US President Bill Clinton makes a groundbreaking visit to India to improve ties.

**2001 January** – Massive earthquakes hit western state of Gujarat, leaving at least 30,000 dead.

**2001 April** – Sixteen Indian and three Bangladeshi soldiers are killed in their worst border clashes. High-powered rocket launched, propelling India into ranks of select club of countries able to fire big satellites deep into space.

**2001 July** – Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee meets Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in the first summit between the two neighbours in more than two years. The meeting ends without a breakthrough or even a joint statement because of differences over Kashmir.

**2001 July** – Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee BJP party declines his offer to resign over a number of political scandals and the apparent failure of his talks with Pakistani President Musharraf.

**2001 September** – US lifts sanctions which it imposed against India and Pakistan after they staged nuclear tests in 1998. The move is seen as a reward for their support for the US anti-terror campaign.

### **Kashmir tensions rise**

**2001** October – India fires on Pakistani military posts in the heaviest firing along the dividing line of control in Kashmir for almost a year.

**2001** December – Suicide squad attacks parliament in New Dehli, killing several police. The five gunmen die in the assault.

**2001** December – India imposes sanctions against Pakistan, to force it to take action against two Kashmir militant groups blamed for the suicide attack on parliament. Pakistan retaliates with similar sanctions, and bans the groups in January.

**2001** December – India, Pakistan mass troops on common border amid mounting fears of a looming war.

**2002** January – India successfully test-fires a nuclear-capable ballistic missile – the Agni – off its eastern coast.

**2002** February – Worst inter-religious bloodshed in a decade breaks out after Muslims set fire to a train carrying Hindus returning from pilgrimage to Ayodhya. More than 800, mainly Muslims, die in subsequent revenge killings by Hindu mobs.

**2002** May – More than 30 people killed in raid on Indian army camp in Kashmir, which India blames on Pakistani-based rebels. Moderate Kashmiri separatist leader Abdul Gani Lone shot dead in Srinagar by suspected Islamist militants.

Pakistan test-fires three medium-range surface-to-surface Ghauri missiles, which are capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

War of words between Indian and Pakistani leaders intensifies. Actual war seems imminent.

**2002** June – UK, US urge their citizens to leave India and Pakistan, while maintaining diplomatic offensive to avert war.

**2002** July – Retired scientist and architect of India's missile programme APJ Abdul Kalam elected president.

**2003** August – At least 50 people are killed in two simultaneous bomb blasts in Bombay.

### **Kashmir ceasefire**

**2003** November – India matches Pakistan's declaration of a Kashmir ceasefire.

**2003** December – India, Pakistan agree to resume direct air s and to allow overflights.

**2004** January – Groundbreaking meeting held between government and moderate Kashmir separatists.

**2004** May – Surprise victory for the Indian National Congress in the general election. Dr. Manmohan Singh is sworn in as prime minister.

**2004** September – India, along with Brazil, Germany and Japan, launches an application for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

**2004** November – India begins to withdraw some of its troops from Kashmir.

**2004** December – Former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao dies, aged 83.

### **Asian tsunami**

Thousands are killed when tidal waves, caused by a powerful undersea earthquake off the Indonesian coast, devastate coastal communities in the south and in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

**2005** 7 April – Bus services, the first in 60 years, operate between Srinagar in Indian-controlled Kashmir and Muzaffarabad in Pakistani-administered Kashmir.

**2005** July – India signs a nuclear co-operation deal with the US, heralding a possible lifting of sanctions on Indian access to civilian nuclear technology.

More than 1,000 people are killed in floods and landslides caused by monsoon rains in Mumbai (Bombay) and Maharashtra region.

**2005** 8 October – An earthquake, with its epicentre in Pakistani-administered Kashmir, kills more than 1,000 people in Indian-administered Kashmir.

29 October – Bombs kill 62 people in Delhi. A little-known Kashmiri group says it is behind the attacks.

**2006** February – India's largest-ever rural jobs scheme is launched, aimed at lifting around 60 million families out of poverty.

**2006** March – US and India sign a nuclear deal during a visit by US President George W Bush. The US gives India access to civilian nuclear technology while India agrees to greater scrutiny for its nuclear programme.

**2006** 7 March – 14 people are killed by bomb blasts in the Hindu pilgrimage city of Varanasi.

**2006** May – Suspected Islamic militants kill 35 Hindus in the worst attacks in Indian-administered Kashmir for several months.

**2006** 11 July – More than 180 people are killed in bomb attacks on rush-hour trains in Mumbai. Investigators blame Islamic militants based in Pakistan.

**2006** 8 September – Explosions outside a mosque in the western town of Malegaon kill at least 31 people.

**2006** November – Hu Jintao makes the first visit to India by a Chinese president in a decade.

**2006** December – US President George W Bush approves a controversial law allowing India to buy US nuclear reactors and fuel for the first time in 30 years.

**2007** 18 February – 68 passengers, most of them Pakistanis, are killed by bomb blasts and a blaze on a train travelling from New Delhi to the Pakistani city of Lahore.

**2007** 21 February – India and Pakistan sign an agreement aimed at reducing the risk of accidental nuclear war.

**2007 March** – Maoist rebels in Chhattisgarh state kill more than 50 policemen in a dawn attack.

**2007 April** – India's first commercial space rocket is launched, carrying an Italian satellite.

**2007 May** – At least nine people are killed in a bomb explosion at the main mosque in Hyderabad. Several others are killed in subsequent rioting.

**2007 May** – Government announces its strongest economic growth figures for 20 years – 9.4% in the year to March.

**2007 July** – India says the number of its people with HIV or AIDS is about half of earlier official tallies. Health ministry figures put the total at between 2 million and 3.1 million cases, compared with previous estimates of more than 5 million.

### **First woman president**

**2007 July** – Pratibha Patil becomes first woman to be elected president of India.

**2008 July** – Congress-led governing coalition survives vote of confidence brought after left-wing parties withdraw their support over controversial nuclear cooperation deal with US. After the vote, several left-wing and regional parties form new alliance to oppose government, saying it has been tainted by corruption.

**2008 July** – Series of explosions kills 49 in Ahmedabad, in Gujarat state. The little-known group Indian Mujahideen claims responsibility ('Timeline: India. A Chronology of key events' 2005, *BBC News*, 9 November [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1155813.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1155813.stm) – Accessed 9 February 2006; 'Timeline: India – A Chronology of Key Events' 2007, *BBC News*, 22 February [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1155813.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1155813.stm) – Accessed 3 April 2007; 'India: A chronology of key events' 2008, *BBC News*, 30 July [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1155813.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1155813.stm) – Accessed 1 September 2008).

## **Languages of India**

“India has a diverse list of spoken languages among different groups of people. At least 30 different languages and around 2000 dialects have been identified. The Constitution of India has stipulated the usage of Hindi and English to be the two languages of official communication for the national government. Additionally, it classifies a set of 18 scheduled languages which are languages that can be officially adopted by different states for administrative purposes, and also as a medium of communication between the national and the state governments, as also for examinations conducted for national government service.

“As drafted, English ceased to exist as an *official language (on par with Hindi)* in 1965, after which it was intended to continue as an ‘associate additional official language’ until such time that a duly appointed committee can decide on a full-scale transition to Hindi, based on a periodic review. However, due to resentment and protests in certain non-Hindi speaking states, the “twin language” system is still in vogue. Due to rapid industrialization, and a bustling multinational influence in the economy, English continues to be a popular and influential means of communication in the government and day-to-day business, and moves to replace it have effectively been shelved” ('List of National Languages of India' Undated, Word IQ website [http://www.wordiq.com/definition/List\\_of\\_national\\_languages\\_of\\_India](http://www.wordiq.com/definition/List_of_national_languages_of_India) – Accessed 11 August 2004).

“The constitution’s Eighth Schedule, as amended by Parliament in 1992, lists eighteen official or Scheduled Languages. They are Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu. (Precise numbers of speakers of these languages are not known. They were not reported in the 1991 census, and estimates are subject to considerable variation because of the use of multiple languages by individual speakers.) Of the official languages, approximately 403 million people, or about 43 percent of the estimated total 1995 population, speak Hindi as their mother tongue. Telugu, Bengali, Marathi, and Tamil rank next, each the mother tongue of about 4 to 5 percent (about 37 million to 47 million people); Urdu, Gujarati, Malayalam, Kannada, and Oriya are claimed by between 2 and 3 percent (roughly 19 million to 28 million people); Bhojpuri, Punjabi, and Assamese by 1 to 2 percent (9 million to 19 million people); and all other languages by less than 1 percent (less than 9 million speakers) each.

“Since independence in 1947, linguistic affinity has served as a basis for organizing interest groups; the ‘language question’ itself has become an increasingly sensitive political issue. Efforts to reach a consensus on a single national language that transcends the myriad linguistic regions and is acceptable to diverse language communities have been largely unsuccessful” (‘Indian Languages’ Undated, India 4 World website <http://www.india4world.com/indian-language/index.shtml> – Accessed 11 August 2004).

[Ethnologue](#), an online resource guide of world languages, provides a comprehensive list of 387 living and 11 extinct languages for India.







**State & Union Territories**

## Andhra Pradesh

### State Information Last Updated May 2006

**Population:** 76,210,007

**Majority Languages:** Telugu 84.8%, Urdu 8.4 %; Hindi 2.8%.

**Major Religions:** Hindu 89.14%; Muslim 8.91%; Christian 1.83%.

**Districts:** [Click here](#)

**Capital:** Hyderabad

**Current Government:** Indian National Congress (INC)

**Chief Minister:** Dr. Y.S.Rajasekhara Reddy.

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2004. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Upcoming State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2009.

