

Court Seeks Govt. Response On Polygamy

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday sought the Central government's response on a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the practice of polygamy, *nikah halala* (a requirement for a divorced couple to remarry), *nikah mutah* (temporary marriage in the Shias) and *nikah misyar* (short-term marriage among Sunnis) among Muslims.

Issuing notice, the court noted the grounds stating that though these practices, which come within the domain of Muslim personal law, were not immune from judicial review under the Constitution.

The court has been moved by Sameena Begum, Nafisa Khan, Moullium Mohsin and BJP leader and advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay challenging the practice of polygamy, *nikah halala*, *nikah mutah* and *nikah misyar* on the grounds of these being violative of Article 14, Article 15 and Article 21 of the Constitution.

Karnataka Poll On May 12; Result On May 15

Prestige Clash Between BJP, Congress To Control 224-Member Assembly

NEW DELHI: Karnataka, where the Congress and the BJP are set to clash for major sweepstakes ahead of the next year Lok Sabha polls, will vote on May 12 in a single-phased poll to elect its new assembly.

The results will be declared on May 15, Chief Election Commissioner O.P. Rawat announced on Tuesday. The date of notification is April 17 and nominations can be filed till April 24. The scrutiny of nominations will take place on April 25 and the last day for withdrawal is April 27.

The 224-member Assembly expires on May 28 in the state where the Congress is currently in power, with 122 seats against the BJP's 43.

The BJP views Karnataka as a gateway to the south where it is looking to widen its base and increase its haul of Lok Sabha seats in 2019. It had been in power in Karnataka from 2008 to 2013.

The Congress has announced incumbent Chief Minister Sidda-



Siddaramiah



Yeddyurappa

ramiah as its chief minister candidate while the BJP is projecting former Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa as its face.

Minutes before Chief Election Commissioner Rawat announced the schedule of the polling and counting, Bharatiya Janata Party's IT cell head Amit Malviya had tweeted the dates of the poll and counting day, sparking a row.

However, Malviya wrote to the poll panel clarifying that he had picked the dates from a news channel report and also attached

apart from EVMs, will be deployed in Karnataka for the polls.

He said the First Level Check of EVMs and VVPATs has been completed in the presence of representatives of political parties. A two-stage randomization of EVMs and VVPATs will also be done.

The election expenses ceiling for candidates has been fixed at Rs. 28 lakh per candidate for Karnataka though there is no expenditure ceiling for political parties, he said. He said webcasting at identified critical stations for live monitoring of election process, to keep a check on illegal activities such as booth capturing, money distribution and bogus voting etc will also be done.

All registered service voters will be delivered e-postal ballot of their respective constituency through electronically transmitted postal ballot (ETPBS), which will be printed and after casting the vote will be sent back to the Returning Officer by post.

India, US Review Worldwide Threats By Terrorist Groups

NEW DELHI: India and the US on Tuesday held the 15th meeting of their Counter-terrorism Joint Working Group here and reviewed threats posed by terrorists groups across the world.

"The Working Group also reviewed cross-border terrorism in the South Asian region," the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement in an obvious reference to Pakistan providing financial support and safe havens to terror groups.

"Both sides committed to strengthening information sharing on some of the world's most dangerous terrorist groups and individuals and exchanged views on efforts to counter the financing and operations of regional and global terrorist organisations," the statement said.

"The two sides discussed international

efforts to counter threats posed by foreign terrorist fighters."

The meeting was led by Mahaveer Singhvi, Joint Secretary in India's Ministry of External Affairs, on the Indian side and Alina L. Romanowski, the US State Department's Principal Deputy Coordinator for Counter-terrorism.

The working group also discussed international and bilateral cooperation on justice, law enforcement and capacity building efforts to counter terrorism and UN Security Council Resolution 2396.

Adopted in December last year, UNSC Resolution 2396 is aimed at helping UN member states detect and counter threat posed by foreign terrorists.

The US will host the next meeting of the Joint Working Group in 2019.

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