

MOST URGENT
ELECTION MATTER

No 2023/G/4/MCC (E:3427269)

Sub: Immediate action to be taken for enforcement of Model Code of Conduct after announcement of General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the States of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024 - reg.

A copy of O.M No. 1/41/2/2024-Cab dated 17th August 2024 along with enclosures No. 437/6/1/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024/2885 dated 16th August 2024 and No. 437/6/1/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024/2886 dated 16th August 2024, received from Cabinet Secretariat addressed to all Secretaries to the Government of India and Election Commission of India's Press Note No. ECI/PN/128/2024 dated 16th August 2024, on the above-mentioned subject are attached herewith for information and compliance thereto.

DA: As above.



(T. Srinivas)
Joint Secretary
Railway Board
29.08.2024

Chairman & CEO	MF	MI	MTRS	MOBD
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Secretary/RB	DG(HR)	DG(RHS)	DG(RPF)	DG(Safety)
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All AMs	PED(IR)
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Copy to:

EDPG/MR

JDPG/MoSR(S)

MoSR(R) Sectt.

E/S C. P. kg
24/8
secy.

MOST IMMEDIATE

No. 1/41/2/2024-Cab
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)
CABINET SECRETARIAT (MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA)

New Delhi, the 17th August, 2024

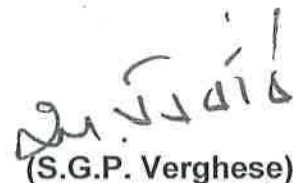
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

- Subject: 1. Immediate action to be taken for enforcement of Model Code of Conduct after announcement of General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the States of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024.**
2. Application of Model Code of Conduct – General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the State of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024.

The undersigned is directed to enclose copies of the following letters from Election Commission of India, for information and necessary action:

- (i) Letter No. 437/6/1/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024/2885 dated 16.08.2024 on subject (1) above.
- (ii) Letter No. 437/6/1/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024/2886 dated 16.08.2024 on subject (2) above.

Encl.: as above


(S.G.P. Verghese)

Joint Secretary

Tele No. 2301 1791

Email: verghese.sgp@nic.in

All Secretaries to the Government of India

By Spl. Messenger/E-mail

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No. 437/6/1/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024/2885

Dated: 16th August, 2024

To

1. ✓ The Cabinet Secretary,
Government of India,
Rashtrapati Bhawan,
New Delhi.
2. The Chief Secretaries of :-
(i) Haryana, Chandigarh ;
(ii) UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar.
3. The Chief Electoral Officers of :-
(i) Haryana, Chandigarh ;
(ii) UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar.

17/8/24

OSD

AS (AJ)

Subject: Immediate action to be taken for enforcement of Model Code of Conduct after announcement of General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the State of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024 - regarding.

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to state that the Election Commission has announced the schedule for holding General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the State of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024 operation of 'MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT' comes into effect with the announcement of elections by the Commission. In view of the elections, the Commission has given following directions for effective enforcement of provisions of MCC:-

1. **Defacement of Property-** ECI instructions contained in letter No. 3/7/2023-SDR, dated 12th October, 2023, provide for prevention of defacement of property. The Commission has directed to ensure strict compliance of its instruction and to take time bound action as prescribed below-
 - (a) **Defacement of Government property-** For this purpose a Government premise would include any Government office and the campus wherein the office building, compound and establishment are situated. All wall- writing, posters/papers or defacement in any other form, including cutout/hoardings, banners, flags etc, on Government property

shall be removed within 24 hours from the announcement of elections by the Election Commission.

(b) **Defacement of public property and misuse of public space-** All unauthorized political advertisement, in the form of wall writing/posters/papers or defacement in any other form, cutout/hoardings, banners flags etc. at public property and in public space like railway station, Bus stands, Airports, railway Bridges, Roadways, Government buses, Electric/Telephone poles , municipal/local bodies' buildings etc., shall be removed within 48 hours from the announcement of elections.

(c) **Defacement of private property-** Subject to any local law and Court's direction, all unauthorized political advertisement displayed at private property shall be removed within 72 hours from the announcement of elections by the Election Commission.

2. **Misuse of official vehicle-** The ECI's Consolidated instructions contained in letter No. 464/L&O/2023/EP(Use of Veh.), dated 26th June, 2023, among other things, provides that **there shall be a total ban on use of official vehicle by any political party, candidate or any other person connected with election (except officials performing any election related official duty) for campaigning, electioneering or election related travel during elections (subject to certain exception mentioned therein).** The expression 'official vehicle' means and shall include, any vehicle used or capable of being used for the purpose of transport, whether propelled by mechanical power or otherwise and will include trucks, lorries, tempos, jeeps, cars, auto rickshaws, e-rickshaws, buses, belonging to Central Government, State Government/UT Administrations, public undertakings of Central/State Government, Joint sector undertakings of Central/State Government, local bodies, municipal corporations, marketing boards, cooperative societies or any other body in which public funds, however small a portion of the total, are invested. **The CEOs/DEOs shall take necessary action for compliance of ECI instructions within 24 hours of the announcement of the elections.**

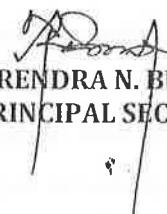
3. **Advertisement at the cost of public exchequer-** ECI instructions contained in letter No. 437/6/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024(ADVERTISEMENTS), dated 2nd January, 2024 provides that at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media and the misuse of official mass media during the election period for partisan coverage of political news and publicity regarding achievements with a view to furthering the prospects of the party in power shall be scrupulously avoided. No advertisements shall be issued in electronic and print media highlighting the achievements of the Govt. at the cost of public exchequer. If any advertisement has already been released for telecast/broadcast or

publication in the print media, it must be ensured that the telecast/broadcast of such ads on electronic media is stopped forthwith and that no such ad is published in any newspapers, magazines, etc., i.e. in print media, from the date of announcement and it should be immediately withdrawn. The CEOs/DEOs have to take immediate action to remove/stop any advertisement, in the print/electronic media, showing the achievements of the Government soon after the announcement of elections.

4. **Photograph of political functionary at official website-** ECI instruction contained in letter No. 437/6/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024(MCC ENFORCEMENT) dated 2nd January, 2024 provides that all references of Ministers, Politicians or political parties available on central/state Government's official website shall be removed. The CEOs have to take immediate action to remove/hide the photographs of any political functionary from official websites of state department.
5. **Development/construction related activities-** within 72 hours of announcement of elections, the CEO/DEO shall obtain the following list of works for reference in case of validating any complaint on violation of MCC:
 - (i) List of work which has already been started on ground.
 - (ii) List of fresh work which has not started on ground.
6. **Activities for Expenditure Monitoring and enforcement of MCC-** Flying squad, FST, video team, intensive checking for liquor/Cash/Contra banned drugs, flying squads of excise department to check illicit trafficking of Drug/Narcotics to be immediately activated after announcement.
7. **Complaint Monitoring System-** The poll going states shall have a complaint redressal mechanism based on website and call center. The toll free number of call center is 1950. Complaints can be registered by making calls to the toll free call center numbers or on the website. Complainants will also be informed of the action taken by SMS and by the call center. Complainants can also see the details of the action taken on their complaints. This system should be operational within 24 hours of the announcement. All complaints should be dealt promptly and properly. The 24x7 control Room at the district level must be activated and sufficient deployment of manpower and other logistics be ensured in particular, round the clock personnel should be deployed in the control room and their duty roster must be issued to avoid any evasion or confusion.
8. **IT Application-** All IT applications including official website and social media shall be operational with the announcement.