**Description:** Andhra Pradesh is India's fifth most populous state. Formed as a linguistic unit after independence, close to 85% of its population speaks Telugu. The state is relatively prosperous, and has a productive agricultural sector and one of the leading information technology and software centres in India.<sup>[9]</sup>

**State government:** The Telugu Desam Party (TDP), which for years dominated politics in the state, lost power at the 2004 state election. The Indian National Congress (INC) with its three electoral allies, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM), and the Communist Party of India (CPI), formed government with a majority of 226 seats in the 294-seat legislature. At the previous [election in 1999](#), the TDP won 180 seats.<sup>[10]</sup>

The TDP is the leading party in opposition, with 47 seats. Its electoral ally, the BJP, holds two seats. Other parties represented in the legislature include The All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), the Janata Party (JP), and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).<sup>[11]</sup>

The [Andhra Pradesh government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.

## Arunachal Pradesh

### State Information Last Updated August 2006

**Population:** 1,097,968

**Majority Languages:** Nissi/Daffla 19.9%; Nepali 9.4%; Bengali; 8.2%; Other Tribal languages

**Major Religions:** Hindu 37.04%; Muslim 1.38%; Christian 10.29%; Buddhist 12.88%; Other 36.22%

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Capital:** Itanagar

**Government:**

**Chief Minister:** Gegong Apang

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly elections:** October 2004. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Upcoming State Legislative Assembly election:** October 2009

**Description:** Arunachal Pradesh is located in the easternmost part of India. Known previously as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA), it became a union territory in 1972. It was subsequently renamed Arunachal Pradesh, literally the “land of the rising sun”, and became 24<sup>th</sup> state of the Indian Union on 20 February 1987. The state’s population is largely rural.[\[12\]](#)

**State government:** At the [1999 state assembly elections](#), the Indian National Congress (INC) won 53 out of 60 state assembly seats, and formed government in the state under the leadership of Mukut Methi. In July 2003, the INC government collapsed when 34 INC legislators left the party to join the former Chief Minister Gegong Apang’s regional party, the Arunachal Congress, which formed a new government under his leadership. His party subsequently merged with the Bharatiya Janata Party.[\[13\]](#)

Before the 2004 state elections, Apang dissolved his alliance with the BJP after the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) lost the national assembly elections. Apang joined the INC, taking with him his entire cabinet. At the 2004 state assembly election, the INC won 34 state assembly seats and was returned to power under Apang’s leadership. The BJP won 9 seats. Other winners included 13 independent candidates.[\[14\]](#)

The [Arunachal Pradesh government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.

## Assam

### State Information Last Updated May 2006

**Population:** 26,655,528

**Majority Languages:** Assamese 57.8%; Bengali 11.3%; Bodo/Boro 5.3%

**Major Religions:** Hindu 67.13%; Muslim 28.43%; Christian 3.32%; Buddhist 0.29%

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Capital:** Dispur

**Government:** Indian National Congress (INC)

**Chief Minister:** Tarun Gogoi

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2006. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Upcoming State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2011

**Description:** The state of Assam is located in the lowlands of northeast India. The state's population is predominantly rural and its economy is largely agrarian. Although famous for producing tea, the state's main agricultural crop is rice.

**State government:** At the 2006 state assembly election, the Indian National Congress won 53 assembly seats, down from its performance at the [state assembly election in 2001](#). Short of a majority in the 126-seat legislature, the INC formed government with the support of the Bodo People's Progressive Front (BPPF), a former separatist group, with whom it had entered a pre-poll alliance. At the [state assembly election in 2001](#), the Indian National Congress had won a clear majority of 71 seats.

The [Assam Government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.

## **Bihar**

### **State Information Last Updated April 2007**

**Population:** 82, 998,509

**Languages:** Hindi 80.9%; Urdu 9.9%; Santhali 2.9%

**Major Religionss:** Hindu 82.42%; Muslim 14.81%; Christian 0.98; Sikh 0.09%

**Government:** Janata Dal (United)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA)

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Capital:** Patna

**Chief Minister:** Nitish Kumar

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** October 2005. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Upcoming State Legislative Assembly election:** November 2010.

**Description:** The state of Bihar is located in north India. Its population is predominantly rural, with only 10.5% defined as urban in the 2001 census. The state is renowned as the poorest in Indian Union, as well as the most prone to official corruption, lawlessness and communal and inter-caste violence.

**State government:** The Janata Dal (United)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won power at the state assembly election of October 2005. Prior to that, the politics of the state had been dominated for fifteen years by the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), a pro-Yadav casetist party led by Laloo Prasad Yadav. The election was the second in the year after an earlier election in [February](#) resulted in a hung parliament; and following that the imposition of President's rule. At the election in October, the Janata Dal (United)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) secured a comfortable majority of 143 seats in the 243-seat legislature, improving on its earlier performance at the February poll by 51 seats. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) secured 56 seats.

Previously, at the [2000 state assembly election](#), the Rashtriya Janata Dal party (RJD) was short of a majority, but had formed a coalition government with the help of other parties, including the Indian National Congress (INC). Laloo Yadav led the state but resigned his post as the Chief Minister of Bihar two years later in 2002 and named his wife Rabri Devi his successor after he was arrested in a \$280-million corruption scandal.

The [Bihar government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.

## Chhattisgarh

State Information Last Updated December 2008

**Population:** 20,833,803

**Languages:** Hindi; Gondi; many linguistic minorities (percentages unavailable)

**Religion:** Hindu; Muslim; Jain; Christian; Sikh; Buddhist; Parsi (percentages unavailable)

**Government:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

**Capital:** Raipur

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Dr. Raman Singh

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** November 2008. Click [here](#) for the results.

Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results of the previous State Legislative Assembly election (December 2003).

**Upcoming State Legislative Assembly election:** ('Terms of the Houses' (undated), Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp)).

**Description:** The new state of Chhattisgarh came into being on 1 November 2000; it was previously a part of the central state of Madhya Pradesh. The state is landlocked and heavily forested, spread over 133,133 square kilometres, and is bordered by Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. About 7 million of its inhabitants are tribal people, including the Gonds, and there has also been migration by various minorities of different faiths to the area. Chhattisgarh is divided into 16 districts, seven of which are said to be affected by Naxalite violence

**State government:** When the new state was formed in 2000, 90 members of the Madhya Pradesh state legislative assembly automatically became members of the Chhattisgarh assembly (a similar process took place for members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha). Of these 90, the Indian National Congress (INC) held 48 seats, giving them a majority in the state government. The BJP subsequently won the state's first ever assembly election in December 2003 and formed government, under the leadership of Dr Raman Singh, with a clear majority of seats in the legislative assembly—50 out of 90. The INC won 37 seats.

In the Chhattisgarh state legislative assembly elections held in November 2008, the BJP retained the state by winning 50 seats in the 90-member assembly. "Raman Singh, who led the Bharatiya Janata Party to power for a second time in Chhattisgarh, was...elected the leader of the BJP legislative party" ('Raman Singh to be sworn in on Dec 12' 2008, *Rediff*, 10 December <http://www.rediff.com///news/2008/dec/10raman-singh-to-be-sworn-in-friday.htm> - Accessed 11 December 2008).

The [Chhattisgarh government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.



## Delhi (National Capital Territory of Delhi)

State Information Last Updated April 2007

**Population:** 13,782,976

**Main languages:** Hindi, Urdu, English & Punjabi

**Religion:** Hindu 84%; Muslim 14.5%; Christian 0.9%

**Government:** Indian National Congress (INC)

**Capital:** New Delhi

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Sheila Dikshit

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2003. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2008

**Description:** The government website for Delhi states that New Delhi, the capital of India, is situated on the west bank of the river Yamuna and is one of the fastest growing cities in India. It is surrounded on three sides by Haryana, and to the east borders Uttar Pradesh. Historically, the city has long been important politically, with many successive dynasties choosing it as their seat of power between the 13th and the 17th centuries. Remnants of the past survive as important monuments in different parts of the city. In 1956 Delhi was converted into a Union territory, and in 1991 the national capital territory Act was passed by the parliament and a system of diarchy was introduced under which the elected Government was given wide powers, except as for those relating to law and order which remained with the central Government.

**State government:** December 2008 saw Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit lead the Congress Party to an win that will mean a third consecutive term of office for Congress in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The Congress Party won 42 of the 69 available seats with 23 going to the Bharatiya Janata Party and 2 to the Bahujan Samaj Party. The previous election in December 2003 had seen Congress take 47 seats out of a possible 70 sets in the legislature while the BJP took 20 seats ('Partywise position in NCT OF Delhi' 2008, Election Commission of India website [http://search.eci.gov.in/ae\\_2008e/pollupd/ac/states/U05/a\\_index.htm](http://search.eci.gov.in/ae_2008e/pollupd/ac/states/U05/a_index.htm) – Accessed 12 December 2008; 'It's 3-2 for Cong as BJP gets jolt in Delhi, Rajasthan' 2008, *Zee News*, 8 December <http://www.zeenews.com/nation/2008-12-08/489230news.html> – Accessed 12 December 2008; Election Commission of India 2003, *Provisional Statistical Report on General Election, 2003, to Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi*, Election Commission of India website <http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp> – Accessed 3 August 2004).

The [Delhi government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.

**Goa**

## State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 1,343,998

**Peoples/languages:** Konkani 60%; Marathi 25%; Gujarati 7%; Kannada 3.2%

**Main languages:** Konkani, Marathi, English and Hindi

**Religion:** Hindu 64.5%; Christian 31.2% (almost entirely Catholic); Muslim 4%; Other 0.3%

**Government:** Congress party (INC) coalition.

**Capital:** Panaji

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Digambar Kamat

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** June 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** Due in 2012. ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website,

[http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** “Goa has a character quite distinct from the rest of India”, since until 1961, it was a Portuguese colony. “Despite four decades of ‘liberation’ from Portuguese colonial rule, Roman Catholicism remains a major religion in Goa, skirts far outnumber saris, and the people display an easy-going tropical indulgence, humour and civility...Farming, fishing, tourism and iron-ore mining form the basis of the economy, although the last two sources of income are sometimes incompatible with the former” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.783 – RRT Library).

**State government:** Assembly elections were held in June 2007. Out of the 40 seats, the Congress won 16 and the NCP three; they formed a coalition government together with two independents and two members of the Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP). The BJP won 14 seats.

