

Dated: 13.01.2025

After AIADMK, BJP too boycotts Erode East bypoll

After principal opposition AIADMK's decision to boycott the Erode East bypoll, BJP has also followed suit, making the election victory a cakewalk for the ruling DMK.

BJP state president K Annamalai said on Sunday that their goal was only to win the 2026 assembly election.

The decision to boycott the bypoll was taken after consultations with NDA leaders in TN, he said. **P 6**

BJP to boycott Erode East bypoll

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: After the AIADMK, the BJP has also announced its decision to boycott the Erode East assembly bypoll scheduled for Feb 5.

BJP state president K Annamalai said in a statement on Sunday that the decision was made after detailed discussions with allied leaders. "Our goal is to defeat the DMK in the 2026 election and form the NDA govt," he stated.

The bypoll was necessitated by the death of E V K S Elangovan, the constituency's MLA, on December 14. The AIADMK and its ally DMKD had earlier cited concerns that the DMK would use 'undemocratic means' to win the poll. The BJP has cited similar reasons for its decision.

"DMK had violated all election rules in Erode East bypolls in 2023. People were locked in sheds and harassed. NDA does not want people to be locked in sheds like livestock again," Annamalai said.

Responding to the announcement, DMK general

secretary Duraimurugan said the boycott of opposition parties was a reflection of their strength in TN.

Former Telangana governor Tamilisai Sounderarajan said it was not the election that all parties are boycotting. "Rather, it's the DMK that they are boycotting," she told reporters. The parties were forced to boycott the election as they had no hope of a fair election due to 'anarchy of DMK.'

AIADMK had boycotted the Vikravandi bypoll too held last year. However, NDA entered the fray, with BJP's ally PMK fielding their candidate since the constituency fell in Villupuram district, where the Vanniyar driven party has a strong base. However, DMK won the polls by a margin of more than 67,000 votes.

Now, AIADMK and BJP have made the poll a cakewalk for DMK by boycotting the election. NTK will be the only major party to contest in the bypoll. NTK chief coordinator Seeman said he will announce his candidate for the bypoll on Tuesday.

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AIADMK: DMK's misuse of power behind boycott

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: AIADMK organising secretary **D Jayakumar** has justified the party's decision to boycott the



Erode East bypoll saying it was to prevent "blatant electoral rule violations by DMK".

Speaking to reporters in Chennai on Sunday, Jayakumar said there would be a repeat of 2023 Erode East bypoll in terms of "violations by DMK" if AIADMK entered the fray. "DMK will distribute cash to all voters. They will give gifts to all houses in the constituency like how they did in 2023. They will lock people in sheds. We will complain to ECI just like we did during the previous election. But, much like the past there will be no action this time too. So we want to avoid a repeat of this," Jayakumar said.

"So there will be a mockery of democracy and demonstration of money power resulting in unfair elections again," he said.

Jayakumar said that though DMK wins the bypoll through "fraudulent means" now, AIADMK will remove the party from power in 2026 assembly elections.

D. T. NEXT

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SC to hear Cong plea challenging amendments to election rules

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Wednesday a plea filed by senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh challenging the amendment to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, which restricts public access to election materials, such as CCTV footage unless explicitly listed by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

As per the causelist published on the website of the apex court, a Bench comprising CJI Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar will take up the matter for hearing on January 15. In his plea filed on December 24 before the top court, the general secretary of the grand old party contended that the ECI cannot be

allowed to unilaterally amend the 1961 Conduct of Election Rules in such a brazen manner and without public consultation.

"A Writ has just been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the recent amendments to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961.

The Election Commission, a Constitutional body, charged with the conduct of free and fair elections cannot be allowed to unilaterally, and without public consultation, amend such a vital law in such a brazen manner," said Ramesh, in a post on social media platform X.

Ramesh, Rajya Sabha MP, added that the amendment,

introduced on December 21 following recommendations from the ECI, does away with "public access to essential information that makes the electoral process more transparent and accountable".

"The integrity of the electoral process is fast eroding. Hopefully the Supreme Court will help restore it," he asserted.

The amendment was apparently seen as a reaction to a Punjab and Haryana High Court directive to provide CCTV footage of an election booth. Earlier, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin strongly criticised the amendment and called it an undemocratic assault on free and fair elec-

tions. In a post on X, CM Stalin said that democracy was facing its gravest threat under the BJP-led Union Government. Voicing his objections, he said,

"Democracy is facing its gravest threat under the BJP-led Union Government, with the reckless amendment of Section 93(2)(a) of the Conduct of Election Rules designed to undermine transparency in elections." CM Stalin added that the move undermines one of the Constitution's fundamental features - transparency.

