

Polling begins for first phase of LS elections

Agency
New Delhi, April 11,

Polling has begun for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections. Voting is taking place for 91 Parliamentary constituencies spread over 18 states and two union territories in this phase.

The voting time in most of the constituencies is from 7 AM to 6 PM. However, in Left-Wing extremism-affected areas and North Eastern States, the timings vary.

Voting is taking place in all parliamentary constituencies of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep, and Uttarakhand. Polling is also progressing for some



constituencies of Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Simultaneously voting is also taking place for single phase Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and for 28 of 147 seats in Odisha.

Lok Sabha polls 2019 in Northeast Indian states

Agency
New Delhi April 11,

Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, J&K, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura, UP, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands & Lakshadweep go for elections in Phase I of Lok Sabha Elections 2019 today.

The polling for the Lok Sabha Elections 2019 began today at 7 am and is underway. The phase I

polling session is underway in the eight states of Northeast India along with other states.

MEGHALAYA

20.41% poll percentage so far as per the information provided by the CEO FR Kharkongor

TRIPURA

Bru voters from relief camps in Tripura line up at border village of Kanhmun, Mizoram.

Manipur: Voting underway at a polling station in Imphal, in Outer Manipur Lok Sabha constituency. Voting on 1 out of 2 parliamentary constituencies in the state is being held today.

CEC appeals voters to come out in large numbers to exercise their franchise



Agency
New Delhi, April 11,

Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora has appealed to voters to come out in large numbers to cast their votes in today's polling so that the bedrock of democracy becomes even more strengthened and robust.

Talking to AIR News, Mr Arora said, the Commission's vision will take a practical shape if each voter, especially the first time voters show adequate zeal and faith in the democratic system.

Mr Arora said, adequate arrangements have been made for providing basic facilities including drinking water and ramps.

Lok Sabha polls 2019 in Meghalaya

Agency
Shillong April 11,

A total number of 1914795 electorates will cast their votes for both Shillong and Tura seat. The voting would begin at 7 am and end at 4 pm. It may be mentioned that the total number of male voters is 9,49,621 while the total number of female voters is 9,65,174.

The smallest polling booth in Shillong is Kamsing and the biggest polling booth is Mawlai. In Tura, Kharkutta PS is the largest PS.

The candidates in fray for the Lok Sabha Elections 2019 from Tura Parliamentary Seat are NPP's Agatha Sangma, INC's Mukul Sangma and BJP Rikman Garry Momin.

For the Shillong Parliamentary Seat, the candidates in fray are INC's Vincent Pala, BJP's Sanbor Shullai, UDP's Jemino Mawthoh and three independent candidates namely Samuel Hashah, Romeo Phira Rani and THS Bonney

20.41% poll percentage so far as per the information provided by

the CEO FR Kharkongor as of 09.30 am

Vvpat malfunction reported during mock poll initially but Polling proceeded without problems as per CEO's

information.

10:30 AM

Meghalaya chief minister Conrad Sangma arrives at Walbagre polling station to exercise his franchise.

PWD voters turn out in large numbers to cast their vote

Agency
Shillong April 11,

With the motto of "No voter to be left behind", the Meghalaya Election Commission had been working tirelessly to encourage voters, especially People with Disabilities to come up and have a say in the democracy of the nation.

And as the state witnesses the first phase of Lok Sabha election which is underway for Shillong and Tura Parliamentary Seats, the turnout of PWD voters has been increasing with each

passing minute.

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View the pictures below of PWD voters in Meghalaya casting their vote with gusto and enthusiasm:

C'garh LS polls: 14 pc turnout till 9.30 am

Agency
Bastar, April 11,

Around 14 per cent electorate cast their votes in the first couple of hours of polling in the Naxal-hit Bastar Lok Sabha constituency of Chhattisgarh on Thursday.

Rashtrapati Bhavan staffer allegedly rapes woman inside staff quarters

Agency
New Delhi April 11,

A woman was allegedly raped by a staffer of Rashtrapati Bhavan who promised to marry her but later backtracked, police said on Wednesday.

In her complaint, the woman alleged that the man allegedly established physical relationship with her, deputy commissioner of police Madhur Verma said.

A case was registered at North Avenue police station on Tuesday and an investigation was taken up, he said. The woman has alleged that she was taken to the staff quarters of Rashtrapati Bhavan and raped. However, the DCP denied the claim and said the accused used to live in Kali Bari where the woman often visited him.

At some places, there were reports of EVM snags which were being rectified, an election official in the state capital Raipur told Agency.

"Polling in Bastar seat started at 7 am and is going on smoothly. Till 9.30 am, around 14 per cent polling has been registered," he said.

Long queues of voters were seen at several polling booths in the region. Early in the morning, Naxals detonated an IED (improvised explosive device) in Narayanpur district, which comes under Bastar constituency, police said.

No casualty was reported in the blast. A thick security blanket, comprising around 80,000 state and paramilitary personnel, was thrown across the constituency to ensure peaceful polling.

Polling in Bastar Lok Sabha constituency's four Assembly

segments - Dantewada, Konta, Bijapur and Narayanpur - is being held from 7 am and 3 pm, the official said.

The voting time in the other four Assembly segments - Bastar, Chitragot, Kondagaon and Jagdalpur - of the constituency is from 7 am and 5 pm, he said.

Seven candidates are in fray in the seat and as per electoral rolls, there are 13,72,127 voters, including 6,59,824 men, 7,12,261 women and 42 of the third gender.

Of the 1,879 polling booths in the constituency, 741 have been marked as hyper-sensitive and 606 as sensitive in view of the threat of Naxalism.

