

## A word of advice:

The article, “A basis for Opposition unity” (Editorial page, August 3), which prescribed enlightened abdication for Congress president Rahul Gandhi and the Indian National Congress, appears to be a road map for their marginalisation. Even staunch critics of the Congress will have to admit that its recall and brand value are much higher than all other parties’, pan India. The Congress may not win 2019 on its own. So what? It has had a memorable past and will eventually gain opportunities — provided it remains the ‘Congress – the pre eminent party’. The original idea of reviving the Congress based on its strength and reach is still the correct approach even if it takes time. The advantage for the party is that it has a host of young leaders in its ranks who have the belief and strength to make the Congress the preferred choice in an electoral contest. While 2019 is a myopic goal, 2024 is not far off. The ‘savarna’ theory is clever but there is nothing to bear it out. In winning the race, the prize will be in enabling an India that is at peace with itself.

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<u>Words</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Mar		spoil, impair, disfigure, blemish
Insinuation		implication, inference, innuendo
Resonate		deep, sonorous, vibrant, thunderous
Setback		drawback, predicament, difficulty, muddle
Travail		trouble, ado
Epidemic		out break, plage, epizootic, pandemic
Dissidence		disagreement, dissent, discord, opposition
Parochial		narrow minded, small minded, provincial, conservative
Right wing		conservative, blimpish, diehard, conventional
Pronouncement		declaration, proclamation, assertion, decrease
Gesture		signal, indication, gesticulation
Suppress		subdue, quell, squash, censor, put down, bottle up
Afresh		a new, again
Upside down		up turned, over turned, upended, capsized, Disarray, in disorder, chaotic, topsy – tory

## Andhra Spectrum:

### **Jagan Reddy is showcasing his widened social base with his choice of Ministers**

Starting off as an unsure heir to his father Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy's legacy 10 years ago, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has since transformed himself into a mass leader. He has done this by sheer tenacity, but his political rise was devoid of an ideological thread. Deeply aware of this inadequacy, which is more pronounced amid the BJP's dominance nationally, Mr. Reddy has made an early move to fortress the wide-spectrum social coalition that accorded his YSR Congress Party a landslide victory, by appointing five deputies. The death of his father, then Chief Minister and better known as YSR, in 2009 had pushed the Congress over the cliff in the State, a downslide in fortunes that befell it nationally too. Humiliated by the Congress and jailed during its rule, Mr. Reddy continued his tireless travels across the State, finally arriving this summer at his destination, the CM's chair. The constitution of his Council of Ministers, including Mekathoti Sucharita, a Dalit woman, as the Home Minister, and five deputies, is evidently aimed at nurturing the coalition of social groups that he singlehandedly built up through his travels. The five Deputy CMs are from the Scheduled Caste (K. Narayana Swamy), Scheduled Tribe (Pamula Pushpa Sreevani), backward caste (Pilli Subhash Chandrabose), Muslim (Amzath Basha) and Kapu (Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas) communities.

Unitary projects such as nationalism have strong homogenising tendencies that consider particular identities and their aspirations for representation irrelevant or even fissiparous. Weaker sections of society are often at the receiving end of such projects, even if they are enthusiastic subscribers. Mr. Reddy's success in weaving together a political base that denied the BJP a foothold in Andhra Pradesh, a State where it could not win a single seat, and vanquished the Telugu Desam Party was built on a sensitive appreciation of the aspiration for representation among diverse sections of society. Mr. Reddy's predecessor, N. Chandrababu Naidu, had two deputies, one a Kapu and one from another backward caste; that was aimed more at accommodating formidable interest groups rather than empowering the weakest. YSR had won in 2004 and 2009 with an expansive welfare agenda. Mr. Reddy believes that welfarism alone is not sufficient and representation is critical in the changed situation. YSR's victories were the bedrock of the Congress in 2004 and 2009; Mr. Reddy's victory signals the decimation of the party in the State. But his politics holds out some useful lessons for the Congress and other parties seeking to challenge the Hindutva juggernaut: that material betterment of the citizenry needs to be complemented with wider social coalitions.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Heir		successor, inheritor, beneficiary, legatee
Sheer		utter, complete, absolute, downright
Tenacity		determination, perseverance, doggedness
Devoid		deprived, free, bankrupt
Pronounce		declare, aver, avow, profess, proclaim
Spectrum		range, gamut, orbit, ambit