9. **Dissemination of information for Awareness of Voters and political parties.** Publicity of major election activity would be given through CEO/DEO/RO. For this purpose, all necessary information shall be disseminated through radio, TV, cinema, Government channel to display voter education material.
10. **Active cooperation from Educational Institutions and Civil Societies-** Cooperation can be sought from educational institutions and civil societies for giving wide publicity to the election related information to the general public and other stakeholders.
11. **Media Centre-**Efforts should be made for awareness among the voters, political parties and other stakeholder through media center about election system including use of EVM/VVPAT.
12. **MCMC/DEMC-** ECI instruction contained in letter no. 491/MCMC/5/2023/Communication dated 24th August, 2023 provides that all registered political parties will approach the Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC) at District and State level, as the case may be, for pre-certification of their political advertisements proposed to be issued on electronic media. The Commission has directed to ensure strict compliance of its instructions contained in above said letter.
13. **Control Room-** The 24x7 control room at district level must be activated immediately and sufficient deployment of manpower and other logistics be ensured by the DEO/CEO. A control room with complaint Monitoring Centre would also be set up at ECI Secretariat during the entire election process.
14. Hindi version will follow.

Yours faithfully


(NARENDRA N. BUTOLIA)
SR. PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

By Spl. Messenger/Speed Post

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No. 437/6/1/INST/ECI//FUNCT/MCC/2024/2586

Dated: 16th August, 2024

To

1. The Cabinet Secretary,
Government of India,
Rashtrapati Bhawan,
New Delhi.
2. The Chief Secretaries to the Government of :-
(i) Haryana, Chandigarh ;
(ii) UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar.
3. The Chief Electoral Officers of :-
(i) Haryana, Chandigarh ;
(ii) UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar.

92/8/24
OSD
AS (A-3)

Sub: Application of Model Code of Conduct – General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the State of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024– reg.

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to state that the Election Commission has announced the schedule for holding **General Elections to Legislative Assemblies in the State of Haryana & UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 2024** (Press Notes No. ECI/PN/128 /2024 dated 16th August, 2024, available at the Commission's website – www.eci.gov.in).

2. With this announcement, the provisions of the Model Code of Conduct for the guidance of the Political Parties and Candidates **have come into force with immediate effect and which will be in force till the completion of the General Elections mentioned above.** This may be brought to the notice of the Central and State Government/Union Territory Administrations, all Ministries/Departments/offices of the Union Government/the State Government/Union Territory Administrations. A copy of instructions issued by you to this effect, may be sent to the Commission for its information and record.

3. Your particular attention is drawn to the provisions of Model Code of Conduct for the guidance of Political Parties and Candidates and various instructions issued by the Commission, which, inter-alia, state that the party in power whether at the Centre or in the State or States/Union Territory concerned, shall ensure that no cause is given for any

complaint that it has used its official position for the purpose of its election campaign and in particular:-

- (i) (a) The Ministers shall not combine their official visit with electioneering work and shall not also make use of official machinery or personnel during the electioneering work;
(b) Government transport including official air-crafts, vehicles, machinery and personnel shall not be used for furtherance of the interest of the party in power;
- (ii) Public places such as maidans etc., for holding election meetings, and use of helipads for air-flights in connection with elections shall not be monopolised by the party in power. Other parties and candidates shall be allowed the use of such places and facilities, on the same terms and conditions, on which they are used by the party in power;
- (iii) Rest houses, dak bungalows or other Government accommodations in the States/Union Territories where elections have been announced or are taking place can be given to the political functionaries who are provided security by the State in 'Z' scale or above or equivalent by various State Governments or the Central Government under provisions of their laws, on equitable basis. This shall be subject to condition that such accommodation is not already allotted or occupied by election related officials or the Commission's Observers. Such political functionaries shall not carry out any political activity while staying in the Government Guest Houses/Rest Houses or other Government accommodation etc.;
- (iv) Issue of advertisement at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media and the misuse of official mass media during the election period for partisan coverage of political news and publicity regarding achievements with a view to furthering the prospects of the party in power shall be scrupulously avoided;
- (v) Ministers and other authorities shall not sanction grants/payments out of discretionary funds from the time, elections are announced by the Commission; and
- (vi) From the time, elections are announced by Commission, Ministers and other authorities shall not –
 - (a) announce any financial grants, in any form or promises thereof; or
 - (b) (except civil servants) lay foundation stones etc. of projects or schemes of any kind; or
 - (c) make any promise of construction of roads, provision of drinking water facilities etc.; or

(d) make any ad-hoc appointments in Government, Public Undertakings etc. which may have the effect of influencing the voters in favour of the party in power.

4. As will be observed from Para 3{Clause iv} above, no advertisement shall be issued in electronic and print media highlighting the achievements of the Govt. at the cost of public exchequer. If any advertisement has already been released for telecast/broadcast or publication in the print media, it must be ensured that the telecast/broadcast of such ads on electronic media is stopped forthwith and that no such ad is published in any newspapers, magazines, etc., i.e. in print media, from today itself and it should be immediately withdrawn.

5. The instruction of the Commission contained in its letter No.437/6/INST/ECI/FUNCT/MCC/2024(MCC ENFORCEMENT) dated 2nd January, 2024 is available on the Commission's website at path -"<https://www.eci.gov.in/issue-details-page/instructions>"for your information and necessary action. The Commission's all other relevant instructions, 'Manual on Model Code of Conduct' and 'Compendium of Instructions on Model Code of Conduct' are also available on the Commission's website for your guidance.


6. The Commission further directs that there shall be a total ban on the transfer of all officers/officials connected with the conduct of the election. These include but are not restricted to: -

- i) The Chief Electoral Officer and Additional/Joint/Deputy Chief Electoral Officers;
- ii) Divisional Commissioners;
- iii) The District Election Officers, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers and other Revenue Officers connected with the conduct of election;
- iv) Officers of the Police Department connected with the management of election, like range IGs and DIGs, Senior Superintendents of Police and Superintendents of Police, Sub-Divisional Police Officers like Deputy Superintendents of Police and other Police officers who are deputed to the Commission under section 28A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951;
- v) The transfer orders issued in respect of the above categories of officers prior to the date of announcement but not implemented till date should not be given effect to without obtaining specific permission from the Commission in this regard;
- vi) This ban shall be effective till the completion of the election. The Commission further directs that the State Governments should refrain from making transfers of senior officers who have a role in the management of election in the State;

vii) In those cases where transfer of an officer is necessary on account of administrative exigencies, the concerned State Government may with full justification approach the Commission for prior clearance.

7. The receipt of the letter may kindly be acknowledged.
8. Hindi version will follow.

Yours faithfully,


(NARENDRA N. BUTOLIA)
SR. PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Tel. No. 011-23052144
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Website: www.eci.gov.in

निर्वाचन सदन,
अशोक रोड, नई दिल्ली-110001.
Nirvachan Sadan,
Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No.ECI/PN/128/2024

Dated: 16th August, 2024

PRESS NOTE

Subject: General Election to Legislative Assemblies of Haryana, and Jammu and Kashmir, 2024 – regarding.

The term and strength along with seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the Assembly Constituencies of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir, as determined by the Delimitation Order, are as under:

Name of State/UT	Term of Assembly	Total No. of AC Seats	Reserved for SCs	Reserved for STs
Haryana	04.11.2019 to 03.11.2024	90	17	0
Jammu And Kashmir	--	90	07	09

Election Commission of India (hereinafter ECI) is committed to conduct *free, fair, participative, accessible, inclusive and safe* election to the Legislative Assemblies of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir in exercise of the authority and powers conferred upon under Article 324 read with Article 172 (1) of the Constitution of India and Section 15 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. As per Supreme Court judgment dated 11th December 2023 in the matter of Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1099 of 2019, the Commission has also decided to take necessary steps to conduct election to the legislative assembly

of UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

2. The Commission has visited these State/UT to review the poll preparedness and during the visit, the Commission interacted with political parties, enforcement agencies, all District Election Officers, SSPs/SPs, Divisional Commissioners, Range IGs, CS/DGPs and other senior officers of the State/UT. The Commission has also interacted with Home Secretary, Government of India.

