

# THE LAST LAP

The administration received about 2.14 lakh applications during a drive on March 9 that was extended up to March 15. About 3,000 applications were received till March 22. Citizens can check for their names on the state chief electoral officer's website after a few days



# 6

The slip will have the voter's name, photograph, address of the polling station and the voter's serial number. This slip will be a voter's proof of identity at the time of voting. If a slip does not have a photo on it, the voter will have to carry a photo identity proof to the polling station —AN OFFICIAL FROM THE DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICE

# Dance of Democracy

BATTLEGROUND INDIA | 7 APR-12 MAY, 2014 FOLLOW DANCE OF DEMOCRACY ON TWITTER @TOI\_ELECTIONS

\* THE TIMES OF INDIA | WEDNESDAY | APRIL 2, 2014

## In sugar belt, it's all in the family

### Cong-NCP Leaders Ensure Kin Get Party Tickets

Radheshyam Jadhav | TNN

**Pune:** A cursory glance at the list of candidates contesting the Lok Sabha polls from a dozen constituencies in the cash-rich sugar belt of Maharashtra, indicates how top leaders of the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party continue to dominate the political scene in the region.

The Pawars, the Kadams, the Patils, the Shindes and the Awades, all families of political heavyweights have ensured party nominations, either for themselves or for their kin in the Lok Sabha polls. These families have an iron grip over the cooperative sector in the region and control education institutes, milk cooperatives, district central banks and cooperative financial bodies.

While close and distant relatives of a handful of families represent the region in the panchayats, the civic bodies and the state assembly, near ones are vying for the Lok Sabha seats. The lone exception is of Shirdi for Congress and Shirur for the NCP.

Top leaders of the parties seem to have bowed down to the wishes of these influential leaders by nominating their near ones as candidates in as many as 10 of the total 12 constituencies. In the process, the parties have neglected loyal workers who had toiled for the party for years.

### TIES THAT BIND

**PUNE**  
VISHWAJEET KADAM | CONGRESS  
► Son of state minister Patangrao Kadam

**SANGLI**  
PRATIK PATIL | CONGRESS  
► Grandson of late CM Vasantdada Patil and son of late MP Prakash Patil

**HATKANANGLE**  
KALLAPPA AWADE | CONGRESS  
► Former MP and state minister. His son Prakash is former state minister and MLA

**SOLAPUR**  
SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE | CONGRESS  
► Daughter Pranita is an MLA

**BARAMATI**  
SUPRIYA SULE | NCP  
► Father Sharad Pawar is Union minister, cousin Ajit is deputy chief minister

**MADHA**  
VIJAYSINH MOHITE-PATIL | NCP  
► Former deputy CM and state minister. His son Ranjeet is a former MP, his brother Pratapsinh is a former MLA and minister

**KOLHAPUR**  
DHANANJAY MAHADIK | NCP  
► Nephew of MLC Mahadev Mahadik

**AHMEDNAGAR**  
RAJIV RAJALE | NCP  
► Cousin of state minister Balasaheb Thorat

**SATARA**  
UDAYANRAJE BHOSALE | NCP  
► His uncle late Abhaysinhraje was state minister, his cousin Shivderraje is an MLA

**MAVAL**  
RAHUL NARVEKAR | NCP  
► He is the son-in-law of senior NCP MLA and former minister Ramraje Naik-Nimbalkar

As per the Congress-NCP seat-sharing formula, the Congress is contesting five Lok Sabha seats in the sugar belt — Pune, Sangli, Hatkanangle, Shirdi and Solapur. The NCP is contesting from the remaining seven — Kolhapur, Ahmednagar, Maval, Shirur, Madha, Baramati and Satara.

"The entire sugar politics of the state is in hands of these families. They have managed to keep their hold

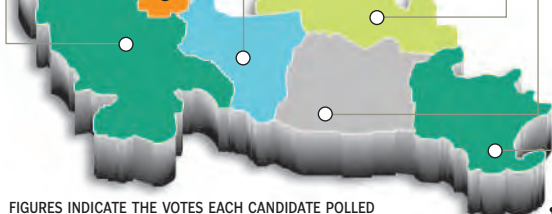
on the region because they control sugar mills and other cooperatives. In rural areas common people and farmers have to depend on them for everything. This picture is changing with Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana building its base in the region. This election would not be easy for the NCP-Congress alliance as the BJP and the Shiv Sena have joined hands with the sanghatana," said political scientist Ashok Chausalkar.

