

National

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Hello, Jayalalithaa here

Mohamed Imranullah S.

Many voters were pleasantly surprised to get a phone call on Monday morning from former Chief Minister and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) general secretary Jayalalithaa!

"Vanakkam," she greeted them, and went on: "This is your sister Jayalalithaa. Vote for the AIADMK-led front to light up the State suffering in darkness, control prices of essential commodities, save Tamils and maintain law and order. "

The Tamil message — conveyed in one breath in 30 seconds — concluded: "Do not forget your [election] symbols: two leaves [AIADMK], mango [PMK], hammer and sickle [CPI-M] and ears of corn with sickle [CPI]."

Only after the phone call ended, did astonished voters realise it was a recorded message. Some tried to reach the numbers +914044783360 and +914044621000 from which they received the call, but in vain.

Voice messaging services for political campaigns are in high demand for the parliamentary elections, according to Vivek Steve Francis, co-founder of MobME, a media and entertainment company based in Kochi. "On an average, a client would be charged Rs.1.50 paise per 30 seconds for making 1,000 calls," he said.

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