

Top Political Strategists in India — 2026

A quick-reference roster of the strategists and firms shaping India's 2026 election cycle. Every entry is sourced from public reporting; citations are listed at the foot of the sheet.

THE 2026 ROSTER AT A GLANCE

#	STRATEGIST	FIRM / AFFILIATION	BEST-KNOWN RESULT	SPECIALTY
1	Prashant Kishor	I-PAC (former); Jan SuraaJ	2014 Modi LS, Bihar '15, WB '21	Large-scale strategy, war-room design
2	Sunil Kanugolu	Congress (Adviser, Karnataka)	Karnataka '23, DMK TN '21	State strategy, coalition messaging
3	John Arokiasamy	JPAC-Persona	TVK's 2026 TN breakthrough	Persona-to-politics, 24x7 war room
4	Rishi Raj Singh	I-PAC (co-founder)	YSRCP AP '19; DMK TN '26	Ground operations at scale
5	Robin Sharrma	ShowTime Consulting	Shinde Sena '24, TDP '24	Multi-state campaign management
6	Rangesh Sridhar	Varahe Analytics	BJP TN 2026 management	Data analytics, micro-targeted ads
7	Rajat Sethi	Independent adviser	BJP Assam 2016	Data-first campaign modelling
8	Ankit Lal	Politique Advisors	AAP Delhi 2015 sweep	Digital-first, social/IT strategy
9	Naresh Arora	DesignBoxed	Congress Punjab '17; NCP	Digital + constituency campaigns
10	Praveen Chakravarty	AICC Data Analytics	Congress '19 & '24 manifestos	Economic-data-led strategy

THE PROFILES

1. Prashant Kishor

I-PAC (FORMER) · JAN SURAAJ

India's best-known strategist, credited with the 2014 Modi Lok Sabha win through Bihar (2015), Punjab (2017), and West Bengal (2021) via I-PAC, which he later stepped back from. He said his fee reached ₹100 crore for a single election. His own party, Jan SuraaJ, won zero of 238 seats it contested in the Nov 2025 Bihar election — advising others doesn't automatically transfer to being the candidate.

2. Sunil Kanugolu

CONGRESS

Behind Karnataka's 2023 win and central to the DMK's 2021 Tamil Nadu campaign. In June 2026 reappointed Chief Adviser to Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar with Cabinet rank — a shift from consultant to quasi-governmental adviser. Also tasked with Congress's Punjab turnaround on a Kerala-modelled unity strategy.

3. John Arokiasamy

JPAC-PERSONA

Founder of JPAC-Persona; earlier COO of Perfect Relations and Good Relations India for 12 years. Credited with TVK's breakthrough in the 2026 TN Assembly election — the party's first, and the largest single party in a hung assembly. Called "Vijay's Chanakya"; translated a film-star persona into a political identity on a 24x7 Chennai war room.

4. Rishi Raj Singh

I-PAC

Co-founder and director of I-PAC. Led its ground operations for YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh's 2019 election and now works on the firm's DMK 2026 Tamil Nadu campaign.

5. Robin Sharrma

SHOWTIME CONSULTING

Founder of ShowTime, brought into DMK's 2026 TN campaign alongside I-PAC. Prior credited work: Meghalaya NPP (2023), Maharashtra Shiv Sena/Shinde (2024), Andhra TDP (2024). ShowTime's "100% strike rate" is self-reported marketing, not an audited figure.

6. Rangesh Sridhar

VARAHE ANALYTICS

Founder of Varahe Analytics, the Chennai data firm leading BJP's 2026 TN election management with backing from BJP general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh. Varahe has run BJP campaigns across states including Haryana, known for viral micro-targeted ad content.

7. Rajat Sethi

INDEPENDENT ADVISER

IIT-Kharagpur and MIT/Harvard graduate credited with BJP's 2016 Assam win — "the Prashant Kishor of BJP's Assam elections." Now advises Manipur's Chief Minister. Relies on structured data analysis over the traditional cadre-first model.

8. Ankit Lal

POLITIQUE ADVISORS

Founder of Politique Advisors; AAP's Social Media and IT head from 2012–2020, credited for the party's digital campaign in the 2015 Delhi sweep. Authored *India Social* (2017) on digital-first Indian political campaigning.

9. Naresh Arora

DESIGNBOXED

Founder of DesignBoxed, which ran Congress digital and constituency campaigns in Punjab (2017), Rajasthan, Haryana, and Karnataka, and since 2024 has worked with Ajit Pawar's NCP faction in Maharashtra.

10. Praveen Chakravarty

AICC DATA ANALYTICS

Chairman of the AICC's Data Analytics Department and the All India Professionals' Congress; credited with drafting Congress's 2019 and 2024 manifestos. A Wharton MBA with a Wall Street background who leans on economic data over conventional messaging.

FEES & HOW TO HIRE

How much do they charge?

Fees are rarely disclosed. The one public figure is Prashant Kishor's own: he said his fee reached **₹100 crore for a single election**. Most engagements are firm retainers (I-PAC, ShowTime, Varahe, DesignBoxed), not individual day rates. Pricing scales with the constituency map, the war-room footprint, and campaign length.

Individual or firm?

- **The individual** — for one accountable strategic brain and senior judgment on positioning.
- **The firm** — for ground operations, data infrastructure, a war room, and content at scale.
- Most 2026 flagship campaigns paired both. The name on the invoice isn't the strategy — the operating system behind it is.

Planning a 2026 or 2027 campaign?

Think Politically runs the strategy, war room, data, and ground operations for serious campaigns in Tamil Nadu and across India. Get a free constituency assessment — no obligation, confidential.

WhatsApp us: +91 90435 05653

thinkpolitically.com

Sources: ThePrint (May & June 2026), Tribune India (June 2026), The South First, Decode (2026), The Quint, Deccan Chronicle, Entrepreneur, IBTimes India, Business Standard, The Federal (May 2026). Figures such as ShowTime's "100% strike rate" are self-reported by the firms and noted as such. This sheet is a reference summary; verify current roles before acting on them.

© Think Politically. Compiled 2026. Free to share unmodified.