

Moderate to high turnout recorded in first phase of elections

Agency
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Moderate to brisk polling was recorded in yesterday's first phase of Lok Sabha elections spread over 91 constituencies in 18 states and two Union Territories. Polling by and large remained peaceful with some incidents of sporadic violence and about 15 cases of damage of electronic voting machines. In all polling booths EVMs were used with

VVPATS. Tripura recorded the highest 81.8 per cent voting followed by West Bengal 81 per cent and Manipur 78.2 per cent. Though final figures of overall poll percentage are still awaited, Assam and Odisha recorded 68 per cent polling. In Mizoram, polling percentage is estimated to be 60 per cent and in Sikkim over 78 per cent. Eight Parliamentary seats in Uttar Pradesh, which went to the polls in the first phase, recorded 63.7 per

cent voting. Bihar recorded 53 per cent polling while in Arunachal Pradesh voter turnout was 66 per cent. Uttarakhand recorded 57.85 per cent polling. In Chhattisgarh 56 per cent polling was recorded. In Maharashtra 56 per cent voting took place. Voting also took place for assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and 28 of the 147 member Assembly in Odisha.

Nagaland: Cong demands re polling; Complaint against Dy CM Y Patton for violating MCC

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Kohima April 12,

Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) has lodged a complaint with Election Commission of India (ECI) and the State's chief electoral officer (CEO) alleging violation of model of conduct by deputy chief minister Y Patton. The Congress has also demanded a re-poll at polling station (PS) no. 31 under 37 Tyui Assembly Constituency in Wokha district. NPCC communication cell, alleged that Patton violated all election norms at 31 Riphym Old-III polling station under 37 Tyui Assembly constituency when he campaigned by openly displaying a BJP scarf, which was an illegal act on polling day. It also claimed that Patton was caught on camera entering polling station with seven to eight voter slips and proceeding to vote on

EVM. Condemning the "irresponsible" act and "blatant" violation by Patton, minister in-charge of home department, NPCC said such disregard and blatant violation of election rules by a home minister has brought disrepute to the office he holds. NPCC also demanded that Election Commission and CEO take cognisance of the "shameful" act perpetrated by "none other than the deputy chief minister and home minister of Nagaland". It further expressed its belief that the Election Commission will uphold its constitutional sanctity by taking due action against Patton under relevant sections of the law. In doing so, NPCC hoped elected leaders will not set a precedence to abuse their positions and make a mockery of the entire democratic process. Correspondent adds: Addressing a

press conference, chief electoral officer (CEO) Abhijit Sinha confirmed that a complaint was received on the matter and informed that it will be scrutinised after receiving reports from the presiding officer, sector magistrate and comments of the district election officer (DEO) concerned. Sinha refused to make any comment on whether there will be re-poll or not at this stage. On the deputy chief minister entering the polling station with BJP scarf, the CEO admitted that it was violation of model code of conduct and said the DEO will issue a notice in this regard. He, however, clarified that the video clip being circulated in social media was not from the state election office. On the request of NPCC for using additional lock in the strong room, Sinha said this was permissible.

Several US lawmakers introduce legislation in House of Representatives to strengthen US-India strategic partnership

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In United States, a bipartisan group of half a dozen influential US lawmakers has reintroduced an important legislation in the House of Representatives which seeks to advance the US-India strategic relationship. If enacted, the legislation would ensure that the US State Department treat India as a NATO ally for the purposes of the Arms Export Control Act. It would send a powerful signal that defence sales to India should be prioritised according to US-India Strategic Partnership Forum, which had worked on this important legislation. The bill HR 2123 was introduced this week by Congressman Joe Wilson, a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Mr. Wilson said India is the world's largest democracy, a pillar



of stability in the region, and has shown strong commitments to export control policies. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal 2017 included special language recognising the unique US-India defence relationship that designated India as a "Major Defence Partner" of the United States. The legislation bolsters national security and helps ensure full alignment between the Department of Defence and

the Department of State. To fulfil the spirit and intent of the NDAA 2017, the US-India Enhanced Cooperation Act would amend the Arms Export Control Act to put India on par with NATO allies and Israel, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia and Japan. US-India Strategic Partnership Forum Chairman John Chambers said this legislation would be a major breakthrough for the US-India defense relationship.

Campaigning for remaining six phases of Lok Sabha polls gains momentum

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After the completion of first phase of Lok Sabha elections, campaigning for remaining phases has gained momentum. Senior leaders of various political parties are addressing rallies

across the country in their bid to woo the voters. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address three rallies at Ahmednagar in Maharashtra, Gangavathi in Karnataka and Kozhikode in Kerala today. Congress President Rahul Gandhi is also scheduled to address three rallies in Tamil Nadu.

BJP National president Amit Shah is going to Kenosha in Odisha today for election campaigning. He will address a public meeting there. Anant Nayak is contesting from Keonjhar Lok Sabha constituency as a BJP candidate.

HRD ministry appoints VCs to three universities after EC nod

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The Union HRD Ministry has appointed vice chancellors to three universities after the Election Commission gave its nod as the Model Code of Conduct is in place due to the Lok Sabha elections. A senior HRD ministry official said,

Najma Akhtar has been appointed as the V-C of Jamia Millia Islamia and Sanjiv Sharma has been appointed as the V-C of Mahatma Gandhi Central University in Motihari. Name of Rajaneesh Kumar Shukla has been approved for the top post at Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya in Wardha,

the official said. Akhtar, is the first woman to be appointed to the Vice Chancellor's post at Jamia. While no appointments are allowed during this period, the HRD Ministry had approached the Election Commission seeking its nod arguing that the selection process was complete before the model code came into place.