Coalition	alliance, union, partnership, caucus, federation
Landslide victory	sweeping victory, huge victory
Cliff	precipice, rock face, ridge, escarpment
Befall	happen to, overtake, take place, come about
Humiliate	embarrass, mortify, humble, disgrace
Evident	obvious, apparent, conspicuous, perceptible
Nurture	bring up, care for, take care of, tend
Homogenise	make uniform, make similar, unite
Fissiparous	division, separation
Enthusiastic	eager, keen, avid, ferrent, ardent
Vanquish	conquer, defeat, beat, trounce, rout
Formidable	intimidating, forbidding, daunting, frightening
Expansive	extensive, wide ranging/talkative
Decimation	exhalation, destruction, maceration
Juggernaut	great force

### **St. Petersburg consensus:**

#### **Russia and China are strengthening ties amid tensions with the U.S.**

The bonhomie between China's and Russia's leaders at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum last week was demonstrable. In a sign of the heightened tensions between the U.S. and the two countries, Russia's annual investment gathering was boycotted by the U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Jon Huntsman. His absence was ascribed to the prevailing environment in Russia for foreign entrepreneurs, typified by the detention of U.S. private equity investor Michael Calvey on allegations of fraud. Conversely, the Chinese telecommunications equipment manufacturer Huawei signed an agreement with Russia's principal mobile operator to start 5G networks, in a rebuff to Washington's attempts to isolate the firm internationally. Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping made it clear in St. Petersburg that the tensions with the West had only drawn them closer. The rift with Russia began with Moscow's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the stand-off in eastern Ukraine that continues. Russia's tensions with the U.S. and some EU countries stem also from their opposition to the 1,200-km-long Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia to Germany. U.S. objections draw in part from its eagerness to export liquefied natural gas to Europe, besides thwarting Moscow's ambition to dominate the region's energy market. Far more sensitive has been U.S. Special Counsel Robert Mueller's inquiry into possible Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Washington's blacklisting of Huawei, prohibiting it from selling technology to

the U.S. and barring domestic firms from supplying semiconductors to Beijing, falls into a class of its own among international trade disputes.

Amid these tensions, in St. Petersburg Mr. Xi and Mr. Putin emphasised that bilateral relations were at a historic high, marked by increased diplomatic and strategic cooperation. China participated in Russian military exercises on its eastern border last September, marking a watershed. Moscow and Beijing, hostile rivals of the Cold War era, have for a while been adopting common positions at the UN Security Council on critical international issues. Bilateral relations are also guided by pragmatism. Russia appears realistic about the growing Chinese economic clout in Central Asia, once firmly in its sphere of influence, thanks to China's massive infrastructure investments under the Belt and Road Initiative. Chinese cooperation would moreover prove critical for Russia's elaborate plans to exploit the Northern Sea Route along the Arctic as an alternative transportation hub. International sanctions have not been very effective in isolating Russia. European states, notably Germany, recognise the importance of engaging with Russia to contain Mr. Putin's expansionist aims. Equally, President Donald Trump's "America first" policy is compelling potential rivals to make common cause.

<b><u>Words</u></b>	<b><u>Kind</u></b>	<b><u>Meaning</u></b>
Bonhomie		geniality, affability, conviviality, joviality
Demonstrable		verifiable, provable, attestable, confirmed
Boy cott		Spurn, snub, avoid, reject
Ascribe		attribute, assign, accredit
Detention		custody, imprisonment, confinement, incarceration
Allegation		claim, assertion, charge, accusation
Rebuff		reject, turn down, spurn, repudiate, snub brush off
Isolate		separate, keep apart, segregate, alienate
Riff		crack, fault, flaw, split
Annexation		seizure, occupation, invasion, conquest
Stand off (n)		Dead block, stalemate, impasse
Thwart		foil, frustrate, prevent, impede, hinder
Meddle		interfere, intrude, pry, interrex
Prohibit		proscribe
Bar		obstacle, impediment, hindrance, hurdle
Pragmatism		practical, sensible, down to earth
Clout		smack, thump, punch, blow
Elaborate (adj)		complicated, involuted, convoluted
Potential (adj)		possible, likely, probable, in herent