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Maha election dates after J&K, Hry results: EC

Election Commission will announce the assembly polls in Maharashtra only after the J&K and Haryana election results are in on Oct 4, and is likely to tie them up with Jharkhand polls, reports **Bharti Jain**. Sources in the poll panel told TOI that elections in Maharashtra and Jharkhand may be held in Nov and shall be completed before the term of the Maharashtra assembly ends on Nov 26. CEC Rajiv Kumar on Friday said elections in Maharashtra and Haryana were delinked this time as the Haryana assembly's term is ending on Nov 3. **P6**

PDP & NC positive reactions to J&K polls signal shift in stand after decade-long gap

Ahmed Ali Fayyaz | TNN

Srinagar: Election Commission's announcement to hold assembly elections in J&K after a decade-long gap has sparked optimism, with parties such as Mehbooba Mufti's People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Farooq Abdullah's National Conference (NC) showing signs of a potential shift in their stand on participating in the electoral process.

Until recently, both former CM Mehbooba and NC's Omar Abdullah had maintained firm positions, stating they would not participate in any elections until J&K's statehood, stripped after the

Cong urges NC and PDP to joins hands to form broad alliance against BJP

New Delhi: Congress is pushing the National Conference (NC) for a wider alliance in Jammu and Kashmir for the assembly elections, stressing that the prime idea is to defeat BJP for which all the like-minded forces should come together, reports **Subodh Ghildiyal**. Congress general secretary and senior J&K leader Ghulam Ahmad Mir said NC and PDP should stand true to their earlier stance that the cause of the state is above personal issues, as he lashed out against their failure to keep the INDIA alliance together in the Lok Sabha elections. He warned that people would be watching their moves.

abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, was restored. However, EC's announcement of elections in three phases from Sept 18 to Oct 1 appears to have altered the political landscape.

PDP insiders suggested Mehbooba is also likely to reconsider her decision to stay away from elections, as pressure mounts from party cadre urging her to participate.

For his part, NC president

Farooq Abdullah asked the party cadre to gear up for the polls, emphasising the need to strengthen its grassroots base. "We are committed to overall development of J&K," he said Saturday in Jammu, while welcoming J&K BJP's OBC wing general secretary and others into the NC fold.

Despite the presence of over 40 political parties in J&K, including Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), many of these parties lack the organisational strength and visibility of PDP and NC, making the upcoming elections a critical battleground for the region's dominant players.