

Cricket, PM, a wedding, a death and qcom on top of mind

Rediffusion survey of what dominated India's emotional and cultural landscape this year

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It is not every year that a wedding crashes the hits of the year party. But 2024 was no ordinary year. And this was no ordinary wedding.

The annual Hits of the Year survey by advertising agency Rediffusion, shared

exclusively with *Business Standard*, paints a picture of the year ending Tuesday with strokes of the expected as well as unexpected, with a dash of resilience and a coat of somberness.

TOP 20 HITS OF THE YEAR

1. India lifts the ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup



2. PM Narendra Modi's leadership strengthens India's global influence

3. The multi-million dollar wedding of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant



4. Consecration of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya

5. The 10-minute delivery revolution

6. Ratan Tata's passing



7. D Gukesh as world chess champ



8. Rishabh Pant, the comeback king

9. Evolution of the Supreme Court into 'the People's Court', credited to former CJI D Y Chandrachud

10. India's strong focus on EVs

11. Diljit Dosanjh takes Punjabi music global

12. Neeraj Chopra wins silver at Paris Olympics

13. Suryakumar Yadav's fearless batting

14. Merger of Air India and Vistara

15. India's best-ever Olympic and Paralympic medal haul

16. The 2024 general elections

17. Donald Trump wins a second presidential term

18. Sheetal Devi wins Paralympics bronze



medal in archery

19. Jasprit Bumrah leads India's cricket pace attack

20. Women's empowerment dominates Maharashtra's elections



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The Ambani wedding, Ayodhya Ram Mandir among other trends

Cricket comes out on top, as you would expect in a year that saw India win its second T20 World Cup in men's cricket. And Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ever rising global stature puts him at number two.

The third place provides the proverbial twist in the tale: The Ambani wedding. With an estimated cost of \$600 million, it spanned seven months, a week-long engagement party, an 800-person Mediterranean cruise, and a three-day wedding extravaganza.

The Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, whose consecration took place on January 22, took the fourth place as "a dream realised". It was followed in fifth place by an altogether contrasting topic: Quick commerce. Having started as a bold experiment, it has turned into an everyday convenience. Ratan Tata, who died on October 9, adds the touch of somberness as the sixth entry.

Last year's survey showed 2023 as India's coming out party. Capturing people's imagination in the year were the successful Chandrayaan mission, the G20 event in New Delhi, India's medal haul at the Asian Games, the successful hosting

of the ODI Cricket World Cup for men, and the stature of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The year 2024 has been a year of many victories — in cricket, in chess and at the Olympics. The hits also came from PM Modi, the Ambanis, Ratan Tata, CJ Chandrachud, singer Diljit Dosanjh, and cricketers Pant, Sky and Bumrah. Many of them find a place in the Hits of the Year 2024 because they made the nation proud," said Sandeep Goyal, Chairman, Rediffusion.

A Hit can be an event, a personality, a trend, a technology, or just a popular word — anything that found fame and gained mass acceptance. The survey is conducted by Red Lab, the consumer insights think tank at Rediffusion. This year, as in 2023, the Red Lab team sat down to list all the things that 'drove' or inspired India in 2024. The researchers scanned headlines and newsmakers through the year, creating a long list of 300 possible Hits. This list was reviewed by an expert panel which distilled it down to 50. Finally, this shortlist was put to a popular poll among 2,317

respondents across India to arrive at the top 20. The respondents were in the 18-45 age group, 53 per cent of them male and the rest female.

Sporting Hits were not confined to cricket. Eighteen-year-old D Gukesh's victory in the World Chess Championship put him in seventh place. Almost inevitably, cricket occurred again, in the eighth place. This, though, was not just because of an event on the field: Rishabh Pant's return to the elite level of the game after a life-threatening accident turned out to be a compelling story.

D Y Chandrachud, who retired as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, came in ninth place as much for his landmark judgements as for his view that the top court should be a "people's court". India's efforts to usher in a new era of transportation with electric vehicles completed the top 10. The Parliament elections came in at 16th place.

The final 20 stories emerged as those that deeply resonated with the public, measured by their emotional and cultural significance.
