

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Buddha Bhavan, M.G. Road, Hyderabad-500003, A.P.

**CIRCULAR**

**No. 167/SEC-B1/2011**

**Date: 19.07.2013**

Sub: State Election Commission – 4<sup>th</sup> ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats – Facilities to be provided to the Press and Electronic Media to cover the events on the day of poll and counting – Reg.

Ref: SEC Circular No. 167/SEC-B1/2011, dated 30.5.2011.

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Instructions were issued by the State Election Commission in the reference cited for coverage of events on the day of poll and counting by the Press and Electronic Media in connection with elections to Panchayat Raj Bodies. According to these instructions, media persons shall not be allowed to enter the Polling Station and Counting Hall. According to the Election Commission of India's Media Policy, media persons are allowed to cover the inside of the Polling Station without violating the secrecy of voting and the counting process inside the Counting hall. The State Election Commission is of the view that this policy of ECI needs to be emulated to enhance the transparency of the election process. The State Election Commission, therefore, issues the following instructions on the subject on the facilities to be provided to the Press and Electronic Media during the ongoing elections to Gram Panchayats.

1. The Collectors & DEAs are permitted to issue authority letters to accredited media persons at the State level and the District level after being satisfied about their identity as genuine accredited media person. They shall be allowed to cover the entire District.
2. At the Mandal level, the Tahsildar concerned shall issue Media passes to one Reporter and one photographer / videographer for each news agency/ news channel to cover the events on the day of poll and counting in the Gram Panchayats within that Mandal.
3. At any time, only one Reporter and only one photographer / videographer shall be allowed inside the Polling Station. Different news agencies / news channels may cover the events in turns so as to ensure smooth conduct of poll process in the Polling Station. The same principle applies to the coverage of counting also.
4. Under no circumstances, the secrecy of ballot of any voter should be violated even by accident. The Presiding Officers will also be free to use regulatory measures as he may feel necessary in this regard taking into the account the situation on hand.

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5. It is expected that all Media persons will extend necessary cooperation in this regard and under no circumstances the process of polling will be allowed to be disturbed because of large number of media persons present at a given time inside or outside a Polling Station.
6. Further, under no circumstances, the actual votes recorded of individual ballot papers should be photographed or covered by audio-visual coverage.

These instructions should be brought to the notice of all concerned and Observers.

**Sd/- Navin Mittal**  
**SECRETARY**

To  
**All the Collectors & DEAs.**  
**All the District Panchayat Officers.**  
**Copy to: All Observers.**

// Attested //

  
**Joint Secretary**