3. The team of senior officers of the Commission also visited these State/UT to review law and order situation, to ascertain State/ UT specific areas of concern, to discuss the quantum of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) required in each State/ UT and to review the overall preparedness of the election machinery. The cooperation of all authorities was sought for conducting free, fair and peaceful elections across these State/UT under the overall superintendence, direction and control of the Commission.

4. The Kashmiri migrant electors registered in several parts of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly Kashmir region, were forced to leave their native places during late 1980s and early 1990s because of terrorist activities of extremists supported from across the Indian borders. In view of this, the Commission, after consultation with the Central Government and the State Government came out with a scheme to enable these migrant electors to cast their vote from wherever they are residing in the country, by way of postal ballots since 1996 and voting in person at Special Polling Stations set up at Delhi, Udhampur and Jammu since 2002. Government of India vide notification dated 9th August, 2019 has abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution of India and

promulgated the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019 and Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir would now go for assembly elections the very first time since its inception. In view of this, the Commission has decided to extend the earlier scheme, for Kashmiri migrant electors from the UT of Jammu and Kashmir. Now, for migrant electors of Jammu and Udhampur, the filling of Form-M has been done away with to vote in person at Special Polling Stations. The electors staying in zones/camps will be mapped to their respective polling stations by the respective AERO Migrants at Jammu and Udhampur. For migrants who are residing outside Jammu and Udhampur, while they have to fill Form-M, they can now self-certify the certificate attached with the Form-M, instead of going through the hassle of getting it attested by a Gazetted officer. Additionally, the facility of voting through Postal Ballot for all those who cannot reach these Special Polling Stations shall also be available by filling Form 12C.

5. The conduct of General Elections in these State/UT requires considerable deployment of Central and State Police Forces to ensure peaceful, free and fair elections with fearless participation of electors, especially in vulnerable areas/pockets. Mobilization, deployment and disengagement of these forces with minimum crisscross movement and optimal utilization involved complex planning and detailed analysis, carried out over several rounds of consultations with the senior officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs/ CAPFs/ Police Nodal Officers of the State/ UT.

6. Delimitation of Assembly Constituencies:

The General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Haryana shall be held on the basis of the extent of Assembly Constituencies

as contained in the “Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order-2008” and in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, the General Election to Legislative Assembly shall be held on the basis of “Delimitation Commission’s Order No. 2 vide Notification dated 5th May 2022”.

7. Electoral Rolls:

The Commission firmly believes that pure and updated electoral rolls are the foundation of free, fair and credible election. Hence, intensive and sustained focus is placed upon improving its quality, health and fidelity. After the amendment in the Section 14 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 by the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021, there is a provision of four qualifying dates to enroll as a voter in a year. Accordingly, Commission has conducted the Special Summary Revision of Electoral Roll in Haryana, and Jammu and Kashmir with reference to 01.07.2024, as the qualifying date. After time-bound completion of Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls with reference to 01.07.2024 as the qualifying date, the final publication of electoral roll is to be done on 20.08.2024 and 27.08.2024 in Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana respectively. As per latest data of electoral roll, the number of electors in the State/UT of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir is:

Name of State/UT	No. of General Electors	No. of Service Voters	Total No. of electors as per electoral rolls
HARYANA	2,01,90,184	1,10,071	2,03,00,255
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	87,90,870	75,834	88,66,704

Number of enrolments of young electors who attained the age of 18 years between 1st January 2024 and 1st July 2024:

Name of State/UT	18-19 electors
HARYANA	4,70,460
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	4,27,813

Number of Electors marked as PwD, Third Gender and Senior Citizen (85+), in the State of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir are:

Name of State/UT	Total PwD Electors	Total Third Gender	Total Senior Citizens (85+)
HARYANA	1,49,239	455	2,46,207
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	83,072	167	69,974

The Commission, in order to maximize participation from all strata of society and improve the health of electoral roll has taken all possible efforts to:

- A.** Ensure maximum enrolment of vulnerable groups like PwDs, transgender and sex workers by collaborating with reputed CSOs. For example, engage with NACO (National AIDS control organisation) to ensure maximum enrolment of sex workers.
- B.** Remove Logical Errors, Demographic Similar Entries and Photo Similar Entries in the electoral roll after following proper field verification and statutory processes.
- C.** Focus on the enrolment of young voters especially who attained the qualifying age on 01.07.2024.
- D.** Rationalize Polling Stations with due diligence. Each and every polling station has been physically visited by Senior Officers and Shifting of polling stations in new and better infrastructure building has also been considered after following due procedures.
- E.** Other Government database like database of Social Welfare Department, NACO/SACO etc. for vulnerable groups of citizens, as

benchmark, were considered for enhanced registration of these groups.

F. The Commission enforces the Assured Minimum Facilities along with accessibility friendly infrastructure for PWDs and senior citizens in the polling stations, CEOs/DEOs have been directed to create permanent infrastructure such as ramps at the polling stations.

G. Polling Station Locations with three or more Polling Stations have been planned for separate entry and exit so as to avoid any untoward incidences related to any epidemic or public order.

H. The Commission has encouraged the DEOs to use eco-friendly material and exhibit local culture and art to create Model Polling Stations. Each District should have at least one such Model Polling Station, as far as possible.

I. List of 85+, PwDs etc. has been prepared and a communication of respect/recognition has also been sent to make them feel important part of society.

8. Photo Electoral Rolls and Electors Photo Identity Cards (EPIC):

Photo Electoral Rolls will be used during the General Elections to Legislative Assemblies of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir. EPIC is one of the documents for establishing the identity of elector at the time of voting. All out efforts are being made to ensure 100% delivery of EPIC to all newly registered electors before the last date of filing nomination.

9. Voter Information Slips (VIS):

To facilitate voters in knowing the serial number of electoral roll in their polling station, date of poll, time etc., 'Voter Information

Slip' will be issued. Voter Information Slip will include information like Polling Station, Date, Time etc. with QR code but not the photograph of the voter. Voter Information Slips will be distributed at least 5 days before the date of poll to all enrolled electors, by the District Election Officer. However, Voter Information Slip will not be allowed as proof of identity of voters.

10. Braille Voter Information Slips:

To ensure ease of participation and active engagement of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the electoral process, Commission has directed to issue Accessible Voter Information Slips with Braille Features to Persons with Visual Impairment, along with normal Voter Information Slips.

11. Voter Guide:

In these elections, a Voter Guide (in Hindi/English/Local Language) shall be provided to every elector's household ahead of elections, giving them information about the date and time of poll, contact details of the BLOs, important websites, helpline numbers, documents required for identification at the polling station besides other important information including the Do's and Don'ts for voters at the polling station. This Voter Guide Brochure will be distributed along with Voter Information Slips by the BLOs.

12. Measures to prevent Impersonation:

BLOs have done door to door survey and prepared a list of voters found absent from the place of their ordinary residence. Similarly, names of shifted and dead voters, whose names could not be deleted, shall also be added to this list by BLOs. This list of Absent, Shifted or Dead (ASD) voters shall be given to the Presiding

Officers on the poll day. Commission has issued instructions that voting will be allowed only after proper identification of voters. Identification shall be done on the basis of EPIC or other alternative identity documents permitted by the Commission. Presiding Officers are required to double check the identity of voters whose names are on the ASD list.

13. Identification of Voters at Polling Stations:

For identification of voters at Polling Station, the Voter shall present his EPIC or any of the following identification documents approved by the Commission:

- i. Aadhaar Card,
- ii. MGNREGA Job Card,
- iii. Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office,
- iv. Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of Ministry of Labour,
- v. Driving License,
- vi. PAN Card,
- vii. Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR,
- viii. Indian Passport,
- ix. Pension document with photograph,
- x. Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/State Govt./PSUs/Public Limited Companies, and
- xi. Official identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs and
- xii. Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card, M/o Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India

14. Polling Stations and Special Facilitation:

(i) Maximum No. of electors in Polling Station

There shall be maximum 1500 electors in a polling station. The changes in the number of Polling Stations in the State are as follows:

Name of State/UT	No. of Polling Stations in 2019	No. of Polling Stations in 2024
HARYANA	19442	20629
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	10,757	11838

(ii) Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at Polling Stations:

Commission has issued instructions to the Chief Electoral Officers of Haryana & Jammu and Kashmir to ensure that every Polling Station needs to be on ground floor and, shall have accessible road in good condition leading to polling station building and is equipped with Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) like drinking water, waiting shed, toilet with water facility, adequate arrangements for lighting, ramp of proper gradient for the PwD electors and a standard voting compartment, proper signage etc. The Commission has directed CEOs/DEOs to take efforts to make permanent ramp and permanent infrastructure at every polling station.

