



My first vote in Elections 2024? When it comes to the role of citizens in shaping our democracy, age is just a number and my octogenarian mother exemplifies this commitment to civic duty. While she has always accompanied me to vote at the ballot box on election day, given her advanced years she, rather reluctantly, agreed to cast her vote at home this time around. She is an inspiring reminder that democracy is for everyone, regardless of age, and a gift that we must all cherish and protect.

GROW UP, PINARAYI TELLS RAHUL

Says Cong leader's recent words attest he has not changed, reminds him of Indira's "deeds"

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kozhikode



A DAY after Rahul Gandhi cast aspersions on Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan for 'hobnobbing with the BJP,' the CM stepped up attack against the Congress leader, reminding him about the deeds of his grandmother Indira Gandhi.

Addressing an election programme in Kozhikode on Friday, Pinarayi said that Rahul's recent words attest that he has not changed from his old self. "It is not good to create an impression that you (Rahul) have not changed from what you were described earlier," Pinarayi said ostensibly referring to Rahul's nickname.

Rahul had asked as to why the BJP government is not doing anything against Pinarayi while two chief ministers are

in jail. "It was your grandmother who jailed us when she was reigning supreme in the country," Pinarayi said referring to the arrest of opposition leaders during Emergency.

"We are not like your leader Ashok Chavan who said he is afraid of going to jail. We didn't faint when we heard about the

investigation. Better not scare us by showing jail and investigating agencies," he said.

Pinarayi said he spoke against Rahul when the Congress leader repeatedly refused to speak about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

He did not say a word on CAA during his Bharat Jodo Yathra or during the election campaign. Congress leaders kept silent on the BJP agenda, he said.

CPM state secretary M V Govindan said that Rahul is backstabbing the INDIA bloc. "On what charges Pinarayi and his family should be arrested? What he said is utter nonsense," Govindan said.

CM criticising Rahul to please PM: Satheesan

Alappuzha: Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan has said CM Pinarayi Vijayan is considering Rahul Gandhi as an enemy and criticising him to please the BJP and PM Narendra Modi.

Satheesan was speaking at a meet-the-press programme organised by the Alappuzha Press Club on Friday. "Throughout the campaigning, Pinarayi is heavily criticising Rahul and Congress. However, he is silent on the BJP and the Centre as he is afraid of them. Congress and Rahul are leading the fight against fascist forces in the country and leading the INDIA bloc. BJP is criticising Rahul as he is a formidable opponent. However, the criticism of Pinarayi reveals an unholy nexus between the CPM and the BJP in Kerala," Satheesan said.



COOL CLICK

Fire force officials from Gandhi Nagar take pictures of a child, who is holding an empty fire extinguisher, during an awareness session organised as part of National Fire Service Awareness Week at Marine Drive in Kochi on Friday | TP SOORAJ

'CASH FOR VOTE'

LDF workers detain bizman Biju Ramesh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @TPuram

LDF WORKERS on Friday night detained businessman Biju Ramesh from near Aruvikkara alleging that he visited the place to distribute cash for votes on behalf of UDF candidate Adoor Prakash.

Biju and a few people accompanying him were detained by LDF workers at Vadakkemala Colony by 7 pm. Alleging that the visit was to distribute cash, they informed the police and Election Commission officials.

The police took Biju and others to Aruvikkara station. Meanwhile, Biju said they were detained by the LDF workers when they went there to visit a Congress local leader residing in that locality.

Biju alleged that a person accompanying him was beaten up by LDF activists and hence he approached the cops to file a complaint on the matter. He said the officials did not find any cash in his vehicle or the house he had visited.

Vadakkemala colony falls under Attingal Lok Sabha constituency. The UDF candidate is a close relative of Biju.

Election Commission warns strict action against officials committing lapses

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EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kannur

THE district collector has also recommended an inquiry and departmental action against the polling officials. Kalliasseri deputy governing officer lodged a complaint with Kannapuram police to take criminal action against Ganeshan and the polling officials for acting against the law and violating the election process.

According to the Kannapuram police, Ganeshan is the primary accused while the polling officials are accused no.

2 to 6. The primary investigation by the district authorities revealed that external interference compromised the secrecy of the vote during the home voting procedure at Devi's house. The collector's report has identified Ganeshan's involvement in violating Section 128(1) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, as well as Section 171(c) of the IPC.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission has warned that strict action will be taken against officials committing lapses while conducting 'voting at home' for senior citizens above the age of 85 years and



Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

"We received a complaint related to the bogus voting in Kalliasseri on Thursday night. I immediately instructed the Kannur district collector to

take further action. The officers concerned were suspended around 1.30am on Friday," said Chief Electoral Officer (Kerala) Sanjay Kaul. Directions were also issued to register cases against the person who inter-

fered in the process. The CEO urged polling officials to maintain the dignity and essence of the electoral process while conducting 'voting at home' for senior citizens and PwDs.

