

ARUN SANKAR/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Members of the Communist Party of India's student wing were detained by police at a protest against the culling of voting rolls.

India cuts 130m from voter rolls, sparking protests

By Mujib Mashal and Pragati K.B.
NEW YORK TIMES

NEW DELHI — Nearly 1 billion people in the world's biggest democracy are being asked to show documents to prove that they should keep the right to vote.

The exercise is billed by an election commission appointed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as cleaning India's voter roll of duplicates and discrepancies. So far, it has expunged more than 130 million names — more than the population of Mexico.

Tens of millions of voters have been flagged by algorithms for deletion over anomalies in their information. Millions who have appealed their deletions remain stuck in adjudication, deprived of their right to vote during close-fought elections earlier this year. Some removed for being dead are challenging the decision based on the fact they are alive.

Public anger is turning into widespread protests, as evidence piles up that the exercise is disenfranchising parts of society seen as less likely to support Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist party. India's 200 million Muslims appear to have been disproportionately targeted.

Protesters are calling for the resignation of Gyanesh Kumar, chief of the election commission, a body that was long held in high regard for running relatively fair polls in a region with a history of coups and autocratic governance.

"The heart of our democracy, which is the right to vote, is at great peril," Rohinton Nariman, a former solicitor general of India and a supreme court judge, said in a lecture last week.

The exercise, which began last summer in one state before being expanded to every voter in the country, has struck the biggest blow to election integrity in India's more than seven decades as a republic, former Indian polling officials and analysts say. The anger is intensifying on the back of recent revelations that officials within the election commission and the Supreme Court have expressed reservations about the revision.

"The entire approach has changed from making the rolls inclusive," said Ashok Lavasa, a former election commissioner. "The effort, and the priority, seems to be getting rid of people on the slightest pretext."

While previous revisions of the voter roll focused on "physical verification, door to door" to make sure that every citizen was included, he said the current process puts the onus of proof entirely on citizens and otherwise excludes them. That leaves a large section of the electorate at the mercy of algorithms and mistakes in old records that could largely be clerical errors, he said.

To be sure, inaccuracies in the voter roll, which included about 970 million names before the recent revisions, have long been a fixture in a country where tens of millions of people are on the move for work, enabling abuses by some. But the list is routinely updated before every local and national election, and public faith in the electoral system was strong enough that the impact of the remaining discrepancies was believed to be marginal. Modi won three terms in office through elections based on the voter roll before the nationwide revision, and his Bharatiya Janata Party flourished.

The sudden discovery and deletion of more than 20 million dead people and 90 million others categorized as "absent, shifted, and others," has cast doubt about the integrity of previous elections or raised suspicion about the ruling party's intentions for upcoming ones, analysts and opposition leaders say.

Since a weaker showing in 2024 national elections, Modi's party has strung together a series of wins at the state level, including flipping one large state that it had never won based on a revised voter list. The next national election is in 2029.

Election commission officials did not respond to multiple requests for comment. Leaders of Modi's party have rejected the uproar as fomented by a struggling opposition, which had earlier asked for similar revisions.

Two senior officials who would talk about the governing party's strategy only anonymously said the process was aimed at entrenching its electoral advantage. The officials asked not be named for fear of retribution.



French police fire teargas at school protests

Jon Henley
Paris

Police fired teargas at protesters as 250,000 pupils, teachers and parents demonstrated in France on the biggest day yet of a campaign for better high school conditions that has been marred by violent clashes with police.

▲ *Riot police face protesters demanding better learning conditions in Nantes*

PHOTOGRAPH: SÉBASTIEN SALOM-GOMIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The French prime minister, Sébastien Lecornu, yesterday said at least 215 teenagers and 85 school staff had been injured since the protests began more than a fortnight ago, calling the figures "the heaviest toll in decades paid by the school system".

The country's president, Emmanuel Macron, called key ministers to the Élysée

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What happens to a dog when its owner can't leave hospital?

Ranjana Srivastava

"Doctor, do you know I have a little dog?"

My team exchanges a glance. It's my turn today.

"Tell me about your dog."

Her face lights up. "Well, he is just a lovely little thing. When I am knitting, he curls up on my lap and keeps me company. We are very happy, the two of us."

It is unlikely that our patient has knitted in the last year, during which a series of mishaps has brought her in and out of hospital. But the rest of her account rings true.