(iii) Accessible Election - Facilitation for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and Senior Citizens:

In Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir all polling stations are located at ground floor and ramps with proper gradient are provided for the convenience of differently abled electors and

senior citizens with wheelchairs. Further, in order to provide targeted and need-based facilitation to differently-abled voters, Commission has directed that all persons with disabilities and senior citizens in an Assembly Constituency are identified and tagged to their respective Polling Stations and necessary disability-specific arrangements made for their smooth and convenient voting experience on poll day. Identified PwD and senior citizens electors will be assisted by volunteers appointed by RO/DEO. Special facilitation will be made for PwD and senior citizens electors at Polling Stations. Also, it has been directed that differently abled electors & senior citizens are given priority for entering polling booths, provision be made for designated parking spaces close to the entrance of polling station premise and special facilitation extended to electors with speech and hearing impairment. Special focus has been laid on sensitization of polling personnel regarding special needs of the differently abled electors.

Commission has directed the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) that there should be proper transport facility for PwD and senior citizens electors in each and every polling station on the day of poll. The PwD electors can request for wheelchair facility by registering on **Saksham-ECI App**.

At the Polling Station, visually impaired persons can take a companion along with him/her to cast his/her vote on his/her behalf as provided in Rule 49 N of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961. Besides, Dummy Ballot Sheets in Braille are available in Polling Stations. Any visually impaired voter can use this sheet and after studying content of this sheet can cast his/her

vote on his/her own using Braille facility on Ballot Units of EVMs without any help from companion.

(iv) Voter Facilitation Posters:

In order to fulfill the statutory requirements under Rule 31 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 and to provide accurate and relevant information for voter awareness and information at each polling station, the Commission has also directed that following four(4) kind of uniform and standardized Voter Facilitation Posters(VFP) shall be prominently displayed at all Polling Stations:-

a) Polling Station Details,

b) List of Candidates,

c) Do's and Don'ts and

d) Approved Identification Documents & How to Vote.

(v) Voter Assistance Booths (VAB):

Voter Assistance Booths shall be set up for every polling station location, having a team of BLO/officials in order to assist voters to correctly locate her/his polling booth number and serial number in the electoral roll of that concerned polling booth. The VABs will be set up with prominent signage and in such a manner that it will be conspicuous to the voters as they approach the polling premise/building to enable them to seek required facilitation on poll day. Alphabetic locator (as per English alphabet) generated with ERO-Net is placed at VAB to search the name easily and to know the serial number in the Electoral Roll.

(vi) Standardised Voting Compartment to ensure Secrecy of Voting:

In order to maintain the secrecy of vote at the time of poll and to achieve uniformity in use of voting compartments, Commission instructed that the height of the Voting Compartments should be 30 inches and the Voting Compartment should be placed on a table whose height shall be 30 inches. Only corrugated sheet (flex board) of steel- grey colour, which is completely opaque and reusable, shall be used for making the voting compartments. The Commission hopes that the use of these standardized and uniform Voting Compartments in all the polling stations will translate into greater voter facilitation, ensure absolute secrecy of vote and eliminate aberrations and non-uniformity in the preparation of Voting Compartment inside the polling stations.

The voting compartments shall also be pasted with *self-adhesive stickers* on three sides of the voting compartment depicting name of election, Name of State/UT, AC Number & name, P.S. number and Name, date of poll etc.

15. Initiatives/Facilities for PwD Voters, 85+ Senior Citizens, and Electors employed in essential services and COVID suspect/affected voters:

A. Rule 27A of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 has been amended to provide the optional postal ballot facility to “Absentee Voters”. “Absentee Voter” has been defined in clause (aa) of Rule-27A of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, and includes person who is employed in essential services [AVES], senior citizens (above 85 year of age)[AVPD], Persons with Disability (with benchmark or

above disability)[AVCO] and COVID 19 suspect or affected persons[AVCO]. The category of essential services is notified by the Election Commission under Section 60(C) of the R.P. Act, 1951 in consultation with the Government.

The following procedures have also been made in the existing Guidelines for Voting through postal ballot by Absentee Voters in the category of Senior Citizens, PwDs and Covid-19 suspect or affected persons: -

(i) An Absentee Voter wishing to vote by Postal Ballot has to make application to the Returning Officer (RO) of the constituency concerned, in Form-12D appended to the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, giving all requisite particulars. Such applications seeking postal ballot facility should reach the RO during the period from date of announcement of election to five days following the date of notification of the election concerned.

(ii) In case of absentee voters belonging to PwD category (AVPD), who opt for postal ballot, application (Form 12D) should be accompanied by a copy of benchmark disability certificate specified by the concerned appropriate Government, under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

(iii) Distribution of Form 12D by BLO:

(a) BLO will visit the houses of the absentee voters in category of AVSC, AVPD and AVCO, as per details provided by the RO, in the Polling Station area and deliver Form 12D to the concerned electors and obtain acknowledgements from them.

(b) If an elector is not available, BLO shall share his/her contact details and revisit to collect it within five

days of the notification.

(c) The elector may or may not opt for Postal Ballot. If he/she opts for Postal Ballot, then the BLO will collect the filled-in-Form 12D from the house of the elector within five days of the notification and deposit with the RO forthwith.

(d) Sector Officer shall supervise the process of distribution and collection of Form 12D by BLOs under the overall supervision of RO.

(iv) Further, the RO shall share list of all such AVSC, AVPD and AVCO, whose applications in Form 12D for availing Postal Ballot facility have been approved by him, with the Contesting Candidates of recognized political parties in printed hardcopy.

B. A polling team comprised of 2 polling officials out of which at least one should be not below the rank/level of the official appointed as polling officer for polling station and one micro observer along with a videographer and security will then go to the elector's house along with a Voting Compartment and get the elector to vote on the Postal Ballot maintaining complete secrecy of vote. Candidates will be provided a list of these electors in advance and will also be provided the schedule of voting and the route chart of the polling parties so that they can send their representatives to witness the polling procedure. Postal Ballots will then be stored securely by the Returning Officer.

C. This is an optional facility and does not involve any Postal Department for mailing arrangement.

D. Commission has directed the Chief Electoral Officers of Haryana & Jammu and Kashmir to take necessary steps for the

dissemination of information and extending facilitation to the above categories of Voters.

16. Polling stations managed by Women and Persons with Disabilities:

As part of its firm commitment towards gender equality and greater constructive participation of women in the electoral process, the Commission has also directed that, to the extent possible, at least one polling station each managed exclusively by women and Persons with Disabilities shall be set up in every Assembly Constituency in poll going State of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir. In such women managed Polling Stations, all election staff, including police and security personnel, will be women. Minimum one Model Polling Station per Assembly Constituency shall also be set up using and depicting local material and art forms.

Moreover, the Commission has directed that at least one Polling Station per district shall be managed by the Polling teams consisting of available youngest eligible employee of that district.

17. Nomination Process:

Brief description about filing of nomination is as given below:

A. Additional option to facilitate *online mode* in nomination has been provided:

(i) Nomination form will also be available online on the website of CEOs/DEOs. Any intending candidate may fill it online and its print may be taken for submission before the Returning Officer as specified in Form-1 (Rule-3 of Conduct of Election Rules 1961).

(ii) Affidavit may also be filled online on the website of CEOs/DEOs, its print can be taken and after notarization it may be submitted along with the nomination form before the Returning Officer.

