

Bengal officials have been warned to curb poll violence: CEC

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar said on Tuesday that the Election Commission has issued strict instructions to the West Bengal bureaucracy to contain violence and ensure a level-playing field during the Lok Sabha elections.

Mr. Kumar said adequate personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) would be deployed in the State. The CAPF personnel would be jointly deployed by the nodal officer of the State police, the Chief Electoral Officer, and the Central Observer for the State. Information on deployment of forces would be provided to all parties, he added.

Speaking to the media, Mr. Kumar said the bureaucracy in the State had been fully sensitised to make sure that the elections were "free and fair".

On previous failures to curtail violence during polls, Mr. Kumar said, "Incidents will not be that widespread this time. If violence does happen to spread, then the district administration will take action. If they do not take action then we will make them take action."

Law enforcement agencies have been directed to monitor inter-State boundaries and international borders to curb flow of in-



Rajiv Kumar

ducements, especially drugs, gold, and counterfeit Indian currency, he added.

"All enforcement agencies will coordinate closely and not operate in silos and will ensure not only violence-free elections but also prevent any incident," he said.

The CEC said there were 7.58 crore voters – 3.85 crore men and 3.73 crore women – in the State. The number of first-time voters stood at 15.25 lakh.

The electoral gender ratio in the State stood at an impressive 968 women voters for 1,000 men voters, with 90 Assembly seats having a gender ratio of over 1,000. The full bench of the Election Commission has been in Kolkata for two days and held meetings with political parties and officials of the State government.

Mr. Kumar said the commission had taken steps to prevent spread of fake news. It has launched an integrated mechanism system and a toll-free number to register complaints.

DI Next

Dated: 06.03.2024

DMK, Left parties slam State Bank for not revealing donor details of electoral bonds

CHENNAI: DMK leader and Information Technology Minister P Thiaga Rajan lashed out at the State Bank of India (SBI) for seeking more time to disclose details of electoral bonds. He called the move a 'shameless farce'. "Even for the smallest of the bank it is a basic requirement to maintain data, and for a bank like SBI its just two minutes of work to pull it out," he said. "As a nation, it is a tragedy that its largest bank has sunk to such depths," he added. The DMK Minister in a social media post, strongly condemned SBI for requesting more time to disclose details related to electoral bonds. CPM state secretary K Balakrishnan demanded that a day before the expiry of the SC deadline SBI seeks an extension. CPI national secretary Dr K Narayana demanded the union government and the RBI to direct the SBI to submit the data pertaining to anonymous donors through election bonds.

Deccan Chronicle

Dated: 06.03.2024

Report on 1 nation, 1 poll likely next week

New Delhi, March 5: The Law Commission may submit its report on simultaneous polls to the government next week in which it could recommend adding a new chapter to the Constitution on 'one nation, one election' and holding the gigantic democratic exercise for Lok Sabha, state Assemblies and local bodies across the country by mid-2029. According to sources, the Commission, under Justice (retd) Ritu Raj Awasthi, would recommend an amendment to the Constitution to add the "new chapter or part" on simultaneous elections.

The panel would also recommend synchronising the terms of legislative assemblies in "three phases" in the next five years so that the first simultaneous polls could be held in May-June 2029 when elections for the 19th Lok Sabha are due, they said.

The new chapter in the Constitution would include issues related to "simultaneous election", "sustainability of simulta-

neous elections" and "common electoral roll" for Lok Sabha, state legislative assemblies, panchayats and municipalities so that the three-tier simultaneous polls could be held together. "in one go", the sources explained.

The new chapter being recommended will have power of non-extant" to override other provisions in the Constitution dealing with terms of assemblies. The five-year period in which the terms of assemblies will be synchronised will be spread over three phases.

The Commission would recommend that the first phase may deal with state assemblies whose period will have to be curtailed by a few months - three or six months.

In case a government falls due to no confidence or if there is a hung House, the Commission would recommend constitution of a "unity government" with representatives from various political parties.

— PTI

Next, Date: 06-03-2024

Ponmudy's seat vacant, ECI told; bye-elections likely with LS polls

CHENNAI: It is official: The Thirukovilur Assembly, from where senior DMK leader K Ponmudy was elected in 2021 election, is vacant. The Tamil Nadu Assembly secretariat has communicated the vacancy to the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The Assembly secretariat has formally written to State Chief Electoral Officer Satyabrata Sahu, intimating the vacancy of Thirukovilur constituency. The largely rural Assembly segment in Villupuram district fell vacant following the disqualification of former minister



and DMK deputy general secretary K Ponmudy upon his conviction in the disproportionate assets case.