For as long as possible, she stayed at home, managing miraculously well despite her cognitive impairment, with little help beyond an occasional carer. But now, a fall has brought her undone. For weeks, she has been waiting for residential care, one more statistic in the familiar story of "bed block".

From our medical perspective, she is waiting for a facility. But from hers, she is waiting to see her dog. She can recall very little about her life but, when it comes to her pet, her descriptions are unwavering. Her words paint a small brown dog, quietly following her around her apartment. Jumping into her lap when she settles into her armchair. Ready to do it all over again tomorrow.

The paramedic who rescued her from her garden noted that the neighbour had offered to take the dog until the patient's return. But this time, the patient is not going home.

Seeing how much she enjoys the nurses fussing over her - and because she has never once asked to go home - we have not mentioned her living arrangement. But she longs for her dog - and our decision not to lie is far easier in principle than in practice.

There is no easy provision to reunite her with her dog. The neighbour can't bring the dog in. The hospital won't let the dog in.



▲ *For many older people, an animal is their most constant companion, writes Ranjana Srivastava. Photograph: Eva Blanco/Getty Images/iStockphoto*

("Imagine the other patients.")

What if seeing her dog proved distressing afterwards? What if it created a safety risk? And if we made an exception for her, what would we do for the next patient who pined for her turn?

The more frequently I encounter the problem, the more I see it as an emblem of the things medicine considers peripheral to patient care, even when they may not be peripheral at all.

Our relationships with pets matter to wellbeing. They provide physical activity, psychological comfort and social connection. For some older people, an animal is their most constant companion.

But concern for a pet's welfare can also become a practical barrier to healthcare. Patients may delay seeking care, worry about coming to hospital, or discharge themselves because there is a pet at home.

A recent essay in the New England Journal of Medicine on human-animal relationships points to a perhaps delayed recognition of something we have understood for years: the wellbeing of humans and their pets is intertwined.

When I was an intern, just two questions often formed the social history: Does the patient smoke? Does the patient drink?

Today we do better. We ask: Where does the patient live? What services exist? Is there a history of falls? Is the family involved?

Perhaps we should add another question: Are you concerned about a pet?

It is a deceptively easy question to ask. Because what happens when the answer is yes?

Who will feed the cat? Who will walk the dog? What if the patient cannot return home?

The solution can't be another mental responsibility casually added to the medical worklist. Yet ignoring the issue doesn't obscure the problem.

More of us are starting to notice what we have traditionally neglected - not only where a patient lives but also which animal lives with them and what will happen to that animal if the patient doesn't go home.

For many people, pets are part of the social determinants of health. Hospitals cannot take on this responsibility alone. But it's time to ask how hospitals can work effectively with community services and animal welfare agencies to care for the whole patient.

Know thy neighbour - and thy neighbour's dog.

For as long as we cared for her, one doctor from our team sat down with our patient and heard her retell the story about her dog. We never let our interest drift, even when our hearts slightly broke each time. Every one of us would have brought in her dog - if only we could.

One day, all of us rotated out. We left her in the hands of another team, hoping they would continue the ritual.

• Ranjana Srivastava is an Australian oncologist, award-winning author and Fulbright scholar. Her latest book is Every Word Matters: Writing to Engage the Public

‘Privilege’ to teach



Teach for America recruits and trains people who studied for non-education careers and brings them into classrooms across the United States. PROVIDED BY TEACH FOR AMERICA

For 35 years, future leaders with Teach for America have sought to counter inequities

Phaedra Trethan
USA TODAY

“What if our future leaders were teaching in these schools instead of working on Wall Street?”
Wendy Kopp
Founder, Teach for America

Wendy Kopp was a senior at Princeton University in 1989, part of a cohort of the most recruited students in America. • She and her peers in what was widely called “The Me Generation” were being recruited by Wall Street, big banks, lobbying firms, consulting firms and Fortune 500 companies. • Kopp, who’d grown up in Dallas and went to good schools throughout her childhood, realized upon getting to Princeton and meeting people from less privileged backgrounds that not everyone had the same access to education she’d had. And, she said, she bristled at the characterization of her generation as selfish.

“I felt that was wrong,” Kopp said in a recent interview. “I felt like I was one of many people I knew who were searching for ways to make a real difference, to tackle the inequities we saw in the country.”

She did research. She wrote a senior thesis. And the idea she proposed in it led to more than 70,000 teachers being placed in classrooms across the United States and, now, the world.

In schools instead of on Wall Street

Kopp’s thesis proposal eventually became Teach for America, now marking its 35-year anniversary. But it almost never got past her paper.