## PAWARS HAVE REMAINED UNSHAKEABLE ON HOME GROUND FOR DECADES

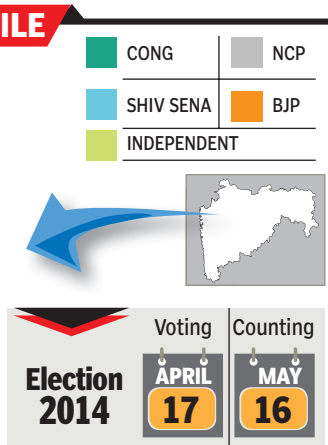
### CONSTITUENCY PROFILE

**Assembly Polls 2009 Results BARAMATI**

<b>Bhor</b> Sangram Thopte 59,041	<b>Baramati</b> Ajit Pawar 1,28,544	<b>Indapur:</b> Harshvardhan Patil 92,729
<b>Khadakwasla</b> Bhimrao Tapkir 59,634	<b>Purandar</b> Vijay Shivtare 67,998	<b>Daund</b> Ramesh Thorat 85,764



FIGURES INDICATE THE VOTES EACH CANDIDATE POLLED



**LOK SABHA POLLS (2009)**  
Supriya Sule | NCP | 4,87,827 | 66.59%  
Kanta Nalawade | Shiv Sena | 1,50,996 | 20.61%  
Vivek Patil | BSP | 29,864 | 04.08%

Total voters: 15,93 lakh  
Voters' turnout: 734 lakh  
Percentage: 46.07

MP's Local Area Development Fund: ₹12.57 cr (2009-2014)

### WHAT THE CANDIDATES SAY...

**Supriya Sule | NCP**  
"I am not over confident. I am optimistic that voters would appreciate the efforts I have put in during the last five years. I know the constituency and I am well acquainted with the issues that need attention. The constituency is witnessing rapid urbanization. A significant area is attached to Pune city. I will focus on resolving urban issues like water management, transportation and employment generation"

**Mahadev Jankar | BJP, Shiv Sena and Rashtriya Samaj Party**  
"The Pawars have failed to ensure balanced development of the constituency. While areas like Baramati have all the infrastructure, most other places are deprived of basic amenities such as water and roads. Funds that have come for the entire constituency have been spent only in specific pockets. People are agitated by this biased approach of NCP leaders"

**Suresh Khopade | AAP**  
"AAP is fighting the election to change the existing outdated political system. Only some families are controlling the political system of the entire country. We want to give power to the powerless and introduce a political model where the voice of common man will be supreme"

**KEY ISSUES** Overall development, water availability, farmers' problems

## Sule confident, others gear up for a big fight

Sarang Dastane | TNN

**Pune:** Candidates pitted against sitting member of Parliament Supriya Sule are up against a formidable task of dethroning her. The BJP and Shiv Sena have fielded Mahadev Jankar of Rashtriya Samaj Party, while the Aam Admi Party's nominee is former IPS officer Suresh Khopade.

Between them, Union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar, Sule's father, and her cousin Ajit Pawar, have represented the constituency for decades. Sule too is confident about a second consecutive term in the Lok Sabha.

In a record of sorts, all three have never lost a Lok Sabha election from Baramati, their hometown. While the senior Pawar was elected to Parliament six times from here, Ajit won once in 1991, while Supriya bagged the seat in 2009. To make inroads, the saffron alliance has planned a series of public meetings to be addressed by Gopinath Munde and Uddhav Thackeray.

The opposition is banking on the change in the demographics of Baramati Lok Sabha constituency following its delimitation in 2008. Many rural pockets in Bhosari, the traditional vote bank of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) were deleted from Baramati following the delimitation process. It included a new class of urban voters from the fringe areas of Pune city in Baramati.

Moreover, the power equations in five of the six assembly segments in the constituency have changed. Except for Baramati city assembly segment, represented by Ajit Pawar, the NCP is not in power in the remaining five.

**The opposition is banking on the change in the demographics of Baramati constituency after its delimitation in 2008. Many rural pockets in Bhosari, the traditional vote bank of the NCP, were deleted from Baramati**

pockets of Khadakwasla. "It will not be a simple election for Pawar and his family. People here are fed up with them. They want change. They want someone who will focus on development of the entire constituency and not just Baramati city," said Sena's MLA from Purandar Vijay Shivtare, who is also the campaign manager for Jankar.

Sule's supporters feel the victory of their leader is a foregone conclusion. "We are not bothered by the change in demographics and the unfavorable power equations in five assembly segments. It was the same situation in 2009 yet she won by a margin of over 3.37 lakh votes. When it comes to Lok Sabha, the voters here vote for the Pawar family, come what may," an NCP leader said.