(iii) Candidate may deposit security money through online mode at the designated platform. However, a candidate will continue to have the option of deposit in cash in the treasury.

(iv) Candidate may also exercise the option to seek his/her elector certification for the purpose of nomination online.

B. Further, Commission has directed the following:

(i) Returning Officer's chamber should have sufficient space to perform the functions of nomination, scrutiny and symbol allocation.

(ii) Returning Officer should allot staggered time in advance to prospective candidates.

(iii) All steps required to be taken for the submission of nomination form and affidavit shall continue to operate as per the provisions contained in the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

18. Affidavits of Candidates:

A. All Columns to be filled in:

In pursuance of the judgment dated 13th September 2013 passed by the Supreme Court in Writ Petition (C) No. 121 of 2008 (Resurgence India Vs Election Commission of India and Another), which among other things makes it obligatory for the Returning Officer to check whether the information required is fully furnished (by the candidate) at the time of filing of affidavit with

the nomination paper, the Commission has issued instructions that in the affidavit to be filed along with the nomination paper, candidates are required to fill up all the columns. If any column in the affidavit is left blank, the Returning Officer will issue a notice to the candidate to file the revised affidavit with all columns duly filled in. After such notice, if a candidate still fails to file affidavit complete in all respects, the nomination paper will be liable to be rejected by the Returning Officer at the time of scrutiny.

B. Changes in the Format of Nomination Form and Affidavit in Form 26:

Vide Notifications dated 16th September 2016 and 7th April 2017, Part IIIA of Nomination Forms 2A & 2B and Part II of Nomination Forms 2C, 2D & 2E have been amended. Affidavit in Form 26 has also been amended vide Notification dated 26th February, 2019 making provisions of (i) Mandatory disclosure of 'PAN' for candidates who have been allotted the number or to state clearly that 'No PAN allotted' for those candidates without a PAN; (ii) Details of total income as declared in the Income Tax return filed in the last 5 years to be declared for candidate, Spouse and HUF; and dependents (iii) Details to be provided of Assets (Movable/immovable) held abroad including beneficial interest in any offshore entity/trust by self, spouse, HUF or Dependents. Copy of amended Nomination Forms and Affidavit are available on the Commission's website <https://eci.gov.in> > Menu > Candidate nomination & other Forms.

C. No Dues Certificate-

- i) As per the directions of the Delhi High Court in judgment

dated 07.08.2015 in WP(C) no. 4912/1998 (Krishak Bharat Vs UoI & ors.) a candidate who has been in occupation of accommodation provided by the Government any time during the last 10 years before the date of notification of the election has to give details of the government dues accrued to him of various departments dealing with government accommodation i.e. towards (a) rent, (b) electricity charges, (c) water charges and (d) telephone charges. The date of 'No Dues Certificate' should be the last date of the third month prior to the month in which election is notified or any date thereafter. The 'No Dues Certificate', wherever applicable, has to be submitted before the Returning Officer along with the Affidavit latest by 3:00 PM on the last date of making nominations in the constituency concerned.

ii) In order to protect the statutory right of the candidate to contest the election, the Commission has directed the Chief Secretary of the State/ UT to issue suitable instructions to the agencies/authorities/departments dealing with the (a) rent, (b) electricity charges, (c) water charges and (d) telephone charges, to immediately provide/ensure the following, if approached by any intending candidate: -

(a) Issue "No Dues Certificate" by all the concerned agencies/authorities/departments to such person within 48 hours of the receipt of the request letter in case where dues are not pending or are not due by law.

(b) Provide details of dues accrued to such persons within 48 hours of submitting of application to the agencies/authorities/departments.

(c) Issue 'No Dues Certificate' by the agencies/authorities/departments within 24 hours of clearing of dues, if any, as communicated as per (b) above, by such persons on submitting of application.

iii) An institutionalized mechanism shall be put in place immediately after promulgation of Model Code of Conduct and a nodal officer shall be appointed to receive and handle such requests from prospective candidate(s) and work as a single window system to dispose of applications as per timelines provided above.

19. Candidates with Criminal Cases:

i) Candidates with criminal antecedents are required to publish information in this regard in newspapers and through television channels on three occasions during the campaign period. A political party that sets up candidates with criminal antecedents is also required to publish information about criminal background of its candidates, both on its website and also in newspapers and television channels on three occasions.

ii) Commission vide its letter No. 3/4/2019/SDR/Vol.IV dated 16th September, 2020 has directed that the period specified will be decided with three blocks in the following manner, so that electors have sufficient time to know about the background of such candidates:

(a) Within first 4 days of date of withdrawal of Nominations.

(b) Between next 5th - 8th days.

(c) From 9th day till the last day of campaign (the second day

prior to date of poll)

(Illustration: If the last date for withdrawal is 10th of the month and poll is on 24th of the Month, the first block for publishing of declaration shall be done between 11th and 14th of the Month, second and third blocks shall be between 15th and 18th and 19th and 22nd of that Month, respectively.)

This requirement is in pursuance of the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition(C) No. 784 of 2015 (Lok Prahari Vs. Union of India & Others) and Writ Petition(Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr).

20. Political Parties setting up candidates with Criminal Cases:

- i) In pursuance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court Order dated 13.02.2020 in Contempt Petition (C)No. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) No. 536 of 2011, it is mandatory for political parties (at the Central and State election level) to upload on their website detailed information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases (including the nature of the offences, and relevant particulars such as whether charges have been framed, the concerned Court, the case number etc.) who have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates. The reasons as to selection shall be with reference to the qualifications, achievements and merit of the candidate concerned, and not mere "winnability" at the polls.
- ii) This information shall also be published in:

- (a) One local vernacular newspaper and one national newspaper;
 - (b) On the official social media platforms of the political party, including Facebook & Twitter.
- iii) These details shall be published within *48 hours of the selection of the candidate and not prior to two weeks before the first date of filing of nominations*. The political party concerned shall then submit a report of compliance with these directions with the Election Commission within 72 hours of the selection of the said candidate. If a political party fails to submit such compliance report with the Election Commission, the Election Commission shall bring such non-compliance by the political Party concerned to the notice of the Supreme Court as being in contempt of this Court's orders/directions. The Commission's instructions issued vide letter no. 3/4/2020/SDR/Vol.III dated 6th March, 2020 available on the Commission's website may be seen.
- iv) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Brajesh Singh v. Sunil Arora & Ors.* [Contempt Petition (C) No. 656/2020 in Contempt Petition (C) No. 2192/2018 in WP(C) No. 536/2011)] issued some additional directions vide judgment dated 10.08.2021, which has been circulated vide Commission's letter No. 3/4/SDR/VOL.I dated 26.08.2021, which is available on the Commission's website. Following are the directions which are concerned with the political parties: -
- a. Political parties are to publish information regarding criminal antecedents of candidates on the homepage of their websites, thus making it easier for the voter to get to the*

information that has to be supplied. It will also become necessary now to have on the homepage a caption which “candidates with criminal antecedents”;

b. We clarify that the direction in paragraph 4.4 of our Order dated 13.02.2020 be modified and it is clarified that the details which are required to be published, shall be published within 48 hours of the selection of the candidate and not prior to two weeks before the first date of filing of nominations; and

c. We reiterate that if such a political party fails to submit such compliance report with the ECI, the ECI shall bring such noncompliance by the political party to the notice of this Court as being in contempt of this Court’s Orders/directions, which shall in future be viewed very seriously.

21. District, AC Level and Booth Level Election Management Plan:

The District Election Officers have been asked to prepare a comprehensive District Election Management Plan in consultation with SSPs/SPs and Sector Officers, including the route plan and the communication plan for conduct of elections. These will be vetted by the Observer, taking into account vulnerability mapping exercise and mapping of critical polling stations, in accordance with Election Commission of India’s extant instructions.