Digambar Kamat, who had engineered the downfall of the BJP government in 2005, was sworn in as Chief Minister; and members of the NCP and MGP joined the cabinet ('Congress set to retain power in Goa, Sonia to name CLP leader' 2007, Rediff.com website, 5 June

<http://www.rediff.com/news/2007/jun/05goapoll.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007; 'Digambar Kamat

sworn-in as Goa CM' 2007, Rediff.com website, 8 June

<http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/jun/08goapoll.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007).

The [Goa government website](#) contains background and government information about the state.

# Gujarat

## State Information Last Updated July 2008

**Population:** 50,596,992

**Languages:** Gujarati 91%; Hindi 2.9%; Sindhi 1.7%; Marathi 1.4%; Urdu 1.3% (Tribals 14%)

**Religion:** Hindu 89.5%; Muslim 8.7%; Jain 1.2%; Christian 0.5%

**Government:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

**Capital:** Gandhinagar

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Narendra Modi

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2012 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** Situated on the west coast of India, Gujarat is “one of India’s wealthier and most industrialized states” and has always been a “major centre for Jains” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.626 – RRT Library).

Gujarat has been the scene in recent years of ongoing communal violence, particularly between Hindus and Muslims. In February 2002, about 58 people died when a train carrying Hindus was set alight by Muslims in the town of Godhra. This act precipitated state-wide riots against Muslims which left at least 1000 people dead. “On February 28, in one incident in Ahmedabad, at Naroda Patia, across the road from the State Reserve Police (SRP) quarters, a crowd of about 5000 people set fire to the entire locality, gang-raping women and girls before killing them, altogether killing at least 65 people. The community mosque, Noorani Masjid, facing the SRP, was burnt using LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) cylinders. In the following days, hundreds of young people with swords, daggers, axes, and iron rods walked around the area, shouting ‘Jai Shri Ram’” (‘Gujarat victory heartens nationalists’ 2002, *BBC News*, 15 December [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/2576855.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/2576855.stm) – Accessed 17 December 2002; ‘Q&A: Gujarat elections’ 2002, *BBC News*, 15 November [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/2452463.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/2452463.stm) – Accessed 18 November 2002; ‘2002 Gujarat Violence’ 2004, Wikipedia website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2002\\_Gujarat\\_violence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2002_Gujarat_violence) – Accessed 4 August 2004).

**State government:** “Gujarat is traditional stronghold of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Since Independence in 1947, The Congress Party ruled the United Gujarat and Maharashtra as Bombay State. After its creation in 1960, Congress continued to maintain its rule. During emergency and after its aftermath, the Congress lost the public support in the late 1970s. However, it continued to rule it till 1995. In the 1995 Assembly Polls, the Congress lost to the BJP and Keshubhai Patel came to power. His Government lasted only 2 years following a split in the BJP caused by Shankersinh Vaghela. It came back to power in 1998 polls and has won most of the subsequent polls. In 2001, following the loss of 2 assembly seats in the bypolls, Keshubhai Patel resigned and handed over power to Narendra Modi, a hard line pro-hindutva person. In 2002 when riots broke out between Hindus and Muslims, Modi resigned only to be reelected by a huge margin in

December 2002 [increasing its majority in 182-seat assembly by winning 125 seats]. Narendra Modi is since the Chief Minister. After the BJP loss in 2004 Lok Sabha Polls, Modi is increasingly blamed for his inability to stop the Gujarat riots. In 2004 Lok Sabha Polls, The BJP was curtailed from 21 to 14. The Congress gained from 5 to 12” (‘Gujarat’ 2004, Wikipedia website <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gujarat> – Accessed 4 August 2004).

In the 2007 state elections, the BJP again won a clear majority of seats in the assembly, winning 117 seats to the INC’s 59. 3 seats went to the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), 1 to the Janata Dal (United) (JD(U)), and 2 to independent candidates (Election Commission of India 2007, *Statistical Report On General Election, 2007 To The Legislative Assembly Of Gujarat*, Election Commission of India website [http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/SE\\_2007/StatReport\\_DEC\\_2007\\_GUJARAT\\_after\\_IC.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/SE_2007/StatReport_DEC_2007_GUJARAT_after_IC.pdf) – Accessed 14 July 2008).

The official [Gujarat government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Haryana

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 21,082,989

**Languages:** Hindi (Haryanvi) 65%; Punjabi 7%; Urdu 1.6%

**Religion:** Hindu 89.3%; Sikh 6.2%; Muslim 4.1%; Jain 0.27%; Christian 0.08% (Catholic 0.02%; Protestant 0.06%)

**Government:** Congress Party (INC)

**Capital:** Chandigarh

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Bhupinder Singh Hooda (INC)

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** February 2005. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2010 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** During Partition, the Punjab was divided into a Muslim region which went to Pakistan, and a Sikh and Hindu region which stayed with India. In 1966 “the Punjab... underwent another split... This time it was divided along predominantly linguistic lines: the mostly Sikh, Punjabi-speaking state of Punjab and the majority Hindi-speaking state of Haryana”. Chandigarh remains the capital of both Haryana and Punjab, and is administered as a Union Territory from Delhi. The Punjab area as a whole is the most affluent in India (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.213 – RRT Library).

**State government:** In the February 2005 assembly elections the INC swept back to power, “capitalising on a strong wave of resentment” against the previous Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) government’s “perceived authoritarianism, nepotism and corruption”, and winning 67 seats. The INLD remained the second largest party in the state with 9 seats, and the BJP’s share of the vote dropped to two seats. Bhupinder Singh Hooda was sworn in as Chief Minister (The wave and what caused it’ 2005, *The Hindu*, 6 March <http://www.hindu.com/2005/03/06/stories/2005030603371600.htm> – Accessed 10 April 2007); ‘Elections in Haryana’ 2005, Rediff.com website, 6 March <http://in.rediff.com/election/har05.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007).

The [Haryana government website](#) includes background and government information for the state.

# Himachal Pradesh

State Information Last Updated July 2008

**Population:** 6,077,248

**Languages:** Hindi 89%, most actually speak Pahari, a group of languages close to Panjabi; Panjabi 6.3%; Kanauri 1.2%; Nepali 0.9%; Dogri 0.7%; Tibetan/Bhotia 0.5%

**Religion:** Hindu 95%; Muslim 1.7%; Buddhist 1.2%; Sikh 1.1%; Christian 0.09%

**Government:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

**Capital:** Shimla

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Prem Kumar Dhumal

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2012 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** Himachal Pradesh means “the land of eternal snow peaks”. The Kangra Valley is “the home of the Tibetan Government in Exile, with its headquarters, including the residence of the Dalai Lama, in Upper Dharamsala [...]. The State of Himachal Pradesh was formed in 1948, liberating many villages from the feudal system. By 1966, the Pahari-speaking parts under Punjab administration... were added. Full statehood was achieved in 1971. Much of Himachal’s income comes from tourism, agriculture and the tourist industry. The Himachal government is now hoping to add hydroelectric power to that list...” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.229-230 – RRT Library).

**State government:** The 1998 state elections had resulted in a hung parliament, with the Indian National Congress (INC) winning 31 seats out of 68, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 28, and the Himachal Vikas Congress (HVC) 4. After a period of instability, the BJP and the HVC formed a coalition government (Pande, S.K. 1998, ‘The Assembly round: Himachal Pradesh’, *Frontline*, Volume 15, No.6, 21 March <http://www.flonnet.com/fl1506/15060300.htm> – Accessed 12 April 2002).

In the 2003 state elections the INC won 43 seats and formed government with a clear majority in 68 seat legislature. The BJP’s standing was reduced to 16 (Election Commission of India 2003, *Key Highlights of General Election, 2003 to the Legislative Assembly of Himachal Pradesh*, Election Commission of India website <http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp> – Accessed 4 August 2004).

In the December 2007 state elections the BJP won 41 seats and formed government with a clear majority. The INC won 23 seats, the Bahujan Samaj Party 1, and 3 seats went to independent candidates (Election Commission of India 2008, *Statistical Report On General Election, 2007 To The Legislative Assembly Of Himachal Pradesh*, Election Commission of India website [http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/SE\\_2007/StatReport\\_DEC\\_2007\\_HIMACHAL\\_after\\_I\\_C.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/SE_2007/StatReport_DEC_2007_HIMACHAL_after_I_C.pdf) – Accessed 14 July 2008).

The [Himachal Pradesh government website](#) located at contains background and general information for the state.



## Jammu & Kashmir

State Information Last Updated August 2004

**Population:** 10,069,917

**Main languages:** Kashmiri 55%; state language Urdu; Dogri; Ladakhi; tribal languages

**Religion:** Muslim 64.2%; Hindu 32.2%; Sikh 2.2%; Buddhist 1.2%; Christian 0.16%

**Government:** People's Democratic Party (PDP), Indian National Congress (INC) and others.

**Capital:** Srinagar

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Mufti Mohammad Sayeed

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** November 2002. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** November 2008 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** Jammu & Kashmir “has always been a centre of conflict for independent India. When India and Pakistan became independent, there was much controversy over whether the region should be annexed to India or Pakistan. The population was predominantly Muslim but J&K was...a ‘princely state’, ruled by a Hindu maharaja, in whose hands was left the decision of whether to merge with Muslim Pakistan or Hindu India...[He] only made his decision when a Pathan...group from north-west Pakistan was already crossing his borders, and the inevitable result was the first Indo-Pakistani conflict. Since that first conflict, in October 1948, Kashmir has remained a flashpoint between the two countries. A substantial part of the region is now Indian and the rest (Azad Kashmir) is administered by Pakistan; both countries claim all of it. Militant activity in Kashmir has increased substantially since 1989, and it's estimated that as many as 30,000 have died in the fighting” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.288 – RRT Library).

“Effective November 26, 2003, India and Pakistan have agreed to maintain a ceasefire along the undisputed International Border, the disputed Line Of Control, and along the Siachen glacier. This is the first such ‘total ceasefire’ declared by both the nations in nearly 15 years. In February 2004, Pakistan further increased pressure on militant Muslim leaders in Kashmir to adopt the ceasefire” (‘Kashmir’ 2004, Wikipedia website <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashmir> – Accessed 4 August).

