

Parties in tizzy as EC may hold Erode bypoll in Feb

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The possibility of the Election Commission of India holding the by-election to the Erode East Assembly constituency that fell vacant following the demise of sitting Congress member E.V.K.S. Elangovan on December 14 in February, along with the Delhi Assembly elections, has put the state's political parties in a tizzy as none of them is keen on contesting the polls that would give the winner a highly truncated term of a little over a year.

However, since the by-election would be seen as a precursor to the 2026 Assembly polls that is expected to witness a multi-cornered momentous electoral battle, the parties will be forced to put in their best efforts to prove their popularity at least as part of the pre-

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election preparations.

While the talk of the inconsequential elections that would make no change in the electoral arithmetic of the Assembly was subdued as there was a time frame of six months, suddenly it erupted when the Election Commission of India, amidst its schedule for the conduct of the Delhi Assembly elections, felt that the clutch of pending by-elections could also be

held.

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Since the DMK wanted to contest the seat with a rumour being floated that there were no prominent candidate for the Congress to field the third time for the present term of the Assembly, the district committee of the Congress on Saturday resolved to recommend the fielding Elangovan's second son and Thirumagan Evera's younger brother Sanjay Sampath as the candidate in the Congress ticket.

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The DMK that heads the ruling coalition, too, would prefer a candidate from the family of Elangovan as it will be easy to convince the voters on the need to support the Congress candidate hailing from the family of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, whose grandnephew Elangovan was.

However, it is not clear if the AIADMK, whose candidates had fought Thirumagan Evera in 2021 and Elangovan in 2023, would make an earnest effort to

wrest the seat from the Congress and if the BJP that had shown interest in pitting its candidate against a Congress candidate in 2023 would be fielding their candidates.

That might lead to a situation in which the Naam Tamilar Katchi of Seeman nominates a candidate against the Congress, the AIADMK and the BJP since Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam seem to be not keen on entering the electoral fray at this stage.