22. Communication Plan:

Commission attaches great importance to preparation and implementation of a perfect communication plan at the district/constituency level for the smooth conduct of elections and to enable concurrent intervention and mid-course correction on the poll

day. For the said purpose, the Commission has directed the Chief Electoral Officers of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir to coordinate with the officers of Telecommunication Department in the State headquarter, BSNL authorities, the representatives of other leading service providers in the State so that network status in the State is assessed and communication shadow areas be identified. The CEOs have also been instructed to prepare the best communication plan in their State and make suitable alternate arrangements in the communication shadow areas by providing Satellite Phones, Wireless sets, Special Runners etc.

Further, the Commission has also directed to improve the condition of connecting roads for smooth movement of polling parties, security forces, voters and other election machineries. In case of water ways, proper arrangements of boats/ferries etc. are to be ensured during election.

23. Eco-friendly elections:

Election Commission has issued advisories on several occasions urging political parties and candidates to use only environment-friendly material and to avoid single-use plastic and non-biodegradable material in their election campaign activities. Protecting the environment is not an individual task but a collective responsibility and hence the Commission urges all the political parties to avoid the use of plastic/polythene and similar non-biodegradable materials for preparation of posters, banners, etc. during election campaign in the interest of environment and human health. In this connection, on 18.08.2023, Commission has issued a compiled instruction to all CEOs and political parties to make our elections eco-friendly.

Further, NGT has also asked all concerned for close monitoring of Election Commission of India's instructions in this regard.

24. PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR:

As per Section 3(1) of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 as amended vide the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016; no child shall be employed or permitted to work in any occupation or process. The Commission has also taken strong exception to use of children in any way in election related work, instruction has been issued in this regard on 5th February, 2024.

25. Model Code of Conduct:

- i) Model Code of Conduct comes into effect immediately from the announcement of schedule. All the provisions of the Model Code will apply to the whole of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir with regard to all candidates, political parties and the government of the said State/UT. The Model Code of Conduct shall also be applicable to the Union Governments in so far as announcements/policy decisions pertaining to/for Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir are concerned.
- ii) The Commission has made elaborate arrangements for ensuring the effective implementation of MCC Guidelines. Any violation of these Guidelines would be strictly dealt with and the Commission re-emphasizes that the instructions issued in this regard from time to time should be read and understood by all political parties, contesting candidates and their agents/representatives, to avoid any misgivings or lack of information or inadequate understanding/interpretation.

The Governments of the poll-bound State have also been directed to ensure that no misuse of official machinery/position is done during the MCC period.

- iii) The Commission has also issued instructions for swift, effective and stringent action for enforcement of Model Code of Conduct during the first 72 hours of announcement of the election schedule and also for maintaining extra vigilance and strict enforcement action in the last 72 hours prior to the close of polls. These instructions have been issued in the form of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for compliance by the field election machinery.

26. Videography/ Webcasting/CCTV Coverage:

All critical events will be video-graphed. District Election Officers will arrange sufficient number of video and digital cameras and camera teams for the purpose. The events for videography will include filing of nomination papers and scrutiny thereof, allotment of symbols, First Level Checking, preparations and storage of Electronic Voting Machines, important public meetings, processions etc. during election campaign, process of dispatching of postal ballot papers, polling process in identified vulnerable polling stations, storage of polled EVMs and VVPATs, counting of votes etc. Additionally, CCTVs will be installed at important Border Check Posts and Static Check Points for effective monitoring and surveillance. Commission has directed that arrangements for web casting shall be done in critical polling stations and all polling stations in vulnerable areas or at least in 50% of total polling stations including auxiliary polling stations, whichever is higher.

27. Measures to Prevent Public Nuisance:

- i) The Commission has directed that the use of public address system or loudspeakers or any sound amplifier, whether fitted on vehicles of any kind whatsoever, or in static position to be used for public meetings for electioneering purposes, during the entire election period starting from the date of announcement of election and ending with the date of declaration of results, shall not be permitted at night between **10:00 PM to 06:00 AM.**
- ii) Further, no loudspeakers fitted on vehicles of any kind or in any other manner whatsoever shall be permitted to be used during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of the poll in any polling area.

28. Advisory to Political Parties regarding silence period:

- i) For reviewing the working of Section 126 in the context of advancements in communication technology and rise of social media, a Committee was constituted by the Commission with the mandate of studying the provisions of Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and other related provisions and to make suitable recommendation in this regard. The Committee submitted its report to the Commission on 10th January, 2019. Among other proposals, the Committee has proposed for an advisory to political parties for compliance with the letter and spirit of the provisions of Section 126. The Commission called upon all political parties to instruct and brief their leaders and campaigners to ensure that they observe the silence period on all forms of media as envisaged under Section 126 of the R.P.

Act, 1951, and their leaders and cadres do not commit any act that may violate the spirit of Section 126.

- ii) In a multi-phased election, the silence period of last 48 hours may be on in certain constituencies while campaign is ongoing in other constituencies. In such event, there should not be any direct or indirect reference amounting to soliciting support for parties or candidates in the constituencies observing the silence period.
- iii) During the silence period, star campaigners and other political leaders should refrain from addressing the media by way of press conferences and giving interviews on election matters.

29. Law and Order, Security Arrangements and Deployment of Forces:

- i) Conduct of elections involves elaborate security management, which includes not just the security of polling personnel, polling stations and polling materials, but also the overall security of the election process. Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) are deployed to supplement the local police force in ensuring a peaceful and conducive atmosphere for the smooth conduct of elections in a free, fair and credible manner.
- ii) Based on the assessment of the ground situation, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and State Armed Police (SAP) drawn from other State will be deployed during the election. The CAPFs shall be deployed well in advance for area domination, route marches in vulnerable pockets, point patrolling and other confidence building measures to re-assure and build faith in the minds of the voters, especially those belonging to the weaker sections, minorities etc. CAPFs

shall be inducted well in time for undertaking area familiarization and hand-holding with local forces and all other standard security protocols for movement, enforcement activities etc. in these areas will be strictly adhered to. The CAPFs/SAP shall also be deployed in Expenditure Sensitive Constituencies and other vulnerable areas and critical polling stations as per the assessment of ground realities by the CEOs of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir in consultation with various stakeholders. On the eve of poll, the CAPFs/SAP shall take position and control of the respective polling stations and will be responsible for safeguarding the polling stations and for providing security to the electors and polling personnel on the poll day. Besides, these forces will secure the strong rooms where EVMs and VVPATs are stored and for securing the counting centres and for other purposes, as required. The entire force deployment in the assembly segments shall be under the oversight of the Central Observers deputed by the Commission.

- iii) *To ensure optimum and effective utilization of State Police Official and CAPFs, Commission has directed to constitute a Committee of CEO, State Police Nodal Officer (SPNO) and State CAPF Coordinator to jointly decide the State Deployment Plan and to ensure randomization of State Police.*

30. Protection to Electors of SC/ST and Other Weaker Sections:

As per Section 3 (1) of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (as amended in 2015), whoever, not being a member of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, forces or intimidates a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe

not to vote or to vote for a particular candidate or to vote in a manner other than that provided by law, or not to stand as a candidate etc., shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than six months but which may extend to five years and with fine. The Commission has asked CEOs of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir to bring these provisions to the notice of all concerned for prompt action. In order to bolster the confidence of the voters hailing from vulnerable sections especially SCs, STs etc. and enhance their conviction and faith in the purity and credibility of the poll process, CAPFs/SAP shall be extensively and vigorously utilized in patrolling and conducting route marches and undertaking other necessary confidence building measures under the supervision of the Central Observers.