**State government:** State assembly elections were held in Jammu and Kashmir in September 2002, the first in six years. The main issues for most Kashmiris were the security situation in the state; separatism; lack of development; and the deteriorating economy, with many industries and services badly affected by the drop in tourism. The polls were conducted amidst ongoing violence, with most separatist groups boycotting the polls, and many people not voting for fear of separatists, who had threatened anyone who participated. The governing National Conference Party (an ally of the BJP-led coalition in Delhi) was defeated, and a new government was formed by a coalition of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) with the Indian National Congress (INC),

the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Panthers Party and some independents. There was disagreement among the coalition partners as to who should become Chief Minister, and direct rule was imposed on the state from Delhi, until Sonia Gandhi (the Congress leader at national level) gave her support to Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the leader of the PDP. Sayeed was formally invited to form government at the end of October, and became Chief Minister. Of the 87 member assembly, Sayeed is said to have the support of about 52 (Hussein, A.2002, 'Kashmir leader gets go-ahead', *BBC News*, 30 October [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/2376623.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/2376623.stm) – Accessed 17 November 2002; Sen, A. 2002, 'New leader for Indian Kashmir', *BBC News*, 26 October, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/2364327.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/2364327.stm) – Accessed 17 November 2002; Rao, R.2002, 'Q&A: Kashmir assembly elections', *BBC News*, 23 October, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/2249016.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/2249016.stm) – Accessed 17 November 2002)

The [Jammu & Kashmir government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

**Banned Organisations:** Hizbul Mujahedin; Harkat-ul Ansar (renamed Harkat-ul-Mujahideen), Jamat-i-Islami, People's League, Islamic Jamat-i-Tulba, Islamic Students League ('Major events' Undated, Jammu & Kashmir government website <http://jammukashmir.nic.in/profile/majev2.htm> – Accessed 4 August).

## **Jharkhand**

### **State Information Last Updated July 2007**

**Population:** 26,909,428

**Languages:** (percentages not clear) Hindi; Hindi dialects (Bhojpuri, Maithili, Magahi); Tribal languages; Urdu; Bengali.

**Religion:** (percentages not clear) Hindu; Muslim; ethnic religions; Christian.

**Government:** Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) led coalition

**Capital:** Ranchi

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Madhu Koda

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** February 2005. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2010 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** The new state of Jharkhand was created on 15 November 2000; it had previously been part of Bihar. Jharkhand is about 80,000 square kilometres and heavily forested, with a large percentage of tribal people. At least 14 out of the 18 districts are said to be affected by Naxalite violence: active groups include the Marxist Communist Centre (MCC) and the People's War Group. There has also been communal violence involving Muslims in the capital city Ranchi ('Bihar to be divided for second time with birth of Jharkhand: PTI' 2000, Rediff.com website, 13 November <http://www.rediff.com/news/2000/nov/13jhar1.htm> – Accessed 4 April 2002; Chaudhuri, K. 2001, Jharkhand tensions', *Frontline* online edition, Volume 18, Issue 2, 2 February – <http://www.flonnet.com/fl1802/18020330.htm> – Accessed 4 April 2002)

**State government:** The 2005 assembly elections were won by a BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, with Arjun Munda as Chief Minister. However, in September 2006 Munda resigned after 4 MLAs withdrew from the coalition and it seemed likely he would lose any trust vote. There are 82 seats in the states assembly. A new coalition named the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) took government. It was formed from several parties, including the JMM (17 seats), the Congress (9 seats) and some smaller parties and independents. The new Chief Minister was the independent Madhu Koda. In February 2007, one of the small parties withdrew from the coalition, but the government held and Koda continued as Chief Minister (Chaudhuri, K. 2001, Jharkhand tensions', *Frontline* online edition, Volume 18, Issue 2, 2 February – <http://www.flonnet.com/fl1802/18020330.htm> – Accessed 4 April 2002; 'No threat to my govt: Jharkand CM' 2007, Rediff.com website, 9 February <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/feb/09koda.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007; 'Jharkhand: CM Arjun Munda quits' 2006, Rediff.com website, 14 September <http://in.rediff.com/news/2006/sep/14jhar.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007).

The [Jharkand government website](#) located at contains background and government information on the state.

## **Karnataka**

### **State Information Last Updated July 2008**

**Population:** 52,733,958

**Languages:** Kannada 66%, many dialects; Urdu 9.5%, most speaking Deccani, distantly related to Urdu; Telugu 8.1%; Marathi 3.8%; Konkani 1.8%; Hindi 1.8%; Malayalam 1.6%

**Religion:** Hindu 85.4%; Muslim 11.6%; Christian 2.1% (Catholic 1.4%, Protestant 0.7%); Jain 0.8%

**Government:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

**Capital:** Bangalore

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** B.S.Yeddyurappa

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2008. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2013 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** The Kannada-speaking state of Karnataka, on the south-west coast of India, was formerly known as Mysore. Its neighbouring states are Goa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. "It's a major producer of coffee, spices and betel nut, and supplies 60% of the country's silk. The capital, boomtown Bangalore, is the centre of India's software and technology industries and is one of Asia's fastest growing cities.... The state boundaries of were redrawn on linguistic grounds in 1956 and the extended Kannada-speaking state of Mysore was born. This was renamed Karnataka in 1972" (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.820 – RRT Library).

**State government:** The May 2008 assembly elections were won by the Hindu nationalist BJP; with voting held in three phases on the 10th, 16th and 22nd May, and B.S.Yeddyurappa was sworn in as Chief Minister on 30 May 2008. The BJP won 110 seats in the 224-seat assembly and its former coalition partner the Janata Dal (Secular) (JDS) 28, while the INC won 80 seats and six went to independent candidates. The May 2004 assembly elections were won by a Congress led coalition. However, in December 2006 H.D. Kumaraswamy of the JDS led a revolt which withdrew support for the coalition, and the 20-month-old government led by Dharam Singh collapsed. The JDS formed a new coalition with the BJP and Kumaraswamy became Chief Minister, with the BJP's B.S.Yediyurappa as his deputy (for the 2008 elections, see: Raghunath, Bharathi 2006, '2006: Year of political turmoil for Karnataka', Rediff.com website, 16 December <http://in.rediff.com/news/2006/dec/16ktaka.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007; 'Karnataka: Kumaraswamy expands Cabinet' 2007, Rediff.com website, 25 January <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/jan/25ktaka.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007).

The [Karnataka government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Kerala

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 31,838,619

**Languages:** Malayali (Malayalam) 96%; Tamil 2.3%

**Religion:** Hindu 57.7%; Muslim 23%; Christian 19.3% (Syrian Orthodox 6.7%, Catholic 8.9%, Protestant/Independent 4.4%)

**Government:** Left Democratic Front (LDF), led by the CPI-M

**Capital:** Thiruvananthapuram

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** V.S. Achuthanandan

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2006. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next Legislative Assembly election:** May 2011 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "The present-day state of Kerala was created in 1956 from the former states of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Traditional concern for the arts and education resulted in a post-Independence state that is one of the most progressive in India. Kerala had the first freely elected communist government in the world, elected in 1957. The participatory political system has resulted in a more equitable distribution of land and income, low infant mortality and a 91% literacy rate... The state's militant political parties and frequent *hartals* (strikes) has meant that Kerala's economic growth has lagged [behind] other states, even while it improves on social indicators" (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.890-892 – RRT Library).

**State government:** At the May 2006 assembly elections the Left Democratic Front, a coalition led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), was elected with 98 seats. The Congress-led United Democratic Front, which had previously been in power, won only 42 seats. The new Chief Minister is V.S.Achuthanandan. This continued a pattern where government has alternated between the two coalitions every five years. The CPI-M is reportedly very factionalised and has a history of in-fighting: the main two rival camps are loyal to the Chief Minister and to the party state secretary (Muraleedharan, N. 2006, '2006: Political conflicts in Kerala', Rediff.com website, 20 December <http://in.rediff.com/news/2006/dec/20year.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007; Lye, George 2006, 'Kerala: Where change is static', Rediff.com website, 11 May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2006/may/11gi.htm> – Accessed 6 July 2007).

The [Kerala government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Madhya Pradesh

State Information Last Updated December 2008

**Population:** 60,385,118

**Languages:** Hindi 80%; Gondi 10%; Marathi 2.3%; Urdu 2.2%; Oriya 1.1%

**Religion:** Hindu 92.4% (most of the Dalit groups and tribes are actually animists); Muslim 5.2%; Jain 0.85%; Christian 0.70%; Sikh 0.27%; Buddhist 0.14%

**Government:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

**Capital:** Bhopal

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Shivraj Singh Chouhan

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2008. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2008 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "Madhya Pradesh was created in 1950 from the former British Central Provinces and Berar and the princely states of Makrai and Chhattisgarh, with Nagpur as the capital of the state. In 1956, the states of Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh, and Bhopal, made up of former princely states, were merged into it, and it lost the Marathi-speaking southern region Vidarbha, which included Nagpur, to Bombay state. Bhopal became the new capital. In November 2000, as part of the Madhya Pradesh Reorganization Act, the southeastern portion of the state split off to form the new state of Chhattisgarh" ('Madhya Pradesh' 2004, Wikipedia website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madhya\\_Pradesh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madhya_Pradesh) – Accessed 4 August 2004).

**State government:** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won the December 2008 elections with a clear victory over the INC; securing 126 of the 228 constituencies. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan's public image was reportedly instrumental in the victory. The BJP also won the 2003 elections with a clear victory over the INC ('Partywise position in Madhya Pradesh' 2008, Election Commission of India website [http://search.eci.gov.in/ae\\_2008e/pollupd/ac/states/S12/AS12.htm](http://search.eci.gov.in/ae_2008e/pollupd/ac/states/S12/AS12.htm) – Accessed 10 December 2008; Mishra, A. 2008, 'BJP's poll strategy bears fruit in MP, Chhattisgarh', *India Today*, 9 December [http://indiatoday.digitaltoday.in/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=22086&sectionid=4&issueid=83&Itemid=1](http://indiatoday.digitaltoday.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=22086&sectionid=4&issueid=83&Itemid=1) – Accessed 10 December 2008).

