

Press ReleaseNational Voters Day Celebrations, 2011 in Tamil Nadu

As a measure to enhance participation of citizens in the democratic electoral process, the Election commission has decided to, celebrate 25th January, its foundation day, as National Voters Day every year starting from 25th January 2011. The main objective is to increase enrolment of voters and educating the voters on importance of voting. The First National Voters Day is planned to be celebrated in a grand manner in Tamil Nadu with the objective of improving voter awareness ensuring greater participation of people especially youth in the electoral process. New voters registered during the Summary roll revision 2011 is 11.50 lakhs. All new voters will be given EPIC cards on National Voters Day in districts and booth level functions.

The State level function is planned in Raj Bhavan with His Excellency the Governor of Tamil Nadu as chief guest for the function. He will administer the National Voters Day Pledge, deliver his special address and give away EPIC cards to newly registered voters. The State Election commissioner Mr. Syed Munir Hoda IAS (R) and Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu Ms. S. Malathi, IAS will offer felicitations.

State Level Activities

The following activities have been taken up at the state level

- a) A stall has been set up at the State level Trade fair exhibition for creating awareness among the voters on election and electoral processes as part of National Voters' Day celebrations. This stall has :
 - i. Computer kiosks for quick search on Electoral roll details.
 - ii. All forms for elector registration
 - iii. EVM demonstration
 - iv. FAQs on various election processes
 - v. Slogan writing competition
 - vi. Signature Campaign

- b) A tableau is being prepared by public (Elections) department for Republic Day depicting:
- i. A polling station with various categories of voters (Men and women, Young and old, differently abled and sick) casting their vote.
 - ii. Youth Apathy and Voter Education and Empowerment activities motivating youth.
 - iii. EVM model
 - iv. Publicity material for voter education
- c) All Vice Chancellors of Universities have been requested to ask all colleges to administer the National Voters Day pledge to all students studying in colleges at 11.00am on 25th January 2011.
- d) Publicity materials being shared with Visual Media and print media to support and partner with CEO to reach out the message to large sections of population all over the state.
- e) BSNL is supporting CEO's office in SMS campaign to all their subscribers by sending following SMS on 25th January 2011.
"Be a responsible citizen. Cast your Invaluable vote. Greater participation for a stronger democracy".
- f) FM Radio channels have been requested to run voters' awareness programmes in the week of 20-26th January 2011 by getting sound bytes from celebrities and VIPs and phone in programme with youth to motivate young voters.
- g) Punch lines and slogans competition through the on the CEO website for sending short powerful slogans on the theme "Greater participation for a stronger democracy" in less than 20 words.
- h) Motor Cycle rally by college students emphasising the importance of youth participation in election processes for stronger democracy from Marina beach to Gandhi mandapam.

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- i) Talk show on All India radio and Panel discussion in Doordarshan on "Greater participation for a stronger democracy..
- j) Voter awareness materials like posters, pamphlets, flex boards, stickers; badges etc prepared with common messages for the entire state. The artwork CD sent to District Collectors for printing and display in prominent places and also distributed among the people especially youth.

2. District level activities

- a) Every District has developed a District action plan which includes awareness rallies, human chain, competitions for youth and students cultural programmes etc., in connection with National voters' day.
- b) On 25th January district level function will be held in the head quarters with District Collector administering the National Voters day Pledge, distributing EPICs and NVD badges to new voters. Cultural programme and competitions will be organised to emphasise the importance of voting and democracy.
- c) Panchayat Level federation (PLF) of SHGs will be used to reach the message of importance of participation of women for a stronger democracy in the General body meeting of PLFs on 26th January, 2011.
- d) The Gram Sabha meetings will include a special agenda on voter rights and duties' and process of registration of new voters for the meeting on 26th January, 2011.

3. Booth level activities

NVD functions will be organised in all the 29,000 locations covering 54,000 polling booths. Head master of the school will be the chief guest.

- a. All voters will be administered NVD pledge.

- b. All new voters within the booth area will be given EPIC card and NVD badge.
- c. Cultural programme by school students

Civil society organisations, NGOs, Media, women and youth organisations have been requested to extend all support to the NVD celebrations.

All the above activities are aimed at inculcating in new voters a commitment to democratic electoral process leading to stronger democracy.

A/A

Chief Electoral Officer,
Tamil Nadu