31. Election Expenditure Monitoring:

- i) Comprehensive instructions for the purpose of effective monitoring of the election expenditure of the candidates have been issued, which include deployment of Expenditure Observers, Assistant Expenditure Observers, formation of Flying Squads (FSs), Static Surveillance Teams (SSTs), Video Surveillance Teams (VSTs), Video Viewing Teams (VVTs), Accounting Teams (ATs), Media Certification & Monitoring Committee (MCMC), District Expenditure Monitoring Committee (DEMC), District Grievance Committee involvement of enforcement agencies viz. State Police Dept., State Excise Dept., State Commercial Dept., Income Tax Dept. (Inv.), CBIC, DRI, CGST, ED, FIU-IND, NCB, BCAS, CISF, RPF, BSF, ICG, Department of Post and State Forest Dept.
- ii) State Excise Department has been asked to monitor

production, distribution, sale and storage of liquor and inducements in the form of free goods during the election process. The functioning and operations of the Flying Squads/Mobile Teams shall be closely monitored using GPS Tracking/and the use of c-VIGIL App. For greater transparency and for ease of monitoring of Election Expenses, candidates would be required to open a separate bank account and incur their election expenses from only that account. The Investigation Directorate of Income Tax Dept. has been asked to activate Air Intelligence Units in the airports of the State/UT and also to gather intelligence and take necessary action to check movement of large sums of money in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir. Control room and Complaint Monitoring Centre with 24 hours toll free numbers shall be operative during the entire election process.

iii) District Election Officers (DEOs) have been directed to obtain unusual and suspicious cash withdrawal or deposit of cash exceeding Rs. 1 Lakh from banks for due verification followed by necessary action. If the amount is more than Rs. 10 Lakh, then DEOs shall pass on such information to Income Tax Department for necessary action. FIU-IND has been requested to share Cash Transaction Reports (CTRs) and Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs) with CBDT for effective monitoring of the election expenditure of the candidates.

iv) Some new initiatives taken by the Commission to strengthen the Expenditure Monitoring mechanism are:

(a) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for seizure and release of cash: For the purpose of maintaining purity of

elections, the Election Commission of India has issued a Standard Operating Procedure for Flying Squads and Static Surveillance Teams, constituted for keeping vigil over excessive campaign expenses, distribution of items of bribe in cash or in kind, movement of illegal arms, ammunition, liquor, or antisocial elements etc. in the constituencies during election process. Furthermore, in order to avoid inconvenience to the public and also for redressal of their grievances, if any, the Commission has issued instruction to constitute a District Grievance Committee in each district comprising three officers of the District, namely, (i) CEO, Zila Parishad/CDO/P.D. DRDA, (ii) Nodal Officer of Expenditure Monitoring in the District Election Office (Convener) and (iii) District Treasury Officer. The Committee shall *suo-moto* examine each case of seizure made by the Police or SST or FS and where the Committee finds that no FIR/Complaint has been filed against the seizure or where the seizure is not linked with any candidate or political party or any election campaign etc., as per SOP, it shall take immediate steps to order release of such cash etc. to such persons from whom the cash was seized after passing a speaking order to that effect. In no case, shall any matter relating to seized cash/seized valuables shall be kept pending in Malkhana or treasury for more than 7 (seven) days after the date of poll, unless any FIR /Complaint is filed.

(b) Accounting of the expenditure incurred for campaign vehicles: It has come to the notice of the Commission that the candidates take permission from the

Returning Officer for use of vehicles for campaign purpose, but some candidates do not show the vehicle hiring charges or fuel expenses in their election expenditure account. Therefore, it has been decided that unless the candidate intimates the R.O. regarding withdrawing vehicles from campaigning, the notional expenditure on account of campaign vehicles will be calculated based on the number of vehicles for which permission has been granted by the Returning Officer.

(c) Account Reconciliation Meeting: In order to reduce litigation relating to expenditure accounts of contesting candidates, a reconciliation meeting will be convened by the DEOs before final submission of the accounts, on the 26th day after the declaration of the results.

(d) Accounting of Expenditure on publicity of criminal antecedents: In Pursuance of Hon'ble Supreme Court Judgement dated 25.09.2018 in WP(C) No. 536 of 2011, the candidates as well as the concerned political parties shall issue a declaration, in the format prescribed, in widely circulated newspapers and on electronic media in the state regarding the criminal antecedents of the candidates at least thrice after filing of the nomination papers. Candidates are required to maintain expenditure incurred by them in this regard in their accounts and the same shall be reflected in their Abstract Statement of election expenses (Schedule 10) to be submitted by them to the concerned DEOs along with their accounts of election expenses within 30 days of

declaration of results. Political parties are also required to show the amount incurred by them in this regard in their Statement of Election Expenses (Schedule 23A, 23B) to be submitted by them to ECI (recognized political party)/CEO (unrecognized political party) within 75 days of completion of Assembly Election.

(e) Expenditure incurred on candidates' Booth/Kiosk and on TV/Cable Channel/Newspaper owned by party for promoting the electoral prospects of the candidate in the account of the candidate: The Commission, on further examination of the relevant provisions of section 77(1) of the R. P. Act, 1951, had decided that the candidates' booths set up outside the polling stations should hereinafter be deemed to have been set up by the candidates as part of their individual campaign and not by way of general party propaganda and as such all expenditure incurred on such candidates' booths shall be deemed to have been incurred/authorized by the candidate/his election agent so as to be included in his account of election expenses. Further, the Commission, after taking into consideration various references/complaints from various sources in the above matter, has directed that if the candidate(s) or their sponsoring parties utilize TV/Cable Channels/Newspapers owned by them for promoting the electoral prospects of the candidate, the expenses for the same, as per standard rate cards of the channel/newspaper, have to be included by the candidate concerned in his Election Expenditure Statement, even if they actually do not pay any amount to the channel/newspaper. In pursuance of

the Commission's aforesaid decisions, Schedule 6 and Schedule 4 & 4A in Abstract Statement of Election Expenses have been amended and incorporated accordingly in the Compendium of Instructions on Election Expenditure Monitoring.

(f) Accounting of Expenditure on Virtual Campaign: Candidates are required to maintain expenditure incurred by them in this regard in their accounts and the same shall be reflected in their Abstract Statement of election expenses (Schedule 11) to be submitted by them to the concerned DEOs along with their accounts of election expenses within 30 days of declaration of results. Political parties are also required to show the amount incurred by them in this regard in their Statement of Election Expenses (Schedule 24A, 24B) to be submitted by them to ECI (recognized political party)/CEO (unrecognized political party) within 75 days of completion of Assembly Election.

(g) Part and Full Election Expenditure Statement required to be submitted by Political Parties: The National and State Recognized Political Parties are required to submit their Election Expenditure Statements with the Election Commission of India whereas Registered Unrecognized Political Parties are required to submit their Election Expenditure Statements with the Chief Electoral Officers of the State concerned where party HQ is situated within 75 days of completion of the Assembly Election. The same shall be uploaded on website for public viewing. For the sake of

transparency and reconciliation of accounts of political parties and candidates, the political parties have to file a part Election Expenditure Statement in addition to the final statement of election in respect of lump-sum payments made by the party to the candidate within 30 days after declaration of results of election to Legislative Assemblies in prescribed format.

(h) Integrated Expenditure Monitoring Software (IEMS): A new tech enabled portal <https://iems.eci.gov.in/> to facilitate online filing of Contribution Report, Election Expenditure Statement (Part and Full) and Audited Annual Accounts by the Political Parties has been started. This facility has been created to enable the political parties to file the statutory and regulatory compliances, reports and statements in a hassle free, smooth manner and with greater transparency. All Political Parties are urged to file their above mentioned financial reports through above mentioned IEMS portal.

(i) Election Seizure Management System (ESMS): A mobile app has also been launched to digitize data for intercepted/seized items (Cash/Liquor/Drugs/Precious Metals/Freebies/other items).

(j) Ceiling of Election Expenses for Candidates: The election expenses ceiling for candidates has been revised by the Government of India vide Notification dated 06th January, 2022. As per the revised ceilings, the maximum limit of election expenses for an Assembly Constituency is **Rs. 40.00 Lakh** per candidate for these State/UT of Haryana and

Jammu and Kashmir.