The [Madhya Pradesh government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Maharashtra

State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 96,752,247

**Languages:** Marathi 73.6%; Urdu 6.9%; Hindi 6.7%; Gujarati 2.7%; Khandeshi 1.7%; Telugu 1.5%; Kannada 1.5%

**Religion:** Hindu 80.4%; Muslim 10%; Buddhist 6.2%; Jain 1.6%; Christian 1.2% (Catholic 1%, Protestant 0.2%)

**Government:** Indian National Congress (INC)

**Capital:** Mumbai (Bombay)

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Vilasrao Deshmukh

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** October 2004. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** November 2009 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "Maharashtra is a large, populous and economically important state...After Independence, western Maharashtra and Gujarat were joined to form Bombay state. Today's state, with Mumbai as capital, was formed in 1960 when the Marathi and Gujarati-speaking areas were once again separated". Mumbai itself is "India's finance centre, the economic powerhouse of the nation, heart of the Hindi film industry and the industrial hub of everything from textiles to petrochemicals" (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.722, 747 – RRT Library).

**State government:** In the 2004 assembly elections the Democratic Front coalition of the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party returned to power, winning 139 seats, which was less than the 151 they had won in 1999. Vilasrao Deshmukh is Chief Minister, and the NCP's R. R. Patil, Deputy Chief Minister. Deshmukh had previously been Chief Minister after the 1999 elections but was replaced in 2003 when the state party was disrupted by factionalism. The opposition alliance of the BJP and Shiv Sena gained 119 seats, which was also less than their 1999 tally of 136. The state-based Shiv Sena has been a force in Maharashtra politics for some years but has recently dwindled in power both at state and federal level. Led by the flamboyant Bal Thackeray, Shiv Sena [the name means "The Army of Shivaji", a 17<sup>th</sup> century Hindu king who fought against the Muslims] has been accused of stirring up communal violence between Hindus and Muslims (UK Home Office 2002, *India Assessment*, April; 'Maharashtra Election' 2004, Rediff.com website, 31 October <http://in.rediff.com/election/mahapoll04.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007; 'Vilasrao Deshmukh to be new Maharashtra CM' 2004, Rediff.com website, 29 October <http://in.rediff.com/election/2004/oct/29maha.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007).

The [Maharashtra government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.



# Manipur

## State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 2,388,634

**Languages:** Manipuri, Hindi, English, Burmese, Tibeto

**Religion:** Hindu 57.7%; Christian 34.1%; (Protestant 31%, Catholic 3.1%); Muslim 7.3%; Other 0.9%

**Government:** Secular Progressive Front, led by the Indian National Congress (INC)

**Capital:** Imphal

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Okram Ibobi Singh

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2012 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "Manipur came under British rule as a princely state in 1891. The Manipur Constitution Act, 1947, established a democratic form of government with the Maharaja as the Executive Head and an elected legislature. The legislative assembly was dissolved on the integration of the state with India in October, 1949. Manipur was a union territory from 1956 and became a full-fledged state in 1972... The Meiteis form the major ethnic group in the valley and they speak Meiteilon, also known simply as Manipuri, which is also the lingua franca in the state. It was recognized as a national Indian language in 1992" ('Manipur' 2004, Word IQ website <http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Manipur> – Accessed 5 August 2004).

The state is wracked by separatist violence. "There are [at least] 19 separatist groups in Manipur with demands ranging from secession to greater autonomy and the right to self-determination... Some 10,000 people have died in insurgency in Manipur in the past two decades" (Hussain, S. Z. 2004, 'Attacks in Manipur trigger panic ahead of polls', South Asia Monitor website <http://www.southasiamonitor.org/vote/apr/poll279.html> – Accessed 5 August 2004).

**State government:** In the March 2007 assembly elections, the Secular Progressive Front won 37 of the 60 seats: the Congress 30, the CPI four, and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) three. In a later bypoll in June, Congress won another seat, giving them a simple majority in the house, of 31 seats; however Congress leaders said that the party would continue in alliance with the CPI and RJD. The Chief Minister is Okram Ibodi Singh, who has been sworn in for his second term ('O Ibobi Singh sworn in as Manipur CM' 2007, Rediff.com website, <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/mar/02manipoll.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007; 'Manipur: Congress wins both seats, commands simple majority' 2007, Rediff.com website, <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/jun/05cong1.htm> – Accessed 9 June 2007).

The [Manipur government website](#) located at contains background and government information on the state.

Banned Groups: People's Liberation Army (PLA); United National Liberation Front (UNLF); People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK); Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP); Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL); Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF); Revolutionary People's Front (RPF) ('Declaration of major groups as "unlawful Associations" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967' Undated, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region website <http://www.northeast.nic.in/security.htm> – Accessed 30 July 2004. Please note that this list was accessed in 2004; no updated list could be found on the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region website).

## Meghalaya

State Information Last Updated July 2008

**Population:** 2,306,069

**Languages:** not listed – 78 different ethnic groups

**Religion:** Christian 64.6%; Hindu 14.7%; Muslim 4%; Animist/Other 16.7%

**Government:** Meghalaya Progressive Alliance (MPA) coalition, led by the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the United Democratic Party (UDP)

**Capital:** Shillong

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Donkumar Roy

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2008. Click [here](#) for an overview of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2013 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** Located in the north-eastern region and “created in 1972, Meghalaya (The Abode of Clouds) is the home of the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo tribes-people, notable for their matrilineal society (ie, property and wealth are passed through the female rather than the male line). The gently rolling hills of Meghalaya are noted for growing fruit and betel nut...Meghalaya is comparatively safe from rebel activity. However, ethnic violence occasionally flares up in the south west near the border with Bangladesh...” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.533 – RRT Library).

**State government:** “Meghalaya is one of the few States in India that has the unique distinction of continuously having coalition ministries for the last 25 years [...]. The elections to the State of Meghalaya were held in February 2003. A total number of 12,79,740 voters participated in these elections to elect 60 representatives from amongst 333 contenders. The results declared on March 1 did not come as a surprise to many. In fact the electorate returned a fractured verdict for the umpteenth time. The party position stood as follows: Congress-22 seats; Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)-14 seats; United Democratic Party (UDP)-9 seats; Meghalaya Democratic Party (MDP)-4 seats; Khun Hynniewtrep National Awakening Movement (KHNAM)-2 seats; Hill State Peoples Democratic Party (HSPDP)-2 seats; Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) -2 seats; Independents-5 seats[...].The [Indian National] Congress-led 40-member alliance, the Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA), which also included other regional parties, was invited to form the government. A 38-member ministry was sworn in headed by the Chief Minister, D.D. Lapang, comprising of 27 Cabinet Ministers and 10 Ministers of State” (Lyngdoh, C. R. 2003, ‘Meghalaya Elections 2003: Challenges before the Meghalaya Democratic Alliance’, *Mainstream Weekly* online edition, Volume No. XLI No. 27, 21 June <http://www.mainstreamweekly.com/issue21jun/content/general7.asp> – Accessed 5 August 2004).

The March 2008 state elections resulted in the formation of the Meghalaya Progressive Alliance (MPA) coalition, made up of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP – 14 seats), the United Democratic Party (UDP – 11 seats), the BJP (2 seats) and small local parties and independents. The MPA holds 31 seats, while the INC won 25 seats and has the support of three independents.

Donkumar Roy was sworn in as Chief Minister on 19 March 2008 ('Donkumar Roy sworn-in new Meghalaya Chief Minister' 2008, *ThaiIndian News*, 19 March [http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/politics/donkumar-roy-sworn-in-new-meghalaya-chief-minister\\_10029234.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/politics/donkumar-roy-sworn-in-new-meghalaya-chief-minister_10029234.html) – Accessed 14 July 2008).

The [Meghalaya government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

**Banned Groups:** Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council(HNLC); Achik National Volunteer Council(ANVC) ('Declaration of major groups as 'Unlawful Associations' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967' Undated, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region website <http://www.northeast.nic.in/security.htm> – Accessed 30 July 2004).

## Mizoram

### State Information Last Updated December 2008

**Population:** 891,058

**Languages:** 54 different ethnic groups, including tribals, Bengalis and Nepalis

**Religion:** Christian 85%; Buddhist 8%; Hindu 7%

**Government:** Indian National Congress (INC)

**Capital:** Aizawl

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Lalthanhawla

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** November 2003. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2008 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "Mizoram (Hill People's Land) is a finger-like extension in the extreme south-east of the [north-eastern] region poking between Myanmar and Bangladesh... Under the British [it was] among the few areas where missionaries were encouraged to operate, and today almost 95% of the Mizo population is Christian. Over 10,000 Mizos have even identified themselves as one of the lost tribes of Israel and converted to Judaism... Mizoram had been comparatively peaceful since achieving statehood in 1986, but the state and Indian governments have been fighting for the past five years or so against the Bru National Liberation Front and the Hmar People's Convention (Democrats). These groups are fairly ineffectual, however..." (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.541 – RRT Library).

**State government:** The Indian National Congress (INC) defeated the state-based Mizo National Front (MNF) in December 2008 elections; winning 32 seats in the 40-member state legislature. The win by INC puts an end to a ten-year rule by the MNF, who won an outright majority at the last state election in November 2003, winning 21 out of 40 seats in the legislative assembly. ('Congress returns to power in Mizoram after 10 years' 2008, *The Hindu*, 10 December <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/000200812082187.htm> – Accessed 10 December 2008; 'Partywise position in Mizoram' 2008, Election Commission of India website [http://search.eci.gov.in/ae\\_2008e/](http://search.eci.gov.in/ae_2008e/) – Accessed 10 December 2008; Election Commission of India 2003, *Provisional Statistical Report on General Election, 2003, to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram*, Election Commission of India website [http://www.eci.gov.in/archive/SENov2003/StatisticalReports\\_MZ\\_Nov2003.pdf](http://www.eci.gov.in/archive/SENov2003/StatisticalReports_MZ_Nov2003.pdf) – Accessed 5 August 2004).