The Assembly Secretariat has already communicated to the poll panel the vacancy of Vilavancode following the resignation of S Vijayadharani, who quit the Congress and joined the BJP recently. With

the vacancy of the two seats communicated, the ECI is likely to hold bye-elections to the seats along with the ensuing Parliamentary election.

Sources in the Election Commission confirmed the receipt of communication from the Assembly Speaker regarding the Thirukovilur vacancy and said that it would be formally notified as vacancy soon. When it is held, it would be the second bypoll in Tamil Nadu since 2021.

The first bypoll of the current Assembly was held early in February 2023 following the death of Thirumagan Evera of Congress. His father and senior Congress leader EVKS Elangovan was elected from the seat then.

The Times of India

Date: 06-03-2024

India's only indelible ink supplier gears up for Lok Sabha elections

Priya.Kothari@timesgroup.com

Pune: It's super busy time at Mysore Paints and Varnish Ltd (MPVL), the sole supplier of a product without which holding elections in India would be extremely difficult — indelible ink. Having got its biggest order till date for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, MPVL said at least 70% of the production was complete and the rest will be done by Mar 15.

The country will need 26.55 lakh vials of the marker, at a cost of ₹55 crore, for the elections. One vial of 10mg can be used for 700 voters.

Besides the domestic demand, the company has a

'70% COMPLETE'

> 26.6 lakh vials of indelible ink needed for LS polls

> 70% of order completed, says Mysore Paints and Varnish Ltd

> 700 voters get inked with single 10mg vial

> 1962, year PSU firm started manufacturing indelible ink



pipeline of export orders to fulfil as many of the 60 nations going to polls this year need the ink for their voting processes.

With the number of voters rising with every election, the demand for indelible ink has been going up. "The order we received from the EC for the 2024 general elections is the largest order so far. We have delivered most vials to the northeast and Jammu & Kashmir. We are now producing the ink for Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana," said MPVL managing director K Mohammed Irfan.

The company has received several requests for the marker vials from other nations and expects more orders to come in over the next few months.

"In the last couple of months, we have fulfilled small export orders from Cambodia, Fiji Islands, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. We are now going to process orders and repeat requirements for Mongolia, Fiji Islands, Malaysia and Cambodia," said Irfan.

Each vial costs ₹174, an upward revision from ₹160 in the last election. That's because of the fluctuating price of silver nitrate, a key ingredient.

The company is also exploring the option of creating marker pens to replace the glass vials containing the ink. The product is still in development stage.

'Won't tolerate poll violence': CEC to Bengal babus, police

In Kolkata on Tuesday along with his team to check poll preparedness, CEC Rajiv Kumar said there would be zero tolerance for violence during LS elections and EC would step in if Bengal administration failed to prevent it. Kumar said while "primary responsibility" to conduct polls lay with state, Bengal govt had been cautioned against any "partisan role", reports **Debashis Konar**. EC instructed Bengal DMs and SPs to be impartial and accessible to political parties and directed that no civil volunteers and contractual staff should be on poll or law and order-related duty.

DI-Next

Dated: 06.03.2024

Delhi HC junks NTK petition on symbol

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court has dismissed a petition challenging allotment of the free symbols by the Election Commission to unrecognised political parties on first come, first served basis.

A bench headed by acting Chief Justice Manmohan and also comprising Justice Manmeet PS Arora rejected the contention of the petitioner, Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK), that the election symbols order to this effect was arbitrary and unconstitutional, saying a contrary view would operate against the very essence of having free symbols.

The petitioner, an unrecognised political party, was aggrieved by the allotment of free symbol 'ganna kisan' (sugarcane farmer) to another political party in Ta-

mil Nadu and Puducherry for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Contending that the policy was unconstitutional, the petitioner said all applications filed within the valid window period for allotment of a free symbol should be considered by the EC on the same footing and, therefore, the 'ganna kisan' symbol should be allotted to it as it has fought six elections since 2019 on that.

"This court is of the view that if the plea of the petitioner party is accepted, the same will operate against the essence of 'free symbols', as it will take away the rights and benefits granted to the unrecognised political parties. "We accordingly, find no merit in the present petition and the same is dismissed along with pending applications," the court ordered.

DJ-Next

Date: 06-03-2024

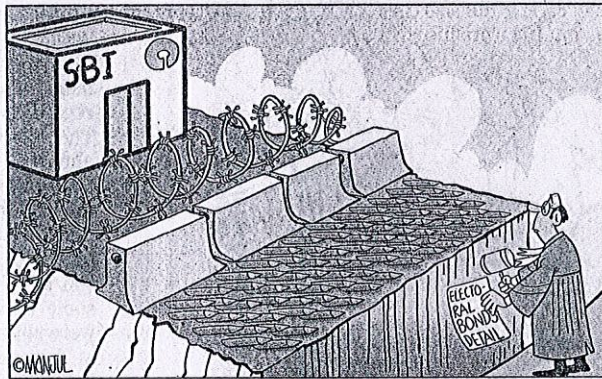
Poll fear tied to NDA pressure on SBI to delay bond info: Cong

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Tuesday attacked the Centre over the State Bank of India moving the Supreme Court to seek more time to disclose electoral bond details, alleging that the Modi government is using the country's largest bank as a shield to hide its "dubious dealings".

