FIRSTPOST.

Election dates announced for UP, Goa, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur polls

By FP Politics

The high-stakes Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh will be held in seven phases between 11 February and 8 March, while Punjab and Goa will go to the polls together on 4 February, Uttarakhand on 15 February and Manipur in two phases on 4 and 8 March. Addressing the media on Wednesday, Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi said counting of votes in all five states will take place on 11 March. Zaidi added that the Model Code of Conduct becomes effective immediately.

Announcing the poll schedule for five states, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Nasim Zaidi said the seven-phased Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls for 403 constituencies will be held on 11, 15, 19, 23, 27 February and 4 and 8 March. The main players in the five states include the Bharatiya Janata Party, Congress, Aam Aadmi Party, Shiromani Akali Dal, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and Manipur People's Party.

Over 16 crore voters will exercise their democratic rights for a total of 690 constituencies in five states, for which the Commission has set up 1.85 lakh polling stations, which are 15 per cent more than those set up in 2012 polls, Zaidi told the press. The CEC flanked by the two election commissioners AK Joti and OP Rawat announced that the poll process will commence with the issue of notification on 11 January for Punjab and Goa polls where candidates can start filing their nominations.

"The Model Code of Conduct will come into immediate effect and will apply on political parties and state governments concerned, besides the central government in terms of announcements in these states," Zaidi told reporters. The CEC said candidates will have to open a fresh bank account for all election expenses and all expenses above Rs 20,000 will be made through cheques from their respective accounts. He added that all donations will also be accepted through cheques.

The maximum limit for expenses for each candidates in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand is Rs 28 lakh, while that in Goa and Manipur is Rs 20 lakh, he said.

Height of voting compartments has been raised to 30 inch for secrecy: Nasim Zaidi, ECI pic.twitter.com/yVIji4URx5
— ANI (@ANI_news) January 4, 2017

Nearly 100% voters have Electoral photo ID Card: CEC Nasim Zaidi pic.twitter.com/PwKyvJ5BiD
— ANI (@ANI_news) January 4, 2017

Every polling station will have 4 posters for voting procedure and dos and don'ts: Nasim Zaidi, ECI pic.twitter.com/GvWwkXVGa1
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ECI to distribute Voters' Guide to facilitate voters; there will be voters Assistance booth manned by officials: CEC Nasim Zaidi

— ANI (@ANI_news) January 4, 2017

In addition to all of this, the Election Commission will also distribute photo voters slip to all voters. "These have been improved," Zaidi said. "A (multi-coloured) voter guide will be distributed to all families. This will have details of polling stations, date and time of polling, ID documents that can be used, etc. At least 1.85 Lakh polling stations will be covered under these polls. This has increased by 15 percent. For secrecy, height of the voting compartment has been raised to 30 inches," Zaidi said. Zaidi added that electronic voter machines will be used in all states. "As you know there is a symbol provided at bottom of EVM for 'None Of The Above' or NOTA. In certain constituencies there will be Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail or VVPAT. The number of constituencies with VVPAT will be increased."

The Election Commission is joining the rank of global leaders in the area of electronic transmission of votes. "This is a historic (first) step. Electronic transmission of votes done keeping in mind defence personnel. Postal votes will be transmitted one-way in certain constituencies.

The CEC added that candidates will be required to file a no demand certificate. The rules have also been changed. "Candidates will have to fix a photograph on nomination paper. They will have to declare that they are citizens of India, not sought foreign citizenship."

Zaidi said the use of black money in these elections is expected to reduce post demonetisation, but use of other illegal inducements in different forms may see an increase. He said for the first time the EC will issue Standard Operating Procedures for the first 72 hours of poll process after announcement of polls and for the last 72 hours before polling to ensure that the poll machinery is set rolling and activated. The EC has also for the first time made it mandatory for every candidate contesting these polls to file another affidavit in the form of a "No demand certificate" declaring any pending electricity, water, telephone bills and rent for government accommodation in their possession in last ten years. The CEC said candidates will also make a declaration while filing their nominations on their being a citizen of India and having not held citizenship of any other country.