The [Mizoram government website](#) located at contains background and government information on the state.

## Nagaland

### State Information Last Updated July 2008

**Population:** 1,988,636

**Languages:** 50 different ethnic groups, including tribals, Nagas, Chin, Assamese and Bengalis

**Religion:** Christian 87.5% (60%+ Baptist); Hindu 10.1%; Muslim 1.7%

**Government:** Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN) coalition, led by the Nagaland People's Front (NPF)

**Capital:** Kohima

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Neiphi-u Rio

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2008. Click [here](#) for an overview of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2013 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "South of Arunachal Pradesh and north of Manipur, the remote and hilly state of Nagaland shares a border with Myanmar...Naga leaders campaigned for outright independence before the British left, but were unwillingly absorbed into India. Almost immediately a rebellion began, which continues with many factional splits and failed peace deals. As with Mizoram, the main religion is Christianity, and churches are at the centre of the communities. There are 16 Naga tribes, including the Angami, Rengma, Ao, Konyak, Wanchu, Sema and Lotha...Various rebel groups, including the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang)- not to be confused with the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Mulivah) – have been waging war against the state and Indian governments (and among themselves) for many years. Clashes between Indian and Burmese forces along the border are also common" (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.543 – RRT Library).

State government: A new Chief Minister, Neiphi-u Rio, assumed office on 6 March 2003. His party, the Nagaland People's Front (NPF), came to power as the head of the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN), "a conglomerate of five regional and non-Congress political parties", which includes the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Samat Party. The Indian National Congress is the main party in opposition, with 21 seats in the legislative assembly ('Neiphiu Rio sworn in as Nagaland Chief Minister' 2003, India Info website, 6 March <http://newsarchives.indiainfo.com/spotlight/election2003/06naga.html> – Accessed 5 August 2004; Indian Election Commission 2003, *Statistical Report on General Election, 2003, to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland*, Election Commission of India website [http://eci.gov.in/infoeci/key\\_stat/keystat\\_fs.htm](http://eci.gov.in/infoeci/key_stat/keystat_fs.htm) – Accessed 5 August 2004).

In the March 2008 state elections, the NPF won 26 seats, the INC 24, the BJP 2, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) 2, and 6 seats were won by independent candidates. The Democratic Alliance of Nagaland coalition (made up of the NPF, BJP, NCP and four independents) controls 34 seats in the 60-seat assembly, but relies on independent support to govern (Joshi, M. 2008, 'Neiphiu Rio sworn-in as Nagaland Chief Minister', *TopNews.in* website, 12 March

<http://www.topnews.in/neiphu-rio-sworn-nagaland-chief-minister-225267> – Accessed 14 July 2008).

The [Nagaland government website](#) located at contains background and government information on the state.

**Banned Groups:** National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) including all its factions, wings and Front organizations ('Declaration of major groups as 'Unlawful Associations' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967' Undated, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region website <http://www.northeast.nic.in/security.htm> – Accessed 30 July 2004).



## Orissa

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 36,706,920

**Languages:** 68; Oriya 83%; Hindi 2.4%; Telugu 2.1%; Santal 2.1%; Kui 2.0%

**Religion:** Hindu 94.7% (many animistic tribal peoples included); Christian 2.1 % (Catholic 0.8%, Protestant 1.3%); Muslim 1.8%; Other 1.4%

**Government:** Biju Janata Dal (BJD)

**Capital:** Bhubaneshwar

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Naveen Patnaik

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2004. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** June 2009 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** “The tropical state of Orissa lies along the eastern seaboard of India, on the Bay of Bengal...Orissa is predominantly rural, with fertile green coastal plains rising to the hills of the Eastern Ghats. The state is also rich in minerals and a big exporter of iron ore. Orissa’s economy is often destabilised by natural disasters”. About 25% of the people of Orissa are Adivasi. “In the last few years, a Hindu fundamentalist group, Bajrang Dal, has undertaken a violent campaign against Christians, mainly because of missionary success in converting the poor, especially in the tribal areas. In January 1999, an Australian missionary and his two sons were burnt alive while sleeping in their car. These activities resulted in the formation of a Christian youth group called Rashtriya Surakshya Vahni to ‘protect’ Christians...The recent creation of Jharkand state from neighbouring Bihar has increased the calls for the separate tribal-oriented state of Koshal, with Sambalpur the capital...no group has undertaken any violence to support this cause [so far]” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.485-487 – RRT Library).

**State government:** At the 2004 state elections, the regional party Biju Janata Dal (BJD) won 61 seats out of 147, the Bharatiya Janata Party 32 and Indian National Congress 38. The BJD is described by the UK Home Office as being “made up of almost the entire Janata Dal unit of Orissa, who formed the BJD because of neglect by the Janata Dal national leadership”. The party is a close ally of the BJP with whom it presently governs Orissa. The Chief Minister is BJD leader Naveen Patnaik (UK Home Office 2002, *India Assessment*, April; ‘BJD-BJP government in Orissa sworn in’ 2004, Rediff.com website, 16 May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2004/may/16oris.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007; Election Commission of India statistics).

The [Orissa government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Punjab

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 24,289,296

**Languages:** Punjabi 92%; Hindi 7.3%

**Religion:** Sikh 63.6%; Hindu 34%; Christian 1.1% Muslim 1%

**Government:** Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)-BJP coalition

**Capital:** Chandigarh

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Sardar Parkash Singh Badal

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#).

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2012 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "The Indian state of Punjab was created in 1947, when the Partition of India and Pakistan split the former Raj province of Punjab between the two new countries. The mostly Muslim western part of the province became Pakistan's Punjab state; the mostly Sikh and Hindu eastern part became India's Punjab state [...]. The capital of Punjab province, Lahore, ended up in Pakistan after partition, so a new capital for Indian Punjab state was built at Chandigarh. On November 1, 1966, the mostly Hindu southeastern half of Punjab became a separate state, Haryana. Chandigarh was on the border between the two states, and became a separate [union territory](#) which serves as the capital of both Punjab and Haryana" ('Punjab' 2004, Wikipedia website, 20 July [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punjab\\_\(India\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punjab_(India)) – Accessed 5 August 2004).

Sikh separatism in Punjab "gained ground in 1973 when Sikh leaders listed their religious, political and economic demands in the Anandpur Sahib resolution. In 1984 when extremists occupied the Golden Temple in Amritsar, a bloody battle ensued [...]. Punjab was considered by the central government to be in a state of emergency and was placed under President's rule from 1985 to 1992". Strategies used to stamp out militancy in the state "left behind a legacy of police brutality and human rights issues which are still being contested today". However, Punjab has been relatively peaceful for the last few years and has prospered economically (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.213-215 – RRT Library).

**State government:** The February 2007 state polls returned to power the coalition of the SAD and BJP which had been voted out in the previous election of 2002. Of 117 assembly seats, the SAD won 48 and the BJP 19; the Congress, with 44 seats forms the opposition. The Chief Minister is the 79 year old Parkash Singh Badal who is now beginning his fourth term in the position, having previously been Chief Minister from 1997 to 2002. The UK Home Office describes SAD as "a moderate Sikh party controlled by the dominant Jat Sikh farming community of Punjab" (UK Home Office 2002, *India Assessment*, April; 'Badal sworn in as Punjab CM' 2007, Rediff.com website, <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/mar/02punpoll.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007; Anand, Ashwani K. 2007, 'Badal prepares for fourth term as CM', Rediff.com website, 28 February <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/feb/28punpoll6.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007).

The [Punjab government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

**Banned Groups:** Babbar Khalsa International, Khalistan Commando Force, Khalistan Zindabad Force, International Sikh Youth Federation.

# Rajasthan

## State Information Last Updated December 2008

**Population:** 56,473,122

**Languages:** Hindi 90%, using the related Rajasthani or Mawari language; Urdu 2.2%; Punjabi 2.1%; Sindhi 0.8%

**Religion:** Hindu 89%; Muslim 7.5%; Jain 1.8%; Sikh 1.5%; Christian 0.12% (Catholic 0.07%, Protestant 0.05%)

**Government:** Indian National Congress-led coalition

**Capital:** Jaipur

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Ashok Gehlot

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** December 2008. Click [here](#) for the results by party, and [here](#) for a list of winning candidates. A full statistical report of the results of the previous December 2003 elections is available [here](#).

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** tba

**Description:** Covering an area of 342,269 sq km in NW India, "Rajasthan is bordered on the west by Pakistan. The capital is Jaipur; other large cities are Ajmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kota, and Udaipur. In the west of the state is the Thar (Indian) Desert, which is sparsely inhabited by pastoral nomads. In the east is part of the upland region of the Deccan, where, with the aid of irrigation, millet, wheat, and cotton are grown. The state's cultivated acreage has increased through irrigation projects, including the Indira Gandhi Canal, opened in 1984. The Aravalli Hills cross the state from the northeast to the southwest; they produce salt, lead, zinc, marble, coal, mica, phosphate, and gypsum. Handicrafts are Rajasthan's leading industry. Hindus comprise about 75% of the population, which also includes Muslims, Jains, and native peoples. Rajasthani and Hindi are the principal languages. The state was formed in 1948 from several former principalities of Rajputana. Other small areas were added in 1949, 1950, and 1956...The state has numerous famous Buddhist, Jain, and Mughal monuments. In 1974 the desert region of Rajasthan was the site of the underground explosion of India's first nuclear device. Rajasthan is governed by a chief minister and cabinet responsible to an elected unicameral legislature and by a governor appointed by India's president" ('Rajasthan' 2001, *The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition*, Columbia University Press <http://www.bartelby.com/65/ra/Rajastha.html> – Accessed 15 April 2002).

