

THE HINDU

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### SC to pronounce verdict on electoral bonds scheme today

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce its judgment on the legality of the electoral bonds scheme, which allows anonymous donations to political parties, on Thursday. The five-judge Bench is headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud. The members of the Bench are Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B.R. Gavai – two of the senior-most judges of the Supreme Court – and J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. The petitioners in the case argued that the scheme violated citizens' right to information about the funding of political parties.

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## EC will need 3.4 lakh security men for polls

**NEW DELHI:** The Election Commission (EC) has sought 3.4 lakh Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) personnel for deployment in a phased manner during the upcoming Lok Sabha election and Assembly polls in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim.

The EC has also sought adequate rolling stocks with all appropriate facilities in the trains, thereby ensuring hassle-free mobilisation and a timely movement of the forces to perform election duties.

In a communication to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the EC has said the chief electoral officers of all the states and Union territories have requested for the deployment of CAPFs for poll-related duties, such as area domination, confidence-building measures, poll day-related duties, guarding of electronic voting machines (EVMs) and strong room

centres, counting centre security etc. during the elections. The commission has considered the requests made by the state CEOs and decided to deploy a maximum of around 3,400 companies of CAPFs in all states and Union territories in a phased manner to ensure free, fair and peaceful elections, the communication said. A CAPF company comprises around 100 personnel. A maximum of 920 companies of CAPFs are expected to be deployed in West Bengal in a phased manner, followed by 635 companies in Jammu and Kashmir, 360 companies in Chhattisgarh, 252 companies in Uttar Pradesh and 250 companies each in Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Punjab.

The CAPFs are the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and National Security Guard (NSG).

## Not allowing for 100 per cent VVPATs is 'terrible injustice' on Indian voter: Cong

**NEW DELHI:** Calling for greater accountability in using technology in conduct of polls, the Congress Wednesday questioned the Election Commission's "reluctance" to engage with INDIA parties over their demand that the number of VVPATs prescribed be steadily increased towards 100 per cent. The opposition party also said that not allowing for 100 per cent VVPATs is a "terrible injustice" on the Indian voter. In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) parties have been requesting for an appointment to meet the Election Commission since June 2023 on the issue of the greater use of VVPATs (Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail) in the election process. "Not allowing for 100% VVPATs is a terrible ANYAY on the Indian voter," he said. On April 8, 2019, the Supreme Court had requested the EC to increase the number of election booths that undergo VVPAT slip matching, he noted.