The State Bank of India (SBI) on Monday moved the Su-

ernment is using the largest bank of our country as a shield to hide its dubious dealings through electoral bonds," he said. No less than the Supreme Court of India had struck down the Modi government's "black money conversion scheme" of electoral bonds, holding it "unconstitutional", "violative of RTI" and "illegal" and asked SBI to furnish donor details by March 6, he said.

But the BJP wants it to be done after the Lok Sabha elec-



by Manjit

preme Court seeking an extension till June 30 to disclose details of each electoral bond encashed by political parties. In its verdict last month, the top court directed SBI to furnish the details to the Election Commission of India by March 6.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said the party's position on the electoral bonds scheme is that it is "opaque, undemocratic and destroyed the level playing field".

"The (Narendra) Modi gov-

ernment is using the largest bank of our country as a shield to hide its dubious dealings through electoral bonds," he said. No less than the Supreme Court of India had struck down the Modi government's "black money conversion scheme" of electoral bonds, holding it "unconstitutional", "violative of RTI" and "illegal" and asked SBI to furnish donor details by March 6, he said.

But the BJP wants it to be done after the Lok Sabha elections by June 30, Kharge said, adding that the tenure of the Lok Sabha will end on June 16. Alleging that the BJP was the main beneficiary of the "fraudulent" electoral bonds scheme, Kharge said, "Isn't the government conveniently hiding the BJP's shady dealings where contracts of highways, ports, airports, power plants etc were handed over to PM Narendra Modi's cronies in lieu of these opaque electoral bonds?"

The Hindu (Tamil)

Date: 06-03-2024

முன்னாள் அமைச்சர் பொன்முடி போட்டியிட்டு வென்ற

திருக்கோவிலூர் தொகுதி காலியானதாக அறிவிப்பு

● தேர்தல் ஆணையத்துக்கு சட்டப்பேரவை செயலகம் கடிதம்

●சென்னை
சொத்துக்குவிப்பு வழக்கில் சிறை தண்டனை பெற்ற நிலையில், முன்னாள் அமைச்சர் பொன்முடி போட்டியிட்டு வென்ற, திருக்கோவிலூர் தொகுதி காலியானதாக தேர்தல் ஆணையத்துக்கு சட்டப்பேரவை செயலகம் தமிழக தலைமை தேர்தல் அதிகாரி வாயிலாக கடிதம் அனுப்பியுள்ளது. இதையடுத்து, விரைவில் அத்தொகுதி காலியாக இருப்பதாக தேர்தல் ஆணையம் அறிவிக்கும். தமிழக உயர்கல்வித்துறை அமைச்சராக இருந்த க.பொன்முடி, கடந்த 2006-11 திமுக ஆட்சியிலும் இதே துறைக்கு அமைச்சராக இருந்தார். அக்காலகட்டத்தில் வருமானத்துக்கு அதிகமாக சொத்து சேர்த்ததாக, கடந்த 2011-ல் பொன்முடி மற்றும் அவரது மனைவி விசாலாட்சி மீது லஞ்ச ஒழிப்புத்துறை வழக்கு பதிந்தது. இந்த வழக்கு நீதிமன்றத்தில் நடைபெற்று வந்த நிலையில், விழுப்புரம் ஊழல் தடுப்பு சிறப்பு நீதிமன்றம் கடந்த 2016-ல் இருவரையும் விடுவித்தது. 2017-ல் சென்னை உயர் நீதிமன்றத்தில் லஞ்ச ஒழிப்புத்துறை மேல் முறையீடு செய்தது. இந்த வழக்கின் தீர்ப்பு கடந்தாண்டு டிசம்பர் 21-ம் தேதி வெளியானது. அப்போது, இருவருக்கும் தலா 3 ஆண்டுகள் சிறை மற்றும் தலா ரூ.50 லட்சம் அபராதம் விதித்து தீர்ப்பளித்தார். சிறை தண்டனை பெற்றதால், மக்கள் பிரதிநிதித்துவச் சட்டப் படி பொன்முடி தனது அமைச்சர், சட்டப்பேரவை உறுப்பினர் பதவிகளை இழக்க நேரிட்டது. ஒருவர் சட்டப்பேரவை உறுப்பினர் பதவியை இழந்தால், நீதிமன்ற உத்தரவைப் பெற்று அத்தொகுதி காலியானதாக சட்டப்பேரவை செயலகம், தேர்தல் ஆணையத்துக்கு தெரிவிக்க வேண்டும். அதன்பிறகு தேர்தல் ஆணையம் அந்த தொகுதியை காலியானதாக அறிவித்து, 6 மாதங்களுக்குள் தேர்தல் நடத்த வேண்டும். ஆனால், பொன்முடிக்கு, மேல் முறையீடு செய்ய வாய்ப்பு வழங்கப்பட்டதால், அமைச்சர் பதவியில் இருந்து நீக்கப்பட்டாலும், அவரது தொகுதி காலியானதாக அறிவிக்கப்படாமல் இருந்தது. இது தொடர்பாக, பல்வேறு தரப்பினரும் தொடர்ந்து கேள்வி எழுப்பியிருந்தனர். இந்நிலையில், நேற்று திருக்கோவிலூர் தொகுதி காலியாக இருப்பதாக சட்டப்பேரவை செயலகம் அறிவித்தது. அத்துடன், தமிழக தலைமை தேர்தல் அதிகாரி சத்யபிரத சாஹு மூலம் அதற்கான அறிவிக்கையை தேர்தல் ஆணையத்துக்கு அனுப்பியது. இதையடுத்து, விரைவில் தொகுதி காலியானதாக அறிவிக்கப்படும். ஏற்கெனவே, விளவங்கோடு தொகுதி காங்கிரஸ் எம்எல்ஏவாக இருந்த விஜயதரணி காங்கிரஸில் இருந்து விலகி பாஜகவில் சேர்ந்ததால், தனது பதவியை ராஜினாமா செய்தார். இதையடுத்து, அந்த தொகுதி காலியாக இருப்பதாக அறிவிக்கப்பட்டது. இந்நிலையில், தற்போது திருக்கோவிலூர் தொகுதியும் சேர்ந்துள்ளது. மக்களவை தேர்தலுடன் விளவங்கோடு, திருக்கோவிலூர் தொகுதிகளுக்கும் இடைத்தேர்தல் வரும் என எதிர்பார்க்கப்படுகிறது.