### State government:

At the December 2008 state assembly election, the Indian National Congress party obtained a plurality of 96 of 200 available Legislative Assembly seats; the BJP, led by incumbent Chief Minister Vasundara Raje, won 78 seats. The Congress party was able to form government via a majority coalition with 11 other victorious candidates. Ashok Gehlot was approved as Chief Minister by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, and was sworn in on 13 December 2008 (Jha, Srinand & Tomar, K.S. 2008, 'Rajasthan result a vote against Raje', *Hindustan Times*, 9 December [http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/FullcoverageStoryPage.aspx?id=89d7499e-25c2-4058-b57a-3f408894ca7aBattleforBallot\\_Special&&Headline=Rajasthan+result+a+vote+against+Raje](http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/FullcoverageStoryPage.aspx?id=89d7499e-25c2-4058-b57a-3f408894ca7aBattleforBallot_Special&&Headline=Rajasthan+result+a+vote+against+Raje) –

Accessed 12 December 2008; Tomar, K.S. 2008, 'Ashok Gehlot will be new Rajasthan CM', *Hindustan Times*, 11 December  
[http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/FullcoverageStoryPage.aspx?id=305610b9-e1b4-4e1f-8bce-91abf425baa9BattleforBallot\\_Special&MatchID1=4855&TeamID1=6&TeamID2=2&MatchType1=1&SeriesID1=1223&PrimaryID=4855&Headline=Ashok+Gehlot+will+be+Rajasthan's+new+CM](http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/FullcoverageStoryPage.aspx?id=305610b9-e1b4-4e1f-8bce-91abf425baa9BattleforBallot_Special&MatchID1=4855&TeamID1=6&TeamID2=2&MatchType1=1&SeriesID1=1223&PrimaryID=4855&Headline=Ashok+Gehlot+will+be+Rajasthan's+new+CM) – Accessed 12 December 2008; 'Ashok Gehlot sworn in as Rajasthan Chief Minister' 2008, *rediff news*, 13 December <http://www.rediff.com/news/2008/dec/13-ashok-gehlot-sworn-in-as-rajasthan-chief-minister.htm> – Accessed 15 December 2008).

Ashok Gehlot was previously Chief Minister in Rajasthan from December 1998 to December 2003, leading a Congress administration which won the 1998 state election with an outright majority of 153 seats. In the 2003 state election, the BJP won government with a majority of 120 seats, a significant increase on the 33 seats won in the previous election, while the Congress party won only 56 seats (Election Commission of India 2003, *Provisional Highlights on General Election, 2003, to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan*, Election Commission of India website [http://eci.gov.in/infoeci/key\\_stat/keystat\\_fs.htm](http://eci.gov.in/infoeci/key_stat/keystat_fs.htm) – Accessed 6 August 2004; 'Ashok Gehlot' (Undated), Rajasthan legislative Assembly website <http://rajassembly.nic.in/ashok-gehlot.htm> – Accessed 12 December 2008 – ; Election Commission of India 1998, *Statistical Report on General Election, 1998, to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan*, Election Commission of India website [http://eci.gov.in/infoeci/key\\_stat/keystat\\_fs.htm](http://eci.gov.in/infoeci/key_stat/keystat_fs.htm) – Accessed 15 April 2002).

The [Rajasthan government website](#) contains background and government information on the state. This [Rajasthan information website](#) also provides information about the state and the government.

## Sikkim

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 540,493

**Main language:** Nepali – defacto state language; and others

**Religion:** Hindu 67%; Buddhist 27%; Christian 5%; Muslim 0.9%

**Government:** Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)

**Capital:** Gangtok

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Pawan Kumar Chamling

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2004. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2009 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "For many years, Sikkim was regarded as one of the last Himalayan 'Shangri-las' because of its remoteness, spectacular mountain terrain, varied flora and fauna and ancient Buddhist monasteries... To ease potential resentment against the central government, India spends relatively large sums of money to subsidise Sikkim's road building, electrification, water supply and agricultural and industrial development. Much of this activity is also no doubt motivated by India's fear of Chinese military designs on Sikkim. Consequently, the state is more affluent than West Bengal, and being a tax-free zone helps further." Until 1975 Sikkim was an independent kingdom which had treaty relationships with the British, and then with India after Independence. After a period of instability, in a 1975 referendum, 97% of the electorate voted for union with India (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.507-509 – RRT Library).

**State government:** In the 2004 assembly polls, all but one of the 32 seats in the Sikkim assembly were won by the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), increasing its majority since the 1999 elections. The Chief Minister once again is former radical Pawan Kumar Chamling, who is also a published poet ('SDF returns to power in Sikkim' 2004, Rediff.com website, 13 May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2004/may/13sikkim.htm> – Accessed 9 July 2007).

The [Sikkim government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Tamil Nadu

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 62,110,839

**Languages:** Tamil 86.7%, one of the oldest literary languages of India; Telugu (largely Chennai) 7.1%; Kannada 2.2%; Urdu 1.9%; Malayalam 1.2%

**Religion:** Hindu 88.6%; Christian 5.7%; Muslim 5.5%; Other 0.2%

**Government:** Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)

**Capital:** Chennai (Madras)

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Dr. Kalaignar M Karunanidhi

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2006. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2011 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** “When India became independent in 1947, Madras Presidency became Madras State [...]. In 1953 Madras State was bifurcated into two states: Andhra Pradesh, comprising the northern Telugu speaking areas, and Madras State, comprising the southern Tamil-speaking areas. Under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, Madras State lost its western coastal districts to the states of Kerala and Mysore. In 1968, Madras State adopted a new name – Tamil Nadu. The capital city Madras was renamed Chennai in 1996” ('Tamil Nadu' 2004, Wikipedia website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil\\_Nadu#Politics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_Nadu#Politics) – Accessed 6 August 2004).

Two regional parties, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhaga (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) have dominated politics in the state since 1967. Both advocate greater devolution of power to the states. Their origin can be traced to The South Indian Welfare Association, which was founded in 1916, and was latter renamed Dravidar Kazhagam [DK]. The primary demand of the DK was “the establishment of an independent state called Dravida Nadu” ('Tamil Nadu' 2004, Wikipedia website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil\\_Nadu#Politics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_Nadu#Politics) – Accessed 6 August 2004).

Various proscribed militant groups, including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), operate in the state. The state was also home to Veerappan, an infamous forest bandit who had become a folk hero for many Tamils when he was killed by the police in 2004.

**State government:** In the 2006 assembly elections, power was won by the Democratic Progressive Alliance, led by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and including the Congress Party. DMK president Dr. Kalaignar M Karunanidhi became Chief Minister. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) is a state based party, which according to the UK Home Office “supports greater federalism” and “resents northern domination”, and which is “supported primarily by locally dominant backward castes”. Voted out of office was the other state-based party, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (All India Anna Dravidian Progressive Association) (AIADMK) led by Jayram Jayalalitha, who has faced several charges of corruption



over the years (UK Home Office 2002, *India Assessment*, April; 'M. Karunanidhi to be TN chief minister' 2006, Rediff.com website, 11 May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2006/may/11ptn.htm> – Accessed 10 July 2007; Nadar, Ganesh 2006, 'What a coalition means in Tamil Nadu', Rediff.com website, 12 May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2006/may/12agn.htm> – Accessed 10 July 2007).

The [Tamil Nadu government website](#) located at contains background and government information on the state.

**Banned Groups:** Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE); Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)-People's War, All Its Formations And Front Organisations; Maoist Communist Centre (MCC), All Its Formations And Front Organisations; Tamil Nadu Liberation Army (TNLA); Tamil National Retrieval Troops (TNRT); Al-Ummah; Jihad Committee

## Tripura

### State Information Last Updated July 2008

**Population:** 3,191,168

**Languages:** Bengali and Kakkborak (according to Tripura Government web site)

**Religion:** Hindu 85.3% – including Tripuri animists as “Hindu”; Muslim 7.1% (Bengali); Buddhist 4.6% (Chakma); Christian 3% (tribal peoples)

**Government:** Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front

**Capital:** Agartala

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Shri Manik Sarkar

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2008. Click [here](#) for an overview of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2013 (‘Terms of the Houses’ 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** “The tiny state of Tripura is the second smallest in the country...and is almost surrounded by Bangladesh...Though 60% of Tripura is forested, the largest industry is handloom weaving. While there are 19 tribes in the state, the majority of the population is Bengali”. Tripura “became a union territory of India in 1949 and a full state in 1972”. There is some violence in the north of Tripura, and also in the far south “where the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) continues to kill and kidnap indiscriminately. The victims are often Bengalis from Bangladesh, some of whom have sought equally violent retribution through the United Bengali Liberation Front (UBLF)...” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.536-7 – RRT Library).

**State government:** The state assembly is ruled by the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front – it has held power continuously since 1992. . After the State Assembly Elections 2003 the CPI (M) achieved absolute majority with 36 seats in a 60-member house. In the March 2008 state election, the CPI(M) won 46 seats, extending its majority in the Assembly. The Chief Minister remains Shri Manik Sarkar. There is also an autonomous area run by the Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC). The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLTF) is a banned organisation of tribal militants which has attacked and sometimes killed CPI (M) politicians and villagers. It has a political wing, the Indigenous People’s Front of Tripura. Connected with the TUJS are the Tripura Tribal Student’s Federation (TTSF) and the Tripura Upjati Karmachari Samiti (TUKS). There is also a guerilla group called the Tripura National Volunteers (TNV). Some of the tribal groups have a strongly Christian identity (Chaudhuri, K. 2000, ‘Strategy of terror’, *Frontline* online edition, Volume 17, Issue 09, 29 April <http://www.flonnet.com/fl1709/17090460.htm> – Accessed 16 April 2002; ‘Left Front gets majority in Tripura’ 2003, PTI, *Rediff.com* website, 1 March <http://www.rediff.com/election/2003/mar/01trip.htm> – Accessed 9 September 2003).

In the March 2008 Tripura state election, the CPI(M) increased its absolute majority by winning 46 seats, while the INC won 10, the Communist Party of India (CPI) 2, and small local parties 2. The Chief Minister remains Shri Manik Sarkar (Election Commission of India 2008, ‘Tripura

Assembly Elections Results 2008', 7 March <http://www.indian-elections.com/assembly-elections/tripura/election-result-08.html> – Accessed 14 July 2008).

