

ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ತುಣುಕುಗಳು
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Rain shadow over first leg of state LS elections

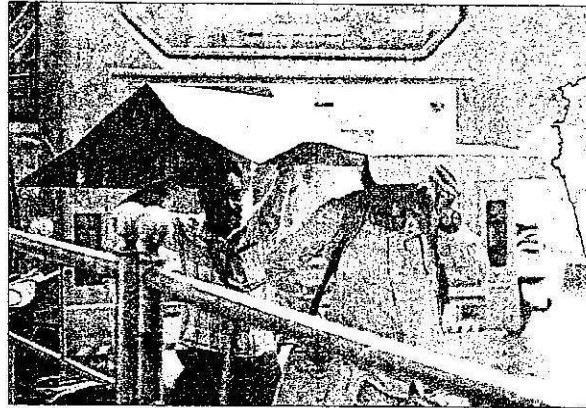
Weather, holidays could hit voter turnout today

BENGALURU: Rain could affect voting on Thursday when 14 Lok Sabha constituencies go to polls in the first phase, with the weatherman advising citizens to exercise their franchise by afternoon. Besides, authorities fear that an extended holiday could affect voter turnout.

The Meteorological Department and the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNDMC) have forecast moderate to heavy rainfall in south interior Karnataka. "Torrential rains will lash the region late in the afternoon. Hence, people have been advised to cast their votes as early as 3 pm," KSNDMC director G S Srinivas Reddy told *DH*.

Over two crore voters will seal the fate of 241 candidates across 14 Lok Sabha segments, in what will be a litmus test for the Congress-JD(S) alliance against the BJP. Polling will take place from 7 am to 6 pm across 30,164 polling stations.

Prominent contestants include former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda (Tumkur), his grandsons Prajwal Revan-



Sudden showers catch election officials unawares as they make their way to their polling booths ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in Bengaluru on Wednesday. PHOTO/ B H SHIVAKUMAR

na and Nikhil Kumaraswamy from Hassan and Mandya, respectively. Also, Union Minister Sadananda Gowda (Bangalore North), senior Congress leaders Veerappa Moily (Chikaballapur) and KHMuniyappa (Kolar) are in the fray.

Others include actor and independent candidate Sumalatha Ambareesh (Mandya) and Tejasvi Surya (Bangalore South), who was given the BJP ticket at the final moment over Union Minister Ananth Ku-

mar's wife Tejaswini.

A key constituency is Mandya where Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil is making his debut against Sumalatha, another debutant. Mandya saw a bitterly-fought campaign with Kumaraswamy devoting most of his time there to ensure his son's victory against Sumalatha, who has the backing of the BJP, film personalities and disgruntled Congress leaders.

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Set for action



Number of candidates: **241**
♂ **17** female
♂ **224** male

Number of Constituencies

- Udupi-Chikmagalur
- Hassan • Dakshina Kannada • Chitradurga
- Tumkur • Mandya
- Mysore • Chamarajanagar
- Bangalore Rural
- Bangalore North
- Bangalore Central
- Bangalore South
- Chikballapur • Kolar

Polling stations **30,164**

37,705

voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT)



Police **38,597**