

# All arrangements in place for 2nd phase of LS polls tomorrow

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

All arrangements are in place for the second phase of Lok Sabha elections tomorrow. Ninety seven constituencies, spread over 12 States and one Union Territory, will go to polls in this phase.

These include- all 39 constituencies of Tamil Nadu, 14 in Karnataka; 10 in Maharashtra; eight in Uttar Pradesh; five each in Assam, Bihar and Odisha; 3 each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal; two in Jammu and Kashmir and one each in Manipur, Tripura and Puducherry. Campaigning for this phase ended last evening. Political parties will resort to door to door campaign today. As all the seats in Tamil Nadu are identified as expenditure sensitive, special measures are being taken by the Election Commission to check money power. The number of sensitive booths in the state has escalated to 8293, where polling would be web-streamed or video-graphed. The state also faces bye-elections for 18 Assembly

seats along with the Lok Sabha polls.

In Karnataka, over two crore 67 lakh voters will decide the fate of 241 candidates in this phase. The Director General and Inspector General of Police, Neelamani N Raju has informed that Hassan, Mandya, Tumkuru and Bengaluru Rural are vulnerable constituencies where the additional police force is deployed.

In Maharashtra, A total of 179 candidates are in the fray for the ten seats. Preparations are on in full swing with both men and machinery expected to reach their respective booths by this evening. Some key personalities whose fate will be decided in this phase include BJP's sitting MP Pritam Munde from Beed, state Congress president Ashok Chavan from Nanded, former Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde from Solapur and Mahagathbandan candidate Navneet Rana from Amravati. In Uttar Pradesh, polling will take place for Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Amroha, Bulandshaher, Nagina, Hathras, Aligarh and Mathura Lok Sabha constituencies.



In Assam, Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Sahu has said that polling parties at some remote areas have already left for the polling stations. The CEO said, adequate security measures are being taken to ensure peaceful polling. Special arrangement will be made for senior citizens and PwD voters. In Puducherry, 18 candidates are in the fray for the lone Lok Sabha seat. Election Commission has made elaborate security arrangements. 1850 police personnel and 10 companies of central forces have been deployed. 222 polling booths have been identified as vulnerable and 25 as critical

stations. Around 4400 polling personnel in all the 970 polling booths have been deployed. A report Meanwhile, electioneering has gained momentum for the third phase of polling slated to be held for 115 constituencies spread across 12 states and 2 Union Territories on 23rd of this month. Senior BJP leader and Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed rallies in Odisha and Chhattisgarh yesterday, while Congress President Rahul Gandhi campaigned in Kerala. Star campaigners of different political parties are holding rallies and roadshows across the country to woo the voters.

# 31 killed as rain, thunderstorm hit Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

Thirty-one people were killed in three states as rain and thunder storm caused by western disturbance hit parts of north India on Tuesday causing damage to property and crops, reports ANI.

While 16 people died in Madhya Pradesh, six deaths were reported from Rajasthan and nine from Gujarat. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh each from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for the next of kin of those who lost their lives. "PM @narendramodi has expressed grief at the loss of lives due to unseasonal rains and storms in MP, Rajasthan, Manipur & various parts of the country. The government is doing its best to provide all possible assistance to those affected. The situation is being monitored closely," the PMO tweeted. In Rajasthan, gusty winds



triggered by western disturbance affected normal life in several areas. Chittorgarh, Sriganganagar, Ajmer, Kota and Pilani received heavy rainfall, according to the Met department. "Western Disturbance and winds with moisture from Arabian sea and Bay of Bengal are developing this kind of weather conditions. Gusty winds are causing dust storm mainly in Western parts of the state because the soil is loose and there is lack of moisture there," a Met official said. Thunderstorm also occurred

in eastern parts of the state and similar weather conditions are most likely to prevail till Tuesday night. In Gujarat, a dust storm damaged part of a tent being erected for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's April 17 rally in Himmatnagar town in Sabarkantha district of Gujarat. Some covering material of the structure was either blown away or torn apart, local BJP leaders said, adding that the structure, which is intended to provide shade to people and dignitaries on stage, remained largely intact.

## EC cancels polling in Vellore constituency on grounds of misuse of money

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

Tamil Nadu goes to the polling for 38 out of the 39 Lok Sabha seats tomorrow, as elections in Vellore has been rescinded following reports of the large-scale illegal flow of cash. 18 Assembly seats also go to the bye-elections tomorrow. Vellore is considered the first Parliamentary constituency where an election has been cancelled on grounds of misuse of money. For the polling in 38 other seats, five-tier security arrangements have been made, with the deployment of nearly 1.39

lakh police, central paramilitary forces and servicemen.

In polling booths, officials have made elaborate arrangements for smooth polling including web streaming or videography of the polling process. Control rooms have been established in Chennai to coordinate the statewide polling and to monitor it. Tomorrow has been declared a holiday for all offices in view of elections. The state transport department operates 1500 special buses to facilitate voters to go to their native places and exercise their franchise.

## EC issues notice to Azam Khan, seeks reply within 24 hours

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

Election Commission has issued a notice to Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan for his alleged objectionable remarks during his campaigning in various parts of Rampur Parliamentary Constituency in Uttar Pradesh in past few days. In the notice which was issued on Tuesday, the poll panel has asked the SP leader to submit his reply within 24 hours. While citing his different

statements, the Commission said, prima facie, Mr Khan has violated the provisions of Model Code of Conduct and willfully disobeyed the Supreme Court's earlier order by making highly objectionable and provocative comments. Earlier, the Commission had banned the Samajwadi Party leader from election campaigning for 72 hours for his objectionable remarks against BJP candidate Jaya Prada. The ban is effective from 10 AM yesterday.