The [Tripura government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

**Banned Groups:** The National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLTF); All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) ('Declaration of major groups as 'Unlawful Associations' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967' Undated, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region website <http://www.northeast.nic.in/security.htm> – Accessed 30 July 2004).

## Uttarakhand

State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 8,479,562

**Languages:** (percentages not clear) Hindi, a complex of related languages (Hindi, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Braj, Bundeli, Charwali, Kumaoni, etc); Urdu; Punjabi

**Religion:** (percentages not clear) Hindu; Muslim; Sikh; Christian; Jain

**Government:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

**Capital:** Dehradun

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** March 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** 2012.

**Description:** “Formerly Northern Uttar Pradesh, the new state of Uttaranchal came into being on 9 November 2000. Forged from the regions of Garhwal and Kumaon – known collectively as Uttarakhand, the Land of the North – Uttaranchal is a region of rolling hills and snow-covered mountains, divided by some of Hinduism’s most sacred rivers...” The region contains many Hindu pilgrimage routes, and there is a high proportion of high-caste Hindus amongst the population (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, p.375 – RRT Library).

In December 2006, due to demands from some inhabitants of the state, the name was changed from Uttaranchal to Uttarakhand by a bill adopted by the national government, the *Lok Sabha* (‘Soon, Uttaranchal will be called Uttarakhand’ 2006, Rediff.com website, 5 December <http://in.rediff.com/news/2006/dec/05change.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007).

**State government:** Uttaranchal had its first Assembly Elections in February 2002, having inherited a Bharatiya Janata Party-dominated assembly from Uttar Pradesh; in the new elections, the Indian National Congress (INC) party toppled the ruling BJP. However, in the 2007 polls, the position was reversed and the BJP won 34 out of 69 seats, one short of a clear majority but enough to form government together with some independent candidates. The new Chief Minister of Uttarakhand is Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri a 72 year old former army engineer. The Congress Party is the opposition, with 21 seats (Tripathi, Purnima S. 2007, ‘Tumble in the hills’, *Frontline*, Volume 24, Issue 5, 10 March <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2405/stories/20070323003601200.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007; Khanduri to be new Uttarakhand CM’ 2007, Rediff.com website, 1 March <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/mar/01uttarpoll.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007).

The [Uttarakhand government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## Uttar Pradesh

State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 166,052,859

**Languages:** Hindi 90%, a complex of related languages (Hindi, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Braj, Bundeli, Charwali, Kumaoni, etc); Urdu 9%; Punjabi 0.5%

**Religion:** Hindu 81.7%; Muslim 17.3%; Sikh 0.4%; Christian 0.14%; Jain 0.13%

**Government:** Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

**Capital:** Lucknow

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Kumari Mayawati

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2007. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2012.

**Description:** “Uttar Pradesh used to stretch from the Ganges plain all the way up to the Tibetan border, but the vast territory was chopped down to size with the creation of the new state of Uttaranchal in November 2000. Uttar Pradesh still includes Agra, Varanasi and Lucknow... Often referred to as the cow belt or Hindi belt, Uttar Pradesh has been the most dominant state in Indian politics and culture since Independence, producing over half of India’s prime ministers. This is partly because it’s the nation’s most populous state and partly because of the central role the region plays in the religious landscape of Hinduism... The people of Uttar Pradesh are predominantly poorly educated farmers, who stand in stark contrast to the wealthy urbanites who control the state’s political and economic destiny... In recent times Uttar Pradesh has become the main support base for the ruling Hindu fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)... Things came to a flashpoint in 1992 in the town of Ayodhya, when rioting Hindus tore down a mosque built by the Mughals over the temple of Rama...” (Singh, S. et al, 2001, *Lonely Planet: India*, August, Lonely Planet Publications, Melbourne, pp.323-325 – RRT Library).

**State government:** In the state assembly elections of May 2007 an outright majority of 206 out of 402 seats was won by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). Kumari Mayawati was sworn in as Chief Minister, replacing Mulayam Singh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party. Mayawati became the first Dalit Chief Minister in 1993, and the latest appointment is her fourth time in the position. The new ministry is large, with fifty members including many Dalits and Brahmins. Some commentators believe that the example in Uttar Pradesh – a centre of traditional Hindu culture where Dalits are still barred from many occupations – of Brahmin ministers and party members acknowledging a Dalit as their leader may set an example to the rest of India of the breaking down of caste barriers. This is the first time a Dalit leader has won an absolute majority in any state, and some predict that the BSP will expand its influence beyond Uttar Pradesh (‘Testing times ahead for fiery administrator’ 2007, Rediff.com website, 15 June <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/jun/15maya.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007; Prasad, Chandra Bhan 2007, ‘Mayawati ushers in a new social revolution’, Rediff.com website, 14 May <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/may/14guest1.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007; Mayawati sworn in as Uttar Pradesh chief minister’ 2007, Rediff.com website, 13 May <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/may/13suppoll.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007). Hasan, Zoya 2007, ‘What next?’, *Frontline*, Volume 24, Issue 10, 19 May

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The [Uttar Pradesh government website](#) contains background and government information on the state.

## West Bengal

### State Information Last Updated July 2007

**Population:** 80,221,171

**Languages:** Bengali 85.8%; Hindi 5.3%; Santali 2.6%; Urdu 2.1%; Nepali 1.3%

**Religion:** Hindu 75.1%; Muslim 23.4%; Christian 0.6%

**Government:** Left Front coalition, led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

**Capital:** Kolkata (Calcutta)

**Districts:** Click [here](#)

**Chief Minister:** Buddhadev Battacharya

**Background & Reference Materials:** Click [here](#)

**Last State Legislative Assembly election:** May 2006. Click [here](#) for a full statistical report of the results.

**Next State Legislative Assembly election:** June 2011 ('Terms of the Houses' 2007, Election Commission of India website, [http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous\\_statistics/terms\\_of\\_houses.asp](http://www.eci.gov.in/miscellaneous_statistics/terms_of_houses.asp) – Accessed 10 April 2007).

**Description:** "...In 1905, Bengal was split into two provinces. The population, which speaks mainly Bengali, is ethnically quite homogeneous but is almost equally divided between Muslims and Hindus. When India was partitioned in 1947, the province was divided along the line approximately separating the two main concentrations of the religious communities. **East Bengal**, overwhelmingly Muslim in population, became East Pakistan in 1947 and the independent nation of Bangladesh in 1971. **West Bengal**... [Covering] 87,874 sq km, became a state of India. It is bordered by Bangladesh and the state of Assam on the east; Nepal, Bhutan, and the state of Sikkim on the north; the states of Bihar and Orissa on the west; and the Bay of Bengal on the south. A highly industrialized region, it has jute mills, steel-fabricating plants, and chemical industries, all mainly centered in the Huglside industrial complex. Coal is mined and petroleum is refined. In 1950, West Bengal absorbed the state of Cooch Behar. During the 1970s disputes between Hindus and Muslims, this was further complicated by droves of refugees from Bangladesh... and agitation by Maoist groups called Naxalites, created political instability. West Bengal is governed by a chief minister and cabinet responsible to a bicameral legislature with one elected house and by a governor appointed by the president of India" ('West Bengal' 2001, *The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition*, Columbia University Press, <http://www.bartelby.com/> – Accessed 15 April 2002).

**State government:** At the 2006 state assembly elections, the Left Front coalition, led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)), was returned to power for a historic seventh term since 1977, winning about 226 of the 293 seats. Other parties in the coalition include the Communist Party of India (CPI), the All Indian Forward Bloc, and the Revolutionary Socialist Party. The Chief Minister is again Buddhadev Battacharya. The main opposition group is the Trinamul Congress, a state based INC splinter group, led by Mamata Bannerjee, which won 30 seats ('WB: Buddhadeb wins; celebrations begin' 2006, Rediff.com website, 11 May <http://in.rediff.com/election/2006/may/11pbengal.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007; Ramakrishnan, Venkitesh 2006, 'Ascendant left', *Frontline*, Volume 23, Issue 10, 20 May <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2310/stories/20060602003700400.htm> – Accessed 12 July 2007).

The [West Bengal government site website](#) contains background and government information on the state.



## **Union Territories**

**Information Last Updated August 2004**

A Union Territory is an administrative division of India. With the exception of Pondicherry – which has its own legislature and chief minister – the territories are ruled directly by the national government. There are presently six union territories viz., Andaman and Nicobar Islands; Chandigarh (the capital city of Punjab and Haryana); Dadra and Nagar Haveli; Daman and Diu; Lakshadweep; and Pondicherry. Previously a Union Territory, Delhi was made a national capital territory in 1991 and is on the verge of being granted statehood ('Union Territory' 2004, Word IQ website [http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Union\\_Territory](http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Union_Territory) – Accessed 11 August 2004; 'CM seeks clearance of Statehood Bill' 2004, *The Hindu* online edition, 18 January <http://www.hindu.com/2004/01/18/stories/2004011808870400.htm> – Accessed 11 August 2004)

The Union Territories are administered by appointed officials, called lieutenant governors or administrators, who are responsible to the president (Banks, A.S. et al, 2003, *Political Handbook of the World 2000-2002*, CSA Publications, New York – RRT Library: REF 320 POL).

More detailed information on the six territories has not been included as the areas involved are so small. However, general historical, administrative and government information can be found at the following websites:

[Andaman & Nicobar Administration website](#)

[Chandigarh Administration website](#)

[Lakshadweep Administration website](#)

[Daman & Diu Administration website](#)

[Dadra & Nagar Haveli Administration website](#)

[Pondicherry government website](#)

## **Useful Internet s**

### **National Commissions**

[National Commission for Minorities](#)

[National Commission for Women](#)

[National Human Rights Commission, India](#)

### **Newspapers/Magazines**

[Daily Excelsior](#)

[Deccan Herald](#)

[Frontline](#)

[The Hindu](#)

[The Hindustan Times](#)

[India Today](#)

[The Times of India](#)

[The Tribune](#)

[Other Newspapers](#)

## **Maps**

[Maps of India](#)

[ReliefWeb Map Centre](#)

## **Other**

[Census of India](#)

[Election Commission of India](#)

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