

South Korea to hold national election tomorrow amid COVID-19 pandemic

14/04/2020 20:03 by admin

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The ruling Democratic Party's supporters wearing face masks to help protect against the spread of the new coronavirus wave their hands during a campaign for the upcoming parliamentary election in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, April 14, 2020. (AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

Once the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak, South Korea will head to polls on Wednesday abandoning the conventional methods of voting, as reported by the Guardian. It will become the first nation to hold national elections in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Millions will be voting for the 300-seat national assembly on Wednesday and about 14,300 polling stations are set up pan nation to pick the lawmakers. The results of the election are expected by Thursday.

Workers wearing face masks and goggles spray disinfectant to help stop the spread of the new coronavirus ahead of the voting for the general elections at a local polling station in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, April 14, 2020. (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man)

Last week, more than 5 million people cast their votes early. President Moon Jae-in too arrived at a polling station wearing a mask. He underwent a thermal screening, washed his hands and put on plastic gloves before casting his vote.

Over 3,500 polling stations have been disinfected and all voters are required to use hand sanitiser and wear a mask and gloves. People who fail the temperature test are directed to special booths. For over 3,000 Covid-19 patients and 900 medical personnel in Seoul and Daegu, separate polling stations have been set up. Meanwhile, people under quarantine will be allowed to vote by mail from home.

The East Asian nation, in early February recorded a surge of Covid-19 cases which now stands at 10,564 with 222 deaths, according to the John Hopkins University data. The country has been able to flatten the curve of Covid-19, recording only 27 new infections between April 14 and April 15, according to Al Jazeera.

- (With inputs from Guardian & Al Jazeera)