

ELECTION - URGENT

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

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Lr.No. 179/SEC-B1/2012

Date: 08.03.2014

To

All the Collectors and District Election Authorities (except Hyderabad).

Sir/Madam,

Sub: State Election Commission – 4th Ordinary elections to ZPTCs / MPTCs –
Arrangements for conduct of elections – Reg.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, in its interim orders dated 18.02.2013 in SLP(C) Nos. 38295-38296/2012, Nos. 38951-38956/2012 and Nos. 838-844/2013 filed in connection with conduct of elections to Panchayat Raj Bodies, directed the State Government and the State Election Commission to proceed with the conduct of elections to Panchayat Raj Institutions with the existing system. The Government furnished reservation information of Gram Panchayats to the State Election Commission on 01.07.2013 and the Commission issued Election Notification on 03.07.2013 for conduct of 4th ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats and completed the election process by 31.07.2013.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in I.A. No.1 of 2014 in SLP(C) Nos. 38295-38296/2012, Nos. 38951-38956/2012 and Nos. 838-844/2013 issued directions during the hearing held on 07.03.2014 that the State Government and the State Election Commission shall take steps to issue Notification for conduct of ordinary elections to Zilla Praja Parishads (ZPPs) and Mandal Praja Parishads (MPPs) by 10.03.2014 and submit a compliance report to the Hon'ble Court by the next hearing scheduled on 10.03.2014.

In the wake of this development, all the Collectors and DEAs are requested to gear up the District election machinery for conduct of 4th ordinary elections to ZPTCs/MPTCs as election notification will be issued at short notice and concentrate on the following important items of election work.

Photo Electoral Rolls:

1. The Commission issued Notification on 07.03.2014 for publication of photo electoral rolls of Gram Panchayats, MPPs and ZPPs on 10.03.2014 duly adopting latest Assembly rolls with reference to 1.1.2014 as qualifying date with amendments up to date.
2. After publication, sufficient copies shall be kept ready by 15.03.2014.

Polling Stations:

1. Earlier polling stations were published in the year 2013 based on Assembly rolls published with reference to 1.1.2013 as qualifying date.
2. The Government completed the exercise of delimitation of wards subsequently and the Commission ordered for publication of electoral rolls of ZPPs/MPPs with reference to 1.1.2014 on 10.03.2014. In the wake of these developments, the list of polling stations shall be republished afresh.
3. The Commission issued Circular No. 405/SEC-B1/2011, dated 08.03.2014 for publication of list of polling stations from **12.03.2014 to 18.03.2014**. This process should be completed as per scheduled.

Appointment of Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers:

1. For ZPTC elections:-
 - a. The Collector and DEA shall appoint Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer.
 - b. The Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Parishad or Joint Collector or any other senior officer with considerable experience may be appointed as Returning Officer for ZPTCs in a Zilla Praja Parishad.
 - c. Nominations for all ZPTCs shall be received in the Zilla Parishads only.
2. For MPTC elections:-
 - a. The Collector and DEA shall appoint Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer.
 - b. The Collector and DEA shall appoint any Gazetted officer not below the rank of MPDO as Returning Officer for all MPTCs in a Mandal Praja Parishad.
 - c. Nominations for all MPTCs shall be received in the Mandal Praja Parishads only.
3. The Collector and DEA shall also appoint Assistant Returning Officers for ZPP and MPP as per requirement.
4. **The process of appointment of ROs/AROs shall be completed by 10.03.2014.**

Phasing of Polls:

1. The ZPTC/MPTC elections are now being held at short notice to comply with directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India at a time when elections to Municipal bodies and General elections to APLA/HOP are also underway. The Commission decided to conduct the elections in a single phase in the entire State unlike two phases last time.
2. This shall be kept in view while deploying men and materials for the ensuing elections. Meticulous planning shall be done to use available police force and polling personnel to conduct elections smoothly.

Ballot Boxes:

1. All the Collectors & DEAs were requested to confirm the availability of ballot boxes in their respective districts as per the statement enclosed and to inform the Commission in case of any shortfall to arrange the same from the neighbouring district / State vide SEC Lr.No.64/SEC-B1/2011, dated 07.03.2014.
2. This is an area of concern as there seems to be some shortage in some districts and we have to tap from other States.

Printing of Ballot Paper:

1. The work relating to printing of ballot papers of MPTC/ZPTC is entrusted to the Collectors and DEAs to get it done locally on the private printing presses available in their respective districts vide SEC Lr. No. 147/SEC-B1/2011-2, dated 19.5.2011.
2. It should be noted that the colour of ballot paper of Member, ZPTC is "**White**" and the colour of ballot paper of Member, MPTC is "**Pink**".
3. White wove and Pink wove paper required for printing of ballot papers has already been supplied to all districts.
4. The Collectors & DEAs have to identify and engage as many offset printing presses as may be required in order to see that the printing work is completed in not more than five days.

