

Morning News Script

0730 hrs

9th May 2024

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Election Commission yesterday reviewed the preparedness for the fourth phase of Lok Sabha polls with 354 observers. The meeting was held through video conferencing. During the meeting, the Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar directed them to ensure smooth, free and fair polling to be held on 13th of this month during the fourth phase. He also asked the observers to ensure all amenities at polling stations especially to combat heat conditions.

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A total of 695 candidates are in the fray for 49 Parliamentary Constituencies of six States and two Union Territories in the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha Elections. A total of one thousand 586 nominations were filed for these Parliamentary Constituencies which are going for polls on 20th May. The last date for filing nominations was the 3rd of this month and after the scrutiny of all nominations filed, 749 nominations were found valid. In the fifth phase, polling will be held on the 20th of May for 14 Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh, 13 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra, seven seats in West Bengal, five Lok Sabha seats each in Bihar and Odisha, three seats Jharkhand and one Lok Sabha seat each in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

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Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra yesterday stressed on the importance of timely detection and prevention of Thalassemia to tackle the disease. He added that there are almost one lakh Thalassemia patients in the country, with approximately ten thousand new cases reported each year. He emphasized on the urgency for proactive intervention aided by timely detection through screening. The Union Health Secretary was speaking at an event to mark the International Thalassemia Day in New Delhi. Chandra also advocated for inclusion of compulsory Thalassemia testing in the existing reproductive and child health (RCH) programs under National Health Mission as a means to curtail the prevalence of the disease. He added that some states have included this in their public health programs and activities and others will be urged to include and expand screening and testing for Thalassemia.

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Chief Veterinary Officer Phek has informed that the Task Force for surveillance have been initiated after testing positive for African Swine

Fever at Old Town Khel, Phek Village for immediate control, containment and surveillance in line with the National Action Plan. In this connection, Old Town Khel, Phek Village and 1 km radius is declared as Infected Zone and 9 km outside the infected zone is declared as Surveillance Zone which include Chosaba, Phek Basa, Phek Town, Lozaphuhu and Losami. The Chief Veterinary Officer therefore informed the ban on slaughter of Pigs, import and export of Pigs and Piglets, transport of Pigs and Pork in both Infected Zone and Surveillance Zone, till further order. All Pig Farmers of the infected/ surveillance village, Town or Ward are requested to report the Task Force Team at Veterinary Hospital Phek immediately for any observance of sickness or dead of Pigs for further necessary action.

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President Droupadi Murmu will present the Padma Awards at the second Civil Investiture Ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi today. Padma Awards – one of the highest civilian Awards of the country, are conferred in three categories – Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The Awards are given in various disciplines and fields of activities including art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, and civil service. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year. Last month, the President had presented three Padma Vibhushan, eight Padma Bhushan and 55 Padma Shri Awards on 22nd April.

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The Sixteenth Finance Commission has invited suggestions and views from general public, interested organisations and individuals on the terms of reference as well as the general approach that the Commission may adopt. Suggestions are also invited on any other issue relevant to the work of the Finance Commission. Suggestions can be submitted through the website of the 16th Finance Commission under the section ‘Call for Suggestions’. The Sixteenth Finance Commission has been constituted in pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution of India by the President with Dr. Arvind Panagariya as its Chairman.

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