

The Hindu (English)

Dated: 21.04.2025

### Two-day training by EC of booth-level officers in Bihar

The Election Commission on Wednesday began a two-day training and capacity-building programme for booth-level officers from Bihar, where the Assembly election is scheduled to be held later this year. This is the third such batch of BLOs to be trained from Bihar. The group includes 229 BLOs, 12 electoral registration officers and two district electoral officers from the State. A specialised one-day training programme for the State Police Nodal Officer and Police Officers from Bihar was also held alongside, an official statement said. The training programme was inaugurated by Chief Election Commissioner of India Gyanesh Kumar.



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Dated: 24.04.2025

# ONOE panel to tour states in May to ascertain views



A file picture of the joint parliamentary committee meeting

**NEW DELHI:** The parliamentary committee scrutinising the simultaneous election bills will be hearing views from celebrities, leading figures from the business and sports world, besides regional political parties and key government figures, as it widens its deliberations over the issue.

The Joint Committee of Parliament chairperson P P Chaudhary told PTI that the panel will be reaching out to different sections of society, including the sports and entertainment industry, legal fraternity and academicians besides state administrations, during its study tour next month.

The panel will also be hearing from the chief secretary, director general of police, heads of different government departments, state election commission, stock exchanges and banks during its visit to Maharashtra and Uttarakhand from May 17 to May 22.

Official sources said the details of these meetings are still being worked out but the panel is keen to

tap leading figures in different fields to draw a wide range of views for its deliberations.

The 39-member committee, which has two special invitees, is expected to be in Mumbai between May 17 and May 20 and in Dehradun for the next two days. While it is not confirmed as yet, the panel may hear out chief ministers and deputy chief ministers, they added.

The BJP, which has been vigorously promoting the concept of simultaneous polls, is in power in both Maharashtra and Uttarakhand.

The leaders of its two allies in the western state, Eknath Shinde of the Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar of the National Congress Party, are deputies to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Sources said that the panel during its study tour is likely to speak to the RBI, SBI, Nabard and LIC besides representatives from other banks in Mumbai. Its members will interact with the state election commission on the logistics, especially challenges, of 'one nation one election'.

## Forum plans campaign on joint polls

**NEW DELHI:** Former student leaders from across the country came together on Wednesday to launch a new forum called "Students for One Nation One Election", which will take forward campaigns related to the ONOE reform to the grassroots level, ensuring widespread public engagement and youth-led advocacy. More than 1,000 student leaders from different states and Union territories joined a daylong discussion on the subject. A book outlining the benefits of implementing One Nation, One Election (ONOE) was launched, along with the unveiling of an AI-powered chatbot that will provide real-time, accurate responses to public queries regarding the initiative. "It is not just about saving government expenditure but about ensuring that our administrative machinery focuses on governance and development, rather than being caught in the constant cycle of elections. I appeal to you all -- become the voice of the people and compel every leader to take a stand on One Nation, One Election," Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said. Student leaders presented their ideas on how to amplify the campaign through outreach activities, such as college debates, community discussions, digital storytelling, door-to-door awareness and cultural initiatives, to connect with people from all walks of life.