A public policy major, Kopp had heard about a teacher shortage, one that was particularly acute in urban and rural districts.



Kopp

“I thought, we can channel all this energy and talent,” she said. “The first two years out of college, what if our future leaders were teaching in these schools instead of working on Wall Street?”

She wrote her senior thesis proposing a teaching corps of non-education majors, young people who could hone their leadership skills in classrooms in places where they were needed most. She knew she could recruit young people eager to

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FAR-RIGHT INFLUENCER SHAMED

RAGE BAIT BULLY DAFFY UNMASKED

Vile anti-migrant activist exposed as footage revealed



FACE OF HATE
Daffy, above, in video and, right, at rally

BY **MARK McGIVERN**

A FAR-RIGHT fanatic who goads innocent black men in "rage bait" videos to stir up racial tension has been unmasked.

The activist known as Daffy films and harasses men in the street before posting videos of their angry reactions online.

His videos are viewed thousands of times after extremist leader Tommy Robinson shared one of them.

But Daffy – who usually conceals his identity during anti-migrant rallies across Scotland – has been unmasked after one of his targets filmed him in return.

The Stand Up to Racism campaign group shared that footage online and branded Daffy "a far-right agitator, bully and rage baiter".

FULL STORY PAGES 4&5

PQ returns to power in Quebec, setting up fresh tests for unity

Party poised to fall short of majority, putting promise to hold third independence vote in question



Parti Québécois Leader Paul St-Pierre Plamondon celebrates in Montreal after his party's election victory on Monday night. The PQ was last in government in 2014 and it won just three seats in the province's 2022 election. ANDREJ IVANOV/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

MAURA FORREST
ERIC ANDREW-GEE
NICOLAS VAN PRAET

Quebec has elected the separatist Parti Québécois to a minority government, setting the stage for years of uncertainty about the party's promised independence referendum, which will now require support from elsewhere in the province's fragmented political landscape.

After a five-way race that revealed a divided province and a splintered federalist vote, incoming premier Paul St-Pierre Plamondon's party was leading or elected in 59 of the province's 127 seats in Monday's provincial election as of late evening, fewer than the 64 needed to secure a majority in the National Assembly.

With 97 per cent of polls reporting, the PQ was on track to receive less than 30 per cent of the popular vote – which would be the lowest share of support for a government in Quebec history.

Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon was thwarted in his quest for a majority by late surges from the Quebec Liberal Party and the Quebec Conservatives. Both parties oppose a separation vote and have vowed to block one in the National Assembly.

The governing Coalition Avenir Québec, meanwhile, was wiped off the map after running the province for eight years. Leader Christine Fréchette lost her own seat as the party was completely shut out on Monday.

The election results come at a delicate moment for national unity, with a referendum in Alberta two weeks away, and persistent threats to Canada's sovereignty and economy from U.S. President Donald Trump. Among the provinces, Quebec has been the biggest casualty of Mr. Trump's protectionist trade agenda, which has targeted its aluminum and forest product industries in particular.

The PQ Leader has promised a vote on the province's place within Canada once Mr. Trump leaves office in 2029, at which point Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon says Quebec can have a "serene" discussion about its future.

■ QUEBEC, A4

Jaguar's hulking car for our era

Too big for parking spaces, it's a middle finger to the future



The £120,000 electric car's lavish cabin

Zoe Williams



The cutting-edge car du jour, even while few will ever buy one, is a good index of what the world's coming to. It's a dress-for-the-job-you-want principle, on wheels: drive for the world you want to inhabit.

That's why when Tesla launched the Model X with a bioweapon defence mode – in 2016! – we should have been much more worried, and it's why the Jaguar Type 01 Grand Tourer EV has a lot to say.

A new era, the heritage carmaker calls it, and it's not wrong; but having test-driven the era – just with my eyes and imagination, rather than the car itself – I would like to return it to the showroom and choose pretty much any other era.

Its gigantic size alone makes it look as if it wants to wage war on the future. The whole point of the electrification revolution in motoring was that we could wean ourselves off energy profligacy and on to elegant sufficiency.

If you counteract all that with a car too wide (2 metres) and too long (5.2 metres) to fit into any UK car parking space, whatever advances you've made with aerodynamics cannot counteract the fact that you are hulking around in something that looks more like a tank than a

Its future owner wants you to get your children indoors at his approach



▲ 'Rich, urban, design literate ...' Jaguar's Rawdon Glover introduces the world to the Type 01 in New York this week

car, the atmospherics underscored by the glassless tailgate and 23-inch (58cm) wheels. To unpack that a bit: you can't see into the back at all, the preference for all the other glass is blackout, and the wheels on a Toyota Hilux, the Chad warlord's vehicle of choice, are between 16 and 18 inches.