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister called on all political parties, including those aligned with the Union Government, to unite against what he termed an undemocratic assault on free and fair elections.



D.T.NEXT

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BJP to boycott Erode (E) bypolls; strategic move, claims Annamalai.

■ RAMAKRISHNA

CHENNAI: The State BJP unit on Sunday defended its decision to boycott Erode East bypoll, saying they want to stay away from electoral malpractices, alleging that previous by-elections were notorious for such violations.

"The DMK, in its lust for power, had confined voters in bars and subjected them to torture," State unit president Annamalai alleged, referring to the 2023 by-poll. "We will not allow the DMK to repeat this charade once again," he added. NDA's decision was a strategic move aimed at exposing the DMK's alleged misdeeds and targeted at mobilising public opinion against the ruling party, Annamalai claimed.

"Our goal is to remove the DMK from power in the 2026 Assembly elections and provide good governance to the people of the State. We are confident that the people will rally behind us and support our cause," he noted.

The decision was arrived at after a meeting with the BJP's national co-in-charge for Tamil Nadu, Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy.

Elaborating on the decision, a top-level leader said, "Initially, our intention was to contest it as the Congress was supposed to be in the fray. However, given that the ruling DMK is now contesting directly, we anticipated that they will resort to extreme measures to inflate their vote margin. This compelled us to reassess our decision."

The insider said that they if the saffron party ends up with a negligible number of votes, it would have consequences in the Assembly polls. "After consultations we came to the decision," he said.



NTK chief coordinator Seeman talking to reporters on Sunday

We relish battles, will declare candidate on Pongal day: Seeman

CHENNAI: Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) chief coordinator Seeman on Sunday said that his party will reveal the candidate's name for Erode East bypoll on January 14.

Speaking to reporters after celebrating Pongal with party workers at the NTK headquarters, Seeman said the party won't shy away from fighting the polls, unlike others, as it is a movement born out of struggles. "We (NTK) need to stand on the field and fight. We cannot afford to be absentee players in the democratic process. We will announce our candidate for Erode East bypoll on January 14 the Pongal day," Seeman said.

In contrast, he endorsed AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami's decision to boycott the bypoll, stating that the electoral process in the State has been compromised, regardless of the ruling

party. "By-elections are not being held democratically. This is not a recent phenomenon. It has been the case for a while now," he said.

Meanwhile, Seeman stood by his comments against Periyar EV Ramasamy, urging people to refrain from drawing parallels between Periyar and BR Ambedkar.

"Periyar's philosophy and legacy are unique and should not be compared with others. We are willing to engage in public debates and discussions on Periyar's ideology, but others seem hesitant to do so," he said.

Seeman slammed the ruling DMK party as "Karunanidhi's Property." He accused it of hiding behind Periyar's legacy. "The DMK is trying to conceal the sacrifices and struggles of thousands of Tamils who fought for the State's rights, language, and social justice. They are attempting to reduce the entire Tamil movement to a single figure, Periyar," Seeman alleged.

D. T. NEXT
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BJP eyes increased presence in T'gana Legislative Council

HYDERABAD: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is eyeing an increased presence in the Telangana Legislative Council as it announced candidates for three constituencies even before the announcement of the poll schedule by the Election Commission.

The saffron party took both the ruling Congress and the main opposition Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) by surprise by declaring candidates for Medak-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Karimnagar Graduates' constituency, Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Teachers' constituency and Medak-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Karimnagar Teachers' constituency.

While the Medak-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Karimnagar

Graduates' constituency is held by the Congress, the teachers' constituencies are represented by Independents.

The BJP has named industrialist C Anji Reddy for the Medak-Nizamabad-Adilabad-Karimnagar Graduates' constituency, currently rep-

**BJP has named
C Anji Reddy for the
Medak-Nizamabad-
Adilabad-Karimnagar
Graduates' seat**

resented by senior Congress leader and former Minister T Jeevan Reddy.

The saffron party has decided to field educationist Malka Komaraiah for the Medak-Nizamabad-Adila-

bad-Karimnagar Teachers' constituency. Puli Sarotham Reddy will contest on a BJP ticket from Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Teachers' constituency. Sarotham Reddy, who hails from Warangal, served as a school teacher for more than 30 years.