Polling station-wise mapping of Persons with Disabilities being done; Assembly Elections to be Persons with Disabilities-friendly: CEC

— ANI (@ANI_news) January 4, 2017

The limit for expenses for candidates is Rs 28 lakh for UP, Punjab, Uttarakhand & Rs 20 lakh for Manipur and Goa: ECI pic.twitter.com/Ck8C4m4zbk

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ECI discourages use of environmentally hazardous material in Assembly Elections campaigns: CEC Nasim Zaidi pic.twitter.com/zhlqWhW1cx

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Kiosks/bastas set up by candidates will be deemed to be set up by candidates, to be included in election exp. by candidates: CEC pic.twitter.com/2BemHUEleF

— ANI (@ANI_news) January 4, 2017

Here are the dates/details for all the states

The affidavit is in compliance with a Delhi High Court ruling in this regard and failure to file it will lead to defects of substantial nature during scrutiny of nomination papers, Zaidi said. As part of another first of its kind initiative, the EC will accept online the service votes of defence, para-military personnel and those posted in missions abroad. This comes after the success of an experiment in Puducherry.

Zaidi said VVPAT machines will be used in increasing number in select areas during these assembly polls and Goa will be saturated with VVPAT. While Electronic Voting Machines will be used in all polling stations, the ballot paper on EVM machines will for the first time carry photographs of candidates along with their names and poll symbols.

The Commission will issue photo voter slips to voters ahead of polls and will for the first time also distribute a multi-coloured booklet that will guide the voters on date and time of polls and location of polling stations, besides *Dos and Don'ts* for them.

To encourage more participation of women in election management, the EC will also have some all-woman polling stations this time around, besides making all polling stations disabilities-friendly.

The tenure of Punjab, Goa and Manipur assemblies are ending on 18 March, while that of Uttarakhand will end on 26 March and Uttar Pradesh Assembly on 27 May. Of the total 690 constituencies going to polls in these five states, 133 are reserved for Scheduled Castes and 23 for Scheduled Tribes.

Uttar Pradesh has 403 constituencies and elections will take place in seven phases

Phase One: 73 Constituencies includes 15 districts

Notification - 17 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 24 January, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 25 January, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 27 January, 2017

Elections will be held on 11 February, 2017

Phase Two: 67 Constituencies, includes 11 districts

Notification - 20 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 27 January, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 28 January, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 30 January, 2017

Elections will be held on 15 February, 2017

Phase Three: 69 Constituencies, includes 12 districts

Notification - 24 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 31 January, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 2 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 4 February, 2017

Elections will be held on 19 February, 2017

Phase Four: 53 Constituencies, includes 12 districts

Notification - 30 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 6 February, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 7 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 9 February, 2017

Elections will be held on 23 February, 2017

Phase Five: 52 Constituencies, includes 11 Districts

Notification - 2 February, 2017

Last date of nominations - 9 February, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 11 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 13 February, 2017

Elections will be held on 27 February, 2017

Phase Six: 49 Constituencies, includes 7 Districts

Notification - 8 February, 2017

Last date of nominations - 15 February, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 16 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 18 February, 2017

Elections will be held on 4 March, 2017

Phase Seven: 40 Constituencies, includes 7 Districts

Notification - 11 February, 2017

Last date of nominations - 18 February, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 20 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 22 February, 2017

Elections will be held on 8 March, 2017

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Goa has 40 Assembly seats and the election will be held in single phase

Notification - 11 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 18 January, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 19 January, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 21 January, 2017.

Elections will be held on 4 February, 2017

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Manipur has 60 Assembly seats and the election will be held in two phases

First Phase

Notification - 8 February, 2017

Last date of nominations - 15 February, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 16 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 18 February, 2017

First Phase election to be held on 4 March, 2017

Second Phase

Notification: 11 February, 2017

Last date of nominations - 18 February, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 28 February, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 2 March, 2017

Second phase elections will be held on 8 March, 2017

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Punjab has 117 Assembly seats and elections will be held in single phase

Notification - 11 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 18 January, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 19 January, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 21 January, 2017.

Elections to be held on 4 February, 2017

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Uttarakhand has 70 Assembly seats and elections will be held in single phase

Notification - 20 January, 2017

Last date of nominations - 27 January, 2017

Scrutiny of nominations - 28 January, 2017

Last date for withdrawal of nominations - 30 January, 2017.

Elections will be held on 15 February, 2017