All the aluminium in the world (73%) can't put a dent in the 2.5-plus tonne weight, and they've busted their balls to reduce the drag coefficient, only to arrive at one (0.23) easily bested by any average electric saloon (0.21).

The look it's going for, according to the literature, is "monolithic", but it's a thin line, isn't it, between an immutable colossus and a





Chemistry prize goes to pair for their work on mirror-image molecules

Linda Geddes

The 2026 Nobel prize in chemistry has been awarded to two scientists for discoveries that show how chemical reactions can produce an overwhelming excess of one of two mirror-image forms of a molecule.

Henri B Kagan at Paris-Sud University in France and Kensō Soai at Tokyo University of Science in Japan have been awarded the prize "for the discovery of nonlinear effects and autocatalysis in asymmetric organic synthesis".

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the winners in Stockholm yesterday. They will share of a prize of 12m Swedish kronor - about £900,000.

Many molecules, including amino acids that form the building blocks of proteins, can exist in two forms that contain the same atoms, but are mirror images of one another, much like a person's left and right hands. This property is known as chirality.

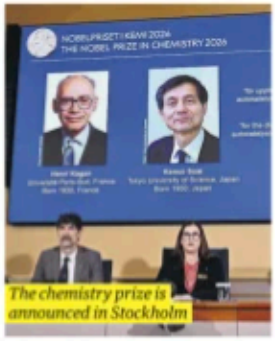
However, the chemistry underpinning life is surprisingly homochiral, or same-handed. Proteins are built almost exclusively from L-amino acids, while the sugars that form the backbone of DNA and RNA have the opposite D-configuration.

How this homochirality could have emerged when chemical reactions in the laboratory typically produce equal quantities of both forms had long puzzled scientists. The question also had practical consequences: "Although these molecules look very similar, they can behave very differently when they interact with other molecules," said Prof Andre Cobb, an organic chemist at King's College London.

"This matters enormously for medicines because many of the molecules in our bodies, including proteins that drugs target, are themselves chiral," he added. "So the 'left-handed' and 'right-handed' versions of a drug can interact with the body in different ways which can lead to different or weakened drug effects."

The drug thalidomide provides a potent example. During the early 1960s, thousands of children were affected by birth defects after their mothers were prescribed it to combat morning sickness during pregnancy. Researchers subsequently found differences in the biological effects of the drug's two mirror-image forms.

Manufacturers wanted a way of steering reactions towards particular forms of the molecules that they produced, and Kagan and Soai eventually provided a solution.



The chemistry prize is announced in Stockholm

12m

Value of the chemistry prize in Swedish kronor - £900,000 - which will be shared by the two winners

▲ *Kensō Soai, lecturer at the Tokyo University of Science and co-winner of the Nobel prize in chemistry, at a press conference in Tokyo yesterday*

PHOTOGRAPH: KIM KYUNG-HOON/REUTERS

It began in 1986, when Kagan discovered that a relatively small imbalance between left- and right-handed forms of a catalyst could create a greater excess of one of the mirror image products than the other.

Soai took the idea further, developing a reaction in which the molecules that were produced themselves acted as catalysts for making more of themselves, a process known as autocatalysis.

"You have to be aware, this is probably the coolest experiment in organic chemistry ever," said Prof Peter Somfai, an organic chemist at Lund University and a member of the Nobel committee for chemistry.

In 2003, Soai demonstrated a reaction that produced almost exclusively one mirror-image form, reproducing the kind of molecular one-handedness found in living organisms for the first time.

Speaking by telephone at yesterday's announcement, Soai, 76, said he was "very proud" of the experiment as it offered a potential explanation for how the molecular one-handedness of life could have arisen. He described hearing the news about the prize as "one of the most exciting days of my life".

Taken together, Kagan and Soai's discoveries have "reshaped our understanding of molecular chirality, how it is created, amplified and transmitted", Somfai said.

These insights have since become embedded in the development of catalysts that steer chemical reactions towards producing a particular mirror image form across different industries.

"It might be difficult to say that this drug or that drug was developed using this," Somfai said. I would say all of them because we use this as a tool. We use this as an understanding of how to develop catalysts and how they function."