



ASIA/INDIA - Christians in Goa ask: To postpone the elections scheduled on Holy Thursday

Goa (Agenzia Fides) - The Church of Goa is opposed to the decision to hold general elections in the state on April 17, which coincides with Holy Thursday. The request for a postponement was expressed publicly by the Archbishop of Goa and Daman, Mgr. Filipe Neri Ferrao, who sent a letter to the Electoral Commission of India. The question has found strong support from Catholics, social activists and some political parties in Goa, as reported to Fides, who in turn have submitted a petition to the Electoral Commission of India to ask to change the date of the vote, anticipating it to Wednesday.

In the letter, the Archbishop informs that Holy Thursday is one of the most solemn days of the liturgical year and the date of the elections would cause, for many Catholics, serious conflict between religious duties and constitutional duties, especially since over 40 % of official voters are Christians, who would be unable to attend religious ceremonies.

In the petition presented by the organizations, it is specified that "Holy Thursday is a holy day for the Christian community and is the beginning of the "Easter Triduum" explains Catholic lawyer Aires Rodrigues, calling on the authorities to respect the holidays of all religious communities and claiming that Christian voters would find it difficult to observe the civic duty of voting. Christians represent nearly 30% of the population in Goa. The petition explains that "Holy Thursday has considerable importance for the life of the Christian community, since it is the day that commemorates Christ's Last Supper, and is the end of the Lenten season and is in the middle of Holy Week". Another proposal is to postpone the vote after Easter. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 10/03/2014)