## Sena, MNS slug it out, BJP mum

Ambarish Mishra | TNN

**Mumbai:** The Thackeray cousins are locked in a verbal dual over the MNS being added to the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance.

MNS chief Raj Thackeray, at a rally in Pune on Sunday, accused Sena president Uddhav Thackeray of blocking his party's entry, as proposed by the state BJP, into the alliance. Uddhav, however, told Saamna on Monday that having the MNS on board the alliance was the brainwave of not the entire Maharashtra BJP, but just one BJP leader (read Nitin Gadkari).

The war of words between Uddhav and Raj will further erode the saffron alliance's credibility among voters, poll pundits said. The state BJP has been silent.

Stating that the state BJP was keen on having the MNS on board, Raj said the BJP leaders who were pursuing the idea later came to him saying that Uddhav had shot down the proposal. It was Uddhav who played spoiler, even as he maintained that the Sena had sent overtures to the MNS, Raj added.

Uddhav said in the Saamna interview that BJP bigwigs Rajnath Singh and Rajiv Pratap Rudy had pacified the Sena following reports of a senior BJP leader trying to get the MNS into the alliance to avoid a split in anti-incumbency votes in the state, much against the Sena's wish. Uddhav said there was no need to have the MNS as an ally as there was no threat of a split in anti-incumbency votes because of the Modi wave.

## It's the joke of the year, Uddhav's level of thinking is low: Pawar

Prafulla Marpakwar | TNN

**Mumbai:** Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray and NCP president Sharad Pawar are locked in a war of words, firing salvos at each other.

A day after Uddhav announced that he would not allow NCP's entry into the NDA, the Maratha strongman on Tuesday called it "the joke of the year". "It's the joke of the year... there is no need to take Uddhav's statement seriously, his level of thinking is low, he is making irresponsible and immature statements, that is the reason why Shiv Sena is

### Ink remark: EC vexed with Pawar but no FIR

**The Election Commission on Tuesday expressed "displeasure" at NCP chief Sharad Pawar's controversial "erase ink, vote twice" remark and asked him to be more careful with his words and conduct in future. Though it pointed out that Pawar's call to people to vote at more than one place violated Section 171D of the IPC, but the EC decided not to pursue the matter further, in view of him regretting the remark. "The Commission conveys its displeasure to you and expects you, as a senior politician and president of a national party, to be careful in future to ensure that by words/conduct you do not violate model code of conduct," the EC told Pawar. TNN**

going down day by day," Sharad Pawar said. Joining him, his nephew Ajit Pawar also launched a tirade against Uddhav for his "uncalled-for statements". The Pawars have even urged him to "self-introspect, particularly over the manner in which born Sena leaders were leaving the organization". Addressing rallies in Vidarbha, Pawar slammed Uddhav for "his lack of vision and inability to lead the organization", while Ajit criticized him for failing to erect a Bal Thackeray memorial despite his party controlling the BMC.

Uddhav has been criticizing the Pawars for lack of development of the state and

drafting a new policy for the welfare of hailstorm-hit farmers. In an interview to Sena mouthpiece Saamna on Monday, Uddhav claimed Pawar's style of functioning was "completely different. He simultaneously showers praises on a large number of politicians, as a result of which, during the formation of the government, all options are open for him". "A month ago, he praised BJP prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi, that is his style... we will not succumb to his plan... we will never allow him to enter the NDA," Uddhav said.

Uddhav claimed that after the elections, NDA would not require the support of non-NDA parties for the formation of government. "We will have sufficient numbers," he said.

## 'Predict result, win ₹21 lakh'

Samrat Phadnis | TNN

**Kolhapur:** The Maharashtra Andhashradha Nirmoolan Samiti (MANS), the organisation formed by slain rationalist Narendra Dabholkar, has challenged astrologers across the country to predict the Lok Sabha election result accurately and win Rs 21 lakh.

MANS working president Avinash Patil on Tuesday said they have posed the challenge to prove that astrology or fortune-telling is not a science and it does not have any proven scientific base. The committee has published a questionnaire of 25 marks for the astrologers and those who get 22 marks will be eligible for the prize money. "We opened the debate on February 28 on the occasion of National Science Day and had challenged the astrologers to participate in the contest," Patil said.

### ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL



CONNECTING WITH VOTERS People's Democratic Party candidate Arun Bhatia interacts with voters in the city on Tuesday afternoon

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