He was general secretary of the Panchayat Raj Teachers' Union (PRTU) from 2012 to 2019 and was active during the statehood movement as part of the Teachers' Joint Action Committee.

The three MLC seats are going to fall vacant in March but the BJP named the candidates even before the announcement of the poll schedule to not only stump both Congress and BRS but also give ample time to the candidates to campaign.

‘ஒரே நாடு, ஒரே தேர்தல்’ நடைமுறை மசோதா

மத்திய அரசின் கருத்துடன் தேர்தல் கமிஷன் முரண்பாடு

புதுடெல்லி, ஜன.13-
‘ஒரே நாடு, ஒரே தேர்தல்’
நடைமுறை மசோதா
விவகாரத்தில், மத்திய
அரசின் கருத்துக்கு எதி
ரான நிலைப்பாட்டை
தேர்தல் கமிஷன் எடுத்
துள்ளது.

வளர்ச்சி திட்டங்கள்
முடக்கம்

நாடு முழுவதும் நாடாளு
மன்றம், சட்டசபைகளுக்கு
ஒரே நேரத்தில்தேர்தல் நடத்த
‘ஒரே நாடு, ஒரே தேர்தல்’
மசோதாவை மத்திய அரசு
நாடாளுமன்றத்தில் தாக்கல்
செய்தது. நாடாளுமன்ற கூட்
டுக்கு முன் ஆய்வுக்கு
மசோதா அனுப்பி வைக்கப்
பட்டுள்ளது.

இந்ததிட்டத்தைகொண்டு

வருவதற்கு மத்திய அரசு பல்
வேறு காரணங்களை
சொல்லி வருகிறது. அவை
வருமாறு:-

அடிக்கடி தேர்தல் நடத்துவ
தால், செலவு அதிகரிக்கிறது.
நேரம் வீணாகிறது. அடிக்கடி
நடக்கும் தேர்தல்களுக்கு தேர்
தல் மாதிரி நடத்தை விதிமு
றைகள் அமல்படுத்தப்படுவ
தால், வளர்ச்சி திட்டங்கள்
முடங்குகின்றன.

சேவைகளின் செயல்பாடு
பாதிக்கப்படுகிறது. அதிகாரி
கள் நீண்ட காலத்துக்கு தேர்
தல் பணிகளுக்கு அனுப்பப்
படுகிறார்கள். மொத்தத்தில்,
பொதுமக்களின் இயல்பு
வாழ்க்கை பாதிக்கப்படு
கிறது.

இவ்வாறு மத்திய அரசு கூறி

வருகிறது.

சமமான போட்டி

ஆனால், தேர்தல் மாதிரி
நடத்தை விதிமுறைகள்
தொடர்பான மத்திய அரசின்
கருத்துடன் தேர்தல்
கமிஷன் முரண்படுகிறது.
நடத்தை விதிமுறைகள்
தொடர்பான சட்ட ஆணை
யத்தின் கேள்விக்கு தேர்தல்
கமிஷன் அளித்த பதில் வரு
மாறு:-

தேர்தல் மாதிரி நடத்தை
விதிமுறைகள் அமலாக்
கத்தை இடையூறாக பார்ப்
பது சரியல்ல. அது, தேர்தல்
பிரசாரத்தின் போது,
அனைத்து தரப்பினருக்கும்
சமமாக போட்டியிடும்
வாய்ப்பை உருவாக்குவதற்

கான முக்கிய கருவி ஆகும்.

அவசியம்

அரசியல் கட்சிகளுடன்
ஆலோசனை நடத்தி, அந்த
விதிமுறைகள் உருவாக்கப்பட்
டுள்ளன. சுதந்திரமான, நேர்
மையான தேர்தல் நடத்த
அவை அவசியம். தேர்தல்
தேதி அறிவிப்பு முதல், தேர்
தல் பணிகள் முடிவடையும்
வரை குறைவான காலத்துக்
குத்தான் நடத்தை விதிமுறை
அமல்படுத்தப்படுகிறது.

இவ்வாறு தேர்தல் கமிஷன்
கூறியுள்ளது.

‘ஒரே நாடு, ஒரே தேர்தல்’
மசோதாவை ஆய்வு செய்யும்
நாடாளுமன்ற கூட்டுக்குழுவி
டம் தேர்தல் கமிஷனின்
நிலைப்பாடு தெரிவிக்கப்பட்
டுள்ளது.