The Tamil Nadu Assembly Secretariat has informed the
Vacancy position of Thirukovilur Assembly constituency,

Daily Thanthi

Date: 06.03.2024

பா.ஜனதாவுக்கு

தாமரை சின்னம் ஒதுக்கியதை எதிர்த்து வழக்கு ஐகோர்ட்டில் தீர்ப்பு தள்ளிவைப்பு

சென்னை, மார்ச்.6-
சென்னை ஐகோர்ட்டில், அகிம்சை சோசலிச கட்சியின் நிறுவன் தலைவரான ரமேஷ் என்பவர் தாக்கல் செய்துள்ள மனுவில், "பா.ஜனதாவுக்கு தாமரை சின்னம் ஒதுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. தேசிய மலரான தாமரையை ஒரு அரசியல் கட்சியின் சின்னமாக ஒதுக்கியது அநீதி ஆகும். இது நாட்டின் ஒருமைப்பாட்டை இழிவுபடுத்துவது போல உள்ளது. அதனால், பா.ஜனதாவுக்கு தாமரை சின்னம் ஒதுக்கீடு செய்ததை ரத்து செய்ய வேண்டும் என்று செப்டம்பர் மாதம் இந்திய தேர்தல் ஆணையத்துக்கு மனு அனுப்பியும், எந்த நடவடிக்கையும் எடுக்கவில்லை. எனவே, என் மனுவை பரிசீலிக்க தேர்தல் ஆணையத்துக்கு உத்தரவிட வேண்டும்" என்று கூறியிருந்தார். இந்த வழக்கு தலைமை நீதிபதி எஸ்.வி.கங்காபுர்வாலா, நீதிபதி டி.பரதசக்கரவர்த்தி ஆகியோர் முன்பு விசாரணைக்கு வந்தது. அப்போது, மனுதாரர் தரப்பில், "தாமரை தேசிய சின்னமாக அறிவிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. சில மாநில அரசுகளும், தாமரையை மாநில சின்னமாக அறிவித்துள்ளன. அதனால், தாமரையை அரசியல் சின்னமாக ஒதுக்கியது மக்கள் பிரதிநிதித்துவ சட்டத்தின்படி தவறாகும்" என்று வாதிடப்பட்டது. இதையடுத்து, இந்த மனு மீதான தீர்ப்பை தேதி குறிப்பிடாமல் தள்ளிவைத்து நீதிபதிகள் உத்தரவிட்டனர்.

case of
Judgement postponed in High court against
allotment of Lotus Symbol to Bharatiya Janatha Party.