Meanwhile, Kannur DCC president Martin George has filed a complaint with the Chief Election Commission to ensure free and fair polling in Kannur, Kasaragod, and Vadakara constituencies.

The UDF alleged that the Kalliasseri incident is proof of fraudulent voting by pro-CPM officials in Kannur district under the guise of vote from home. "We had raised doubts

that the CPM leadership was interfering in the process of voting at homes of senior citizens. The incident that took place in booth 164 in Kalliasseri panchayat confirms it," said a UDF leader in Kannur.

"Foreseeing a defeat in the elections, the CPM is planning to subvert the democratic process itself. The Election Commission should take a serious view of the CPM's move to subvert the smooth election process by resorting to widespread violence and bogus voting in Kannur, Kasaragod, and Vadakara Lok Sabha constituencies," said UDF leaders.

Quantity of gold seized at airports in state dropped by 142.43kg in FY24

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

UNBELIEVABLE as it may sound, it is the fact. The quantity of gold seized from illegal carriers at various airports in the state came down by 142.43kg in the 2023-24 fiscal that ended March 31, compared to the previous fiscal.

The Customs Preventive Commissionerate (CCP), in a statement, said 487.57kg of gold were recovered at the airports in 2023-24.

An analysis of the data from the preceding fiscal reveals 630kg of gold was seized from

the airports in 2022-23. The value of the seized gold, as per the statement, was ₹287.76 crore. As per previous year's data, the value of the seized gold in 2022-23 was ₹311 crore.

The CCP commissioner K Padmavathy said the most common smuggling methods were concealing the gold inside one's body or creating a false space in clothes and shoes to hide gold paste or powder.

"Gold was also found concealed in various electronic items such as watches, grind-

ers, trimmers," Padmavathy said in the statement, adding that search inside flights also led to recovery of gold hidden in seat pockets, toilets and from underneath the seats.

Besides gold, the customs seized foreign currencies worth ₹2.56 crore in the 2023-24 fiscal from airports in Kerala, from both arrival and departure terminals, the statement said.

The seized currencies included US dollars, Saudi and Omani Riyals, Bahraini and Kuwaiti Dinars, and Dirhams.

EXPRESS READ

Cyber attack on Shailaja: 1 more held

Kozhikode: The Thottipalalam police have arrested one more person in connection with the cyber attack on LDF's Vadakara candidate K K Shailaja. Muttathuplav Perumbalily Mebin Thomas was taken into custody under IPC Section 153 and Kerala Police Act Section 120 (I). He was released on bail later. On Thursday, the Vadakara police had arrested Harish Nandanam, a Congress leader and member of Ward 7 of Balussery panchayat, for allegedly circulating content defaming Shailaja. He is the first Congress worker to be arraigned in the cyber attack complaint filed by LDF in Vadakara.

Naidu, wife worth ₹931 cr

BANDHAVI ANNAM @Guntur

SEVERAL bigwigs filed their nominations across the State on Friday. Former Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's wife Bhuvanawari filed nominations on behalf of her husband at Kuppam.

As per the affidavit filed with Election Commission, the assets of the TDP supremo and his family have increased by over 41% in the last five years, reaching ₹810.42 crore mark.

While the total value of assets held by Naidu and Bhuvanawari was ₹668.57 crore in

2019, it shot up to over ₹931 crore in 2024, including movable assets and offshore assets worth ₹8,10,41,89,321 and immovable assets worth ₹1,21,41,41,609. The majority of the assets are owned by Bhuvanawari, who is the owner of over 2.26 crore shares of Heritage Foods Ltd with a market value of ₹337.85 per share totalling to ₹764 crore, compared to ₹545.76 crore in 2019.

She also owns jewellery worth ₹3,24,24,087. The TDP supremo personally has movable assets valued at ₹4.80 lakh and assets valued at ₹36.31 lakh in immovable assets.

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Auction Programme for the month of MAY & JUNE - 2024. Includes table with columns for DATE, DIVISIONS/DEPOTS, and details of various auction lots.

L&T Finance Limited PUBLIC AUCTION FOR SALE OF MORTGAGED PROPERTY. Includes details of the borrower (Mohamed Siyad), secured property address, loan details, and terms and conditions of the auction.

TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE. Details tender for the purchase of 20,000 Metric Tonnes of Tur dal (Split - Husked & Fatka) [Indigenous] / Tur Dal (Split Husked-Imported) / Lentil locally known as Canadian Yellow Lentil (Split - Husked & Laided No.2) / Lentil locally known as Canadian Yellow Lentil (Whole - Husked & Laided No.2) as per AGMARK specifications.

FEDERAL BANK POSSESSION NOTICE. Details notice regarding the possession of mortgaged immovable property by the bank.

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY MARINE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC NOTICE. Details notice regarding the hiring of 01 No. 50 ton Bollard pull tug along with Manning crew for Marine Operation - SPMs and Inside Harbour at Paradip for a period of 07 (seven) years.