

1. **homestretch** (noun) – the last part of an activity, climax.
2. **desperation** (noun) – hopelessness, despair; riskiness, audacity/boldness.
3. **exhaustion** (noun) – extreme tiredness, fatigue, weariness.
4. **fortunes** (noun) – circumstances (the success or failure of someone), state of affairs, conditions.
5. **hinge on** (verb) – depend on, be dependent, be based.
6. **cumulative** (adjective) – collective, aggregate, total.
7. **franchise** (noun) – right to vote, voting rights, the vote/ballot.
8. **anti-incumbency** (noun) – a situation which is against elected officials currently in power; discontent against ruling government/ party in power.
9. **potential** (noun) – possibilities, potentiality, prospects.
10. **crumble** (verb) – disintegrate/collapse, fall to pieces, fall apart.
11. **hallmark** (noun) – mark, indication, sure sign.
12. **sustained** (adjective) – continuous, uninterrupted, constant.
13. **unseemly** (adjective) – improper, inappropriate, undignified.
14. **rake up** (phrasal verb) – recollect, remember, revive/remind the memory of.
15. **uncharitable** (adjective) – unkind, inconsiderate, thoughtless.
16. **pulpit** (noun) – stand, platform, stage.
17. **liken** (verb) – compare, equate, match/correlate.
18. **unpatriotic** (adjective) – agitational, rabble-rousing, trouble making.
19. **legitimate** (adjective) – permissible, allowable, admissible.
20. **scrutiny** (noun) – observation, inspection, examination.
21. **tenor** (noun) – the general content/meaning.
22. **pressing** (adjective) – important, high-priority, critical/crucial.
23. **drive a wedge between** (phrase) – separate, divide.
24. **conspiracy** (noun) – secret plan, collusion, intrigue.
25. **resistance** (noun) – opposition to, refusal to accept, unwillingness/disinclination/reluctance to accept.
26. **livelihood** (noun) – source of income, means of support, living, subsistence.
27. **discourse** (noun) – discussion, talk, debate.
28. **varying** (adjective) – differing.
29. **dismal** (adjective) – bad, poor, dreadful, awful/terrible.

Now there are two: on last two phases of Lok Sabha polls

As the poll (मतदान) process enters the home stretch, desperation(निराशा) and exhaustion (थकान) are evident(प्रत्यक्ष)

In the **fifth phase of the Lok Sabha elections**, just 51 seats across seven States went to the polls, but its outcome could be **critical** (काम का) to the **fortunes**(तकदीर) of the BJP. It had won 39 of these seats in 2014, and its **allies** (सहयोगी)two. In fact, the BJP's hopes of **retaining**(कायम रखना) power at the Centre, and therefore the Opposition's hopes of defeating it, **hinge(depend)** a lot **on** their respective performances in the fifth and the next two phases. As with the previous four phases, the

voter *turnout* (उपस्थिति) was similar to that in 2014; initial estimates were that the *cumulative* (जुड़ने वाला) turnout for the 51 seats was 63.26% on Monday, compared to 61.75% in 2014. One of Indian democracy's big successes has been the high number of registered voters who exercise their *franchise* (मताधिकार); and as turnouts remain healthy, old theories about the *incumbency* (भरोसा) or *anti-incumbency* potential of such turnouts have *crumbled*. (कमज़ोर पड़ना) What, however, continues to be the *hallmark* (विशेषता) of Election 2019 is the *sustained* (लगातार) attempt by the BJP to prevent the campaign from being about its own record of five years in office. In an *unseemly* (अशोभनीय) and controversial statement ahead of the fifth phase, Prime Minister Narendra Modi *raked up* (याद करना) the Bofors controversy with an *uncharitable* (unkind) reference to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. He followed it up with a challenge to Congress president Rahul Gandhi to debate Rajiv Gandhi's term in office, three decades ago. Mr. Modi also used the campaigner's *pulpit* (उपदेश-मंच) to *liken* (तुलना करना) cross-border military operations undertaken by Indian forces during the Congress *regime* (शासन) to "video games". In turn, the Congress charged Mr. Modi with double standards as he had earlier sought to place the armed forces beyond scrutiny and accused those who raised questions on their performance of being *unpatriotic* (देशद्रोही).

Politicians, dead and living, are *legitimate* (उचित) *subjects* (प्रसंग) of public scrutiny as much as armed forces and the security establishment, particularly during elections. But such debates must be conducted in a civil *tenor* (स्वरूप) and within limits — and in a manner that informs *pressing* (जरूरी) matters of governance. It is unclear whether Mr. Modi's statements would have helped the Congress in Amethi and Rae Bareilly, constituencies from which Mr. Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi, respectively, are contesting and which went to the polls in the fifth phase. Mr. Modi has also tried to create a *wedge* (पच्चर) in the Opposition by repeatedly stating that Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati was the victim of a conspiracy between her alliance partner and Samajwadi Party chief, Akhilesh Yadav, and the Congress. The BJP's resistance to any focus on issues of livelihood and liberty has put the burden on the Opposition parties to pull public *discourse* (discussion) back towards policy, something they have managed with varying and often *dismal* (निराशाजनक) degrees of success.