Agency  
Kohima, April 17,

The district administration of Peren has instated a task force to restrict the use of plastic in the district. The action was stated to be in compliance with the National Green Tribunal's order concerning implementation of the Plastic Waste Management Rules of 2016.

The government publicity agency, Information and Public Relations (IPR), issued updates on Tuesday informing about the task force.

The task force is composed of representatives from a number of government servants and community organisations: The district's deputy commissioner, police superintendent, district forest officer; additional deputy commissioners of Peren and Jalukie, Tening; administrator of Jalukie Town Council; all "outpost administrative officers"; urban development officer; and representatives from the Zeliang Mipui Organization, Zeliangrong Baudi, Progressive Peren, Peren/

Jalukie/Tening Town Women Organization; and Peren/ Jalukie/Tening Town youth Organisation; and representatives from churches in the district, the IPR stated. 'The task force will function as squads for vigilance purpose and ensure ban on stocking, distribution, selling and use of any carry bags 50mm thickness and plastic sachets/pouches usage of packaging, storing or selling of gutkha, tobacco and pan masala with immediate effect,' the IPR added.

## EC deferred polling schedule of Tripura East Lok Sabha seat to 3rd Phase

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

The Election Commission has deferred the polling schedule of the Tripura East Lok Sabha seat to the third phase on April 23 from the second phase, due to

security reasons. The Commission said, the law and order situation prevailing, is not conducive to the holding of free and fair poll, citing reports of state chief electoral officer and special police observer. It said, the returning officer

had feared that miscreant elements may thwart the polling process in the constituency. The poll panel said, based on the ground and intelligence reports, he had requested for additional central police force.

## Rs 1.48 crore cash seized from TTV Dhinakaran's party worker in Tamil Nadu's Theni

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

Income Tax department officials seized Rs 1.48 crore of unaccounted cash from a worker of TTV Dhinakaran's party AMMK in Tamil Nadu's Theni district on Wednesday night.

The raids were conducted at the premises of an AMMK leader in Theni where assembly bypolls are scheduled tomorrow. All the 39 Lok Sabha seats of Tamil Nadu also go to polls tomorrow.

The I-T department's director general (investigations) B Murali Kumar said the money was found in a shop in Andipatti in Theni district after the overnight raids, which ended at 5:30am, according to news agency PTI. It was neatly packed in 94 packets and envelopes on which the ward number, number of voters and the amount of Rs 300 per voter was written, PTI reported. Kumar said the premises belong to a functionary of the TTV Dhinakaran-led AMMK and that the party's office functions from the ground floor.

"All these wards are within the Andipatti assembly segment



which is going to bypoll tomorrow," the officer was quoted as saying by PTI. The tax official said the "sworn statement of the person present in the premises was recorded and he said that Rs 2 crore in cash was brought in there for distribution to voters in Andipatti panchayat union area on April 16."

The department will send a report on the operation to the Central Board of Direct Taxes and the Election Commission in New Delhi, a senior official said. The tax department had launched a search at a store on Tuesday night following inputs about the presence of suspected

cash there. The raiding team comprised officials of the Election Commission-appointed surveillance squad and the income tax department.

When the team, comprised officials of the Election Commission-appointed surveillance squad and the I-T department, arrived at the store, believed to be run by a supporter of the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK), the shopkeeper fled the spot after downing the shutter. An argument broke out between AMMK workers and the officials and police had to open fire in the air during the raids to

disperse the party's supporters, who objected to the action being taken

No one was injured in the firing, a senior official said. Seven people were detained in connection with the incident and police have filed an FIR against a number of people, officials said.

The Election Commission on Tuesday cancelled the Lok Sabha election to the Vellore constituency in the southern state on Tuesday after officials recovered huge amounts of cash from a building allegedly linked to a Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader last week.

## Elephant dies after hitting train in Hojai

Agency  
Guwahati April 17,

An elephant died in Assam's Hojai district in the wee hours of Tuesday after being hit by a train, said Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) officials.

The elephant collided with the 15603 Guwahati-Ledo Intercity Express between Patharkhola and Lumding at

around 1.10 a.m. damaging the train engine, officials said, adding that the forest department confirmed the elephant to be dead.

The accident took place between two areas where elephant movements were detected earlier and Permanent Caution Orders were issued to the train drivers, said Pranav Jyoti Sharma, Chief Public

Relations Officer of NFR. However, no caution orders had been issued for the spot where the collision occurred.

In 2018, train drivers had avoided 115 such incidents of collision and saved the elephants by stopping the train on noticing the movement of elephant herds near or over the railway tracks.

## Thursday is Last day for filing of nomination for 5th phase in Bihar

Agency  
New Delhi April 17,

In Bihar, 32 candidates filed nominations for the fifth phase of elections so far. With this 69 candidates have filed nomination so far. Shakeel Ahmad has filed nomination from Madhubani parliamentary constituency

and Chandrika Rai of RJD filed nomination from Saran. Tomorrow is the last day for filing of nomination for this phase. Five Lok Sabha constituencies of the state will go to polls in this phase on 6th May. These are Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur, Saran and Hajipur.

The figure for avoiding collisions was 119 in 2017, 145 in 2016 and 118 in 2015. In 2019 till date, six such incidents have been averted.

The NFR has installed Laser Speed Radar Guns to detect over speeding of trains in elephant zones. All train drivers and trackmen were counselled to observe all permanent and temporary speed restrictions. Fixing of buzzers letting off the sound of buzzing honey bees at level crossing gates at vulnerable locations had proved to be effective in chasing away elephants.