Booklets, Forms and Covers:

1. The Commissioner of Printing has already supplied the following material required for ensuing elections to ZPTCs/MPTCs.
 - a. Instruction Booklets for Returning Officers and Presiding Officers.
 - b. Handbooks for Contesting Candidates.
 - c. Model Code of Conduct.
 - d. Compendium of Instructions.
 - e. Manual of Election Law (Panchayat Raj).
 - f. Forms (statutory and non-statutory).
 - g. Covers (statutory and non-statutory).
2. The material shall be distributed to all the MPPs as per their requirement / scale of supply. This should be completed by 10.03.2014.

Indelible Ink and Paper seals:

1. Nearly, 140000 Indelible ink phials required for conduct of elections have already been procured and preserved in Government Central Press, Chanchalguda. They will be allotted to the districts shortly.
2. The CEOs of ZPPs concerned shall take delivery of the indelible ink phials as per the distribution order given by the Commission from the Government Central Press.
3. Paper seals required for conduct of elections will be supplied by Commissioner of Printing.

Other election material to be procured locally:

1. Material not supplied by the Commissioner of Printing, Stationery and Stores Purchase shall be procured locally. The Collectors and DEAs shall take action to procure such material through District Purchase Committee by calling tenders.

Law and Order and bandobust arrangements:

1. The list of sensitive / hypersensitive villages were already identified by a team of local level officials of Police, Revenue and Panchayat Raj in connection with ordinary elections to Gram Panchayats held in July 2013.
2. Keeping in view the subsequent developments and poll incidents during Gram Panchayat elections, this list may be reverified by the same team of local officials and final list of sensitive / hypersensitive polling stations shall be arrived at.
3. The Superintendents of Police / Superintendents of Police (Urban) having jurisdiction over rural areas shall prepare bandobust plans and budget requirement for deployment of police and submit the same to the Director General of Police.

Polling Personnel:

1. In connection with conduct of Mandal Praja Parishad and Zilla Praja Parishad elections, the State Election Commission issued instructions in Circular No. 173/SEC-B1/2011, dated 16.5.2011. One Presiding Officer and five Polling Officers are required to be appointed for each polling station.
2. The polling personnel shall be posted outside their Mandal of official duty and native Mandal.
3. Polling personnel data shall be updated and action shall be taken to undertake 3-Stage randomization as was done during Gram Panchayat elections-2013.
4. Adequate training shall be given to polling personnel drafted on election duty.

Webcasting / Moco Observers / Videography:

1. Every sensitive / hypersensitive polling station shall be covered any one of the following measures as was done during Gram Panchayat elections – 2013.
 - a. Webcasting
 - b. Micro Observers
 - c. Videography
2. The Collectors & DEAs shall take advance action to enlist volunteers (students and other willing qualified persons) by reemploying the same initiatives that were taken during Gram Panchayat elections in 2013. The Commission will engage the same agencies for providing required training, uploading of software and supervision to ensure smooth live-streaming during election process in the polling stations selected for webcasting. The Collectors & DEAs shall take steps for obtaining internet connections in selected polling stations.
3. Instructions were already issued for selection and appointment of Micro Observers during election period and also regarding Videography.

Photo Voter Slips:

1. During the Gram Panchayat elections held in July 2013, Photo Voter Slips without authentication were generated and distributed to all the voters by the official machinery.
2. This measure will facilitate voters to identify and reach their polling stations without any hassle and make the poll process brisk due to quick identification of voters with the help of the information given in the slip.
3. This measure also curtails the scope for unscrupulous elements to bribe the voters on the pretext of distribution of voter slips on behalf of the candidate.
4. Every voter has to produce either EPIC or any one of the alternative identification documents specified by the Commission irrespective of whether he possessed a voter slip or not. The voter slip is only for the purpose of facilitation and it is not mandatory for voting.
5. The Commission decided that this measure shall be implemented in the ensuing elections to ZPTC/MPTC.
6. Action shall be taken for generation of slips by engaging any agency locally.

Budget:

1. The Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Rural Employment has already sent proposals to the Government for release of budget to the tune of Rs.13.77 Crores for publication and printing of Photo Electoral Rolls with reference to 1.1.2014 as qualifying date.
2. The budget required for each district for conduct of elections to Panchayat Raj Bodies was projected by the Commissioner, PR & RE. The requirement for the entire State was worked out as Rs.141.58 Crores
3. Budget will be released by the Government shortly.

You are requested to review the above mentioned items of election work with the concerned officials and see that items of work for which a deadline was fixed are completed accordingly.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/- Navin Mittal
Secretary

Copy to:

All Chief Executive Officers of Zilla Praja Parishads.
All Superintendents of Police (except Hyderabad).
The Commissioner of Panchayat Raj & Rural Employment, Hyderabad.
The Principal Secretary (PR), P.R. & R.D. Department, Hyderabad.

// Attested //


Joint Secretary

