

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION**

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

**CIRCULAR**

**No. 684/SEC-F2/2014**

**Date: 28.03.2014**

Sub: State Election Commission – 4<sup>th</sup> ordinary elections to Municipal Bodies – 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. 548/SEC-F2/2011-22, dated 03.8.2011.

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The State Election Commission issued Notifications on 03.03.2014 for conduct of ordinary elections to (10) Municipal Corporations and (146) Municipalities and Nagar Panchayats in the State. The Poll is scheduled on 30.03.2014 from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Instructions were issued by the 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 Municipal Bodies. According to these instructions, media persons shall not be allowed to enter the Polling Station and Counting Hall. During the Gram Panchayat elections held in July 2013, media persons were 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 needs to be followed in the ongoing Municipal elections also to enhance the transparency of the election process. The State Election Commission, therefore, issues the following instructions on the facilities to be provided to the Press and Electronic Media during the ongoing elections to Municipal Bodies.

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 all the urban local bodies in the district.
2. The Municipal Commissioner 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 urban local body within his jurisdiction.
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.

(PTO)

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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 on the EVMs should be photographed or captured 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 & District Election Authorities.  
All the Commissioners of Municipal Corporations / Municipalities / Nagar Panchayats.

Copy to:  
The Commissioner, Information & Public Relations Department.  
All Political Parties.  
The Press and Electronic Media.

// Attested //

  
**Joint Secretary**