The Power YOU Have

By : Hareesh Gupta

"It is a good thing to know others, but it is a wise thing to know yourself". Nature has bestowed on every living thing the necessary power that is required for its survival. It is inherent in everyone and is an incredible thing. It can change the impossible into possible, sadness into happiness, war into peace and hate into love. The question is "Do you realize, the power you have is a gift of nature?" As a human being YOU are bestowed with the true power of abundant kindness, joy, love, truth and peace within yourself. These are the things that can change the face of your own world in which you live every day, every moment and there will never be a shortage of these. Despite of all turmoil, there is abundant source of happiness in you, which you can bring forward whenever and wherever you need. In the deepest hour of sorrow, you still have these powers in you that have the ability to change sorrow into happiness for you. The only thing you require is to practice these powers; because whatever you practice, you get good at it. If you find yourself getting angry within no time, it means you have practiced anger the most in your life. Practice peace in your life and you can get good at it. Of all the powers you have, you also have the power to feel peace within yourself. When you are in peace, your world will be in peace too. So take that time to make a difference in life, for which you only need to care. This is one earth and one

humanity. You as a human being, can make others project out their good. One should learn to appreciate the differences. These differences are like, the spaces between two places; and building a bridge can connect the two places. We have not yet built this bridge because of the differences. You have that power to bridge the space by doing constructive things for your loved ones. Everything in your life begins with you sowing seeds. Love, kindness, peace, understanding, doubt and confusion are like the seeds you have been given. Depending on which seed you sow in the soil of this life, will be those trees you see in the garden of your life. They all start out as little seeds, but as they sprout and grow, they manifest their particular characteristics. Some you will like and others you won't. It's upto you which seeds you sow and nurture in your life. It's not only a question of sowing the seeds but also nurturing them, watering them, protecting them, taking care of them so that they grow in the soil of our life. To feel kindness, to feel true love, to understand what it is like not to be in doubt and confusion; this is something you do first of all for you and then for other people; and it will be a step towards humanity and peace. When you focus on problems, you will have more problems and when you focus on possibilities, you will have more opportunities. Ships don't sink because of the water around them; ships sink because of the water that gets into them. So don't let what's happening around you get inside you and weigh you down. Life is

an opportunity - the truest opportunity, as we only have this one life to navigate. The breath coming into us is the definition of opportunity. Sometimes we need to be reminded of that to keep our focus clear and to remember what is real because we get impressed by money, followers, degrees and titles. One should be impressed by kindness, integrity, generosity and humility. This should be real and practical. There are activities in our life that actually does not have any weight. But we give them gravity, shape & importance and weight them so much only in our minds which weighs us down. Being victorious over the self requires us taking decisions in our life, not others on our behalf. Being victorious over the self does not mean conquering. We always look at things as we have to conquer the situations, people and ideas. Conquering means somebody is going to win and somebody is going to lose; but when we are victorious over ourselves, we don't lose, we win; nobody loses. It's only win-win situation. If life is a lottery, we all hold winning tickets in our hands. Mr. Prem Rawat, also known by the honorary title of 'Ambassador of Peace' inspires people with his message around the world towards a unique opportunity of self-discovery and he offers a practical way of feeling peace within oneself. For more information please visit the website www.rajivskykender.org and www.premrawat.com.

Arunachal Pradesh: Damaged EVM, booth capturing, violence mar phase 1 LS polls in state

Agency
Itanagar April 12,

The phase 1 of lok Sabha polls in Arunachal Pradesh was marred with reports of damaged EVM machine, violence and booth capturing instances coming in from various polling booths. As per a report in the Arunachal Times, Sources in Lower Siang HQ Likabali have informed that the EVM machine at the Sogum polling station

in the district was damaged with a hammer and other means by members of the BJP on Thursday. The People's Party of Arunachal filed a complaint with the returning officer, seeking immediate action against 10 people who were allegedly involved in the vandalism. On the reports of violence and booth capturing coming in from some of the districts, the additional CEO here said the commission has received some phone calls about such

incidents but it is yet to receive official reports from the district election officers. Meanwhile, three persons were seriously injured in Pipsorang in Kurung Kumey district after a clash broke out between supporters of two rival political parties, DGPSBK Singh said. The injured have been evacuated to Itanagar by a chopper requisitioned by the district administration, the DGP added.

Arunachal Pradesh: Polling officer dies on duty in Tirap district

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In what may be termed as an unfortunate incident, a polling officer who has been identified as Tenak Socia died due to cardiac arrest while performing election duty in Tirap district of Arunachal

Pradesh on Thursday, April 11. "Socia was the polling officer at the upper primary school polling station under Khonsa West assembly seat. He died due to cardiac arrest while performing duty," Additional Chief Electoral Officer Kangki Darang told reporters as per a report in the

Arunachal Times. Socia was a work inspector in the water resources department. Terming the incident unfortunate, Darang said that, as per the laid down rules, the commission would pay minimum ex gratia of Rs 15 lakhs to the next of kin of the deceased.

Pakistan: 16 killed, 30 injured in bomb blast in Quetta

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In Pakistan, at least 16 people have been killed and 30 others injured in a bomb blast in Quetta, the

provincial capital of Balochistan. The police said the blast was caused by an improvised explosive device that had been hidden among the vegetables in the market. The security forces fear the death

toll may rise. Local media reported that at least eight of those killed in the explosion belonged to the Hazara community. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.