India Has Nearly 83 Crore Voters: Brahma

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India now has 83 crore voters, nearly two crore more than those who had participated in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Chief Election Commissioner H S Brahma said here today that India now "has nearly 83 crore voters as on January 5."

"The total number of voters is more than the population of Europe," he said.

He said that in the next five years, the number of voters is likely to touch the 85 crore mark "easily".

In January last year, EC had said over 81 crore people were expected to exercise their franchise in the Lok Sabha elections, which include at least four crore first-time voters in the youth category.

In 2014 Lok Sabha polls, the number of electors eligible to cast their vote had gone up by around 10 crore from those who were eligible to vote in the 2009 general elections.

Addressing a gathering here to launch a voters’ festival ahead of National Voters Day on January 25, Brahma pointed out that in the first Lok Sabha polls held in 1951, India had 17.32 crore voters.

January 25 is observed as National Voters Day to mark the establishment of Election Commission in 1950.

According to Election Commission guidelines on enrolment of voters, for an election to be held in a particular year, only an individual who has attained the age of 18 years as on January 1 of that year is eligible to be enrolled in the voters' list.

Brahma said the February 7 Delhi assembly polls are important as they are the first elections to be held in 2015.

"Since Delhi assembly polls are the only electoral exercise taking place, the eyes of the entire world are focused on it. Delhi is the capital of India. Ruling Delhi has a separate meaning...It is a big challenge (for EC)," the CEC said.

He said it is the duty of the voters to elect good candidates who produce a better vision.

Brahma hoped that by mid day on February 10 people will come to know the results of the Delhi assembly polls.

Jaco Cilliers, Country Director of UNDP, which is collaborating with EC on voter awareness programmes, said as the voter turnout in Europe and US is dropping, India has set a good example by an impressive voter turnout.

He recalled that 66.4 per cent voters had exercised their franchise in the 2014 general elections.

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