There is a direct contest between Congress' Dipak Baij and senior BJP leader Baiduram Kashyap. The saffron party has never lost the Bastar seat since 1998.

Gujarat OBC leader Alpesh Thakor quits Congress party

Agency
New Delhi, April 11,

In a setback to the Congress in Gujarat, OBC leader Alpesh Thakor has quit the party. Two Congress legislators from the Thakor community — Bayad MLA Dhavalsinh Zala and Bechrabi MLA Bharat Thakor have also resigned from the party.

In a letter to Gujarat Congress chief Amit Chavda, Mr Thakor said, he is resigning from all the posts in the party due to insults and betrayal. He said poor youth of his community are angry and upset as they were ignored and insulted. Mr Thakor had been appointed national secretary of Congress after joining the party in 2017.

Lok Sabha polls 2019 in Nagaland

Agency
Kphima April 11,

The polling for the 1ST phase Lok Sabha Elections 2019 began today at 7 am and is underway in Nagaland. The phase 1 polling session is underway in the eight states of Northeast India along with other states. The voting process commenced at 7 am in the morning and will end at 5 pm in the evening on Thursday.

K L Chishi from Congress, NPP's

Hayithung Tungoe, sitting MP NDDP's Tokheho Yephomi, and M M Thromwa Konyak (Independent) are on the list of candidates for the polls. Consisting of a unicameral legislature, the state may see over 11 lakh voters for the Lok Sabha elections.

21% voter turnout recorded till 9 am in Nagaland parliamentary constituency.

Naga People's Front (NPF) president Shurhozelie Liezietsu exercises his franchise at 9:40am

Mizoram Youth, women dominate state's electoral politics

Agency
AIZAWL, April 11,

Young voters, who constitute around 64 per cent of the total 787,777 electorate, will dominate the electoral politics of Mizoram's lone Lok Sabha seat which goes to the polls on Thursday, officials and political analysts said here on Wednesday.

Women voters would also play a significant role in the parliamentary polls.

Women voters again outnumbered men in Mizoram. Of the total, 4,04,169 are women and 3,83,602 men. There are six third gender voters.

Mizoram Chief Electoral officer Ashish Kundra said that the young voters in the age group of 18 to 40 years, constitute 63.68 per cent of the total 787,777 electorate.

Besides, the election to the lone Lok Sabha seat, by-polls for the Aizawl West-1 Assembly seat will also take place on Thursday.

The by-election to the Aizawl

West-1 Assembly seat was necessitated after Zoram People's Movement's (ZPM) legislator Lalduhoma vacated it to retain his Serchhip constituency.

The electoral fate of all six candidates, including independent woman aspirant Lalhlamuni, will be decided on Thursday's parliamentary polls.

Though women voters outnumber men in the Lok Sabha seat, it's the first time that a woman has joined the race to challenge the hegemony of men to represent Mizoram in the lower house of parliament.

Lalhlamuni, a Jew leader, has four children and runs a non-government organisation (NGO) called Chinlung Israel People Convention (CIPC).

The parliamentary constituency in Mizoram, reserved for Scheduled Tribes, is set for a multi-cornered contest.

However, according to political analysts, the main contest is between ruling Mizo National Front (MNF) candidate C.

Lalrosanga and Lalngingolva Hmar, jointly fielded by the opposition Congress and Zoram People's Movement's (ZPM) a local party.

While Hmar, a young sports journalist, is honorary Secretary of the Mizoram Football Association, Lalrosanga was a former Indian Broadcasting Programme Service officer who retired two years back as Director General of Doodardshan.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has fielded veteran tribal leader Nirupam Chakma, a former Congress minister who joined the BJP a few years ago.

People's Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (Prism) — an anti-corruption watchdog turned political party — has nominated T.B.C. Lalvenchhunga, a young retired Naval officer.

Lal Hriatrega Chhange, another independent, makes it a six-cornered contest.

Of the total 1,175 polling stations, 117 will be manned by only women officials, polling and security personnel.

Chief Electoral officer Ashish Kundra said that following the instructions of the Election Commission, 15 special polling stations have been set up at the Mizoram-Tripura border village of Kanhmun, where 12,081 tribal refugee voters would cast their votes.

The poll panel has also asked the Tripura government to provide logistical support including transportation and security to the Reang tribal voters from their seven relief camps in northern Tripura to Kanhmun village in Mizoram on Thursday.

The 12,081 tribal refugee voters are among the 35,000 emigrants living in the seven relief camps in northern Tripura for the past 22 years after they fled their homes in three Mizoram districts in the wake of communal tension.

Konyak dance is the largest traditional dance: Guinness World Records

Agency
Kohima, April 11,

The Guinness World Records has acknowledged Konyak dance as record holder for the "largest traditional dance", a tribe official said on Wednesday.

Konyak is one of the 16 Naga ethnic tribes and they are inhabited in Nagaland's Mon district. It is known for the fierce headhunting history.

"The largest traditional Konyak dance consists of 4,687 participants, and was achieved by the Konyak Union (India) in Mon of Nagaland on April 5, 2019," noted the

Guinness World Records in its letter of approval for the record holder.

The approval for setting the record was received on Tuesday night from the Guinness World Records, Konyak Union president Manlip Konyak stated in a release.

The official attempt to make the record was made during the Konyak Aoleang-cum-Mini Hornbill Festival in Mon town on April 5.

As many as 4,687 women from over 115 villages under the district sang and danced in full Konyak Naga traditional attire for five minutes and two seconds.