The Commission has decided that an election expenditure/either by/to candidate(s) or political parties exceeding Rs.10000/- (Ten Thousand) in all the situations be incurred by crossed account payee cheque or draft or by RTGS/NEFT or any other electronic mode linked with bank account of the candidate opened for election purpose.

32. Effective use of Media:

(i) Media Engagement:

The Commission has always considered Media as an important ally and a potent force multiplier in ensuring an effective and efficient election management. Hence, the Commission has directed CEOs of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir to take the following measures for positive and progressive engagement and interaction with the media:

- (a) Regular interaction with the media during elections and maintaining an effective and positive line of communication with the media at all times.
- (b) Effective steps to sensitize the media about the Election Code.
- (c) Authority letters will be issued to all accredited media for the polling day and day of counting.

Media is also expected to follow all the extant guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW) or any other competent authorities regarding COVID containment measures during all their election related coverage.

(ii) Pre-Certification of Political Advertisements and monitoring of suspected cases of paid news:

Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC) are in place at all the Districts and State level. All political advertisements proposed to be issued on electronic media shall require pre-certification from the concerned MCMC. Political advertisements in all electronic media/TV Channels/Cable Network/Radio including private FM channels/Cinema halls/audio-visual displays in public places/voice messages & bulk SMS over phone and social media & internet websites shall come within the purview of pre-certification. Commission requests all Political Parties/candidates/Media to follow pre-certification instructions.

MCMCs will also keep a strict vigil on suspected cases of paid news in the media and suitable action will be taken in confirmed cases after following all due procedures.

(iii) Use of Social Media in election:

Keeping in view increasing incidents of misuse of Social Media & menace of Paid News and as a result of ECI's vigorous persuasion, major Social Media Platforms agreed to observe Voluntary Code of Ethics formulated by them in March, 2019. This will be applicable in these elections as well. Provisions of model code of conduct and related instructions of the Commission issued from time to time shall also apply to the content being posted on the internet, including social media websites, by candidates and political parties.

The Commission requests all Political Parties and candidates to ensure that their supporters do not indulge in hate speeches

and fake news. Strict watch on social media posts is being kept by MCMCs to ensure that the election atmosphere is not vitiated. Media may also play an active role in curbing the menace of fake news.

(iv) Monitoring of Electronic and Social Media:

All the election management related news on all the major national and regional news channels during elections would be monitored vigorously. If any untoward incident or violation of any law/rule is noticed, action would be taken immediately. Reports of monitoring would also be forwarded to the CEOs. Office of CEO will ascertain status on each and every item and file ATR/Status Report.

(v) Media restrictions during silence period and on Exit polls:

Section 126 (1)(b) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, prohibits displaying any election matter by means, inter alia, of television or similar apparatus, in any polling area during the period of forty-eight hours (silence period) ending with the hour fixed for the conclusion of the poll for any election in that polling area. Election matter referred hereinabove is defined as any matter intended or calculated to influence or affect the result of an election in any electronic media during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for conclusion of poll in each of the phases of elections.

Section 126A of the R.P. Act 1951, prohibits conduct of Exit poll and dissemination of their results by means of print or electronic media during the period mentioned therein, i.e. between the hour fixed for commencement of poll in the first

phase and half an hour after the time fixed for close of poll for the last phase in all the State. Violation of Section 126 of the R.P. Act, 1951 is punishable with imprisonment upto a period of two years, or with fine or both.

All Media houses are advised to follow instructions in this regard keeping its spirit.

33. Training of Election Officials:

India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) has organized the following training programs for the forthcoming General Election to the Legislative Assemblies of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir –

- i. Capacity building training programme for NLMTs at IIIDEM;
- ii. Theme wise training programme for State Level Master Trainers (SLMTs) of these State/UT at IIIDEM;
- iii. Training of State Police Nodal Officers;
- iv. Training programme for District Election Officers (DEOs);
- v. Certification Programme for Returning Officers (ROs) and Assistant Returning Officers (AROs);
- vi. Online training of EROs;

34. Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP):

Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation is a multi-intervention programme that reaches out to educate citizens about the electoral process in order to increase their awareness and participation.

For enhancing electoral participation, the Commission has directed to take the following new initiatives:

i) Low Voter Turnout (LVT) analysis:

The CEOs/DEOs have been directed to identify Low voter turnout PSs/ACs/PCs and take focused initiatives to address specific issues.

ii) Identification of district specific themes of PS:

As the PS is the basic unit of election machinery, it has been directed to focus on district wise PSs for targeted interventions reaching out various groups like women, PWD, Transgender, PVTGs etc.

iii) Engagement and Utilisation of local Icons:

The State have been directed to identify and engage local influential personalities as Election Icons. This would not only add value to the message of voter awareness as well as increase the general outreach in the specific region.

iv) Focus to address Urban and Youth Apathy:

As has been recently observed, the issue of Urban and Youth Apathy is a major concern for the Commission. Relatively low turnouts in urban areas need to be addressed by special interventions. Similarly, for youth, the awareness and engagement is required to be increased via appropriate mediums like ELCs, special registration camps, etc.

Furthermore, Comprehensive SVEEP Plan, as per the new strategy document (SVEEP-IV) is directed to be prepared. Partnerships collaborations with various stakeholders should be forged with for greater outreach. Ensuring inclusion of all marginalized sections through targeted interventions, technological solutions and policy changes should be done. To enhance the quality of electoral

participation, steps may be taken to promote informed and ethical voting through IMF-EEE (Information, Motivation, Facilitation, Engagement, Education and Empowerment) paradigm. Model Polling stations may be decorated keeping in view NVD theme of the year.

35. Deployment of Central Observers:

(i) General Observers

The Commission will deploy IAS officers as General Observers in adequate number to ensure smooth conduct of election in consultation with the CEOs of the poll going State. The Observers will be asked to keep a close watch on every stage of the electoral process to ensure free and fair election.

(ii) Police Observers

The Commission would deploy IPS officers as Police Observers in consultation with the CEOs of the poll going State at District/AC level, depending upon the need, sensitivity and assessment of ground situation of the District/AC. They will monitor all activities relating to force deployment, law and order situation and co-ordinate between Civil and Police administration to ensure free and fair election.

(iii) Counting Observers

In addition to the already deployed General Observers, the Commission may also deploy additional officers as Counting Observers at District/AC level, depending upon the requirement in consultation with the CEOs of the poll going State. They will oversee the counting centre arrangements and monitor all activities relating counting of votes.

(iv) Special Observers.

In exercise of the plenary powers conferred on it by Article 324 of the Constitution of India, the Commission also deploys Special Observers who belong to All India Services and various Central Services if seems necessary.

(v) Expenditure Observers

The Commission has also decided to appoint adequate number of Expenditure Observers who will exclusively monitor the election expenditure of the contesting candidates.

36. IT applications being used in election management:

The Commission has enhanced usage of IT Application, to usher in greater citizen participation and transparency.

- I. cVIGIL App for filing Model Code of Conduct Violation cases by Citizen:** cVIGIL provides time-stamped evidentiary proof of the Model Code of Conduct / Expenditure Violation by empowering every citizen to click a photo or video using his or her smartphone. The application is based on GIS technology and the unique feature of auto location provides fairly correct information which can be relied upon by flying squads to navigate to the right spot of incidence and take prompt action. This app prioritizes the speedy and effective actions by authorities and promised users status reports within 100 minutes. The cVigil application is available on both the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.
- II. Suvidha Portal:** This portal provides different facility to candidates/ political parties for online nomination, Permission as given below-

a) Candidate Online Nomination:

To facilitate filling of nominations, the Election Commission has introduced an online portal for filling the nomination & affidavit. The Candidate can visit <https://suvidha.eci.gov.in/> to create his/her account, fill nomination form, deposit the security amount, check availability of time slot and appropriately plan his visit to the Returning Officer.

Once the application is filled through the online portal, the candidate only needs to take a printout, get it notarized and submit the application along with relevant documents to the Returning Officer in person.

The Online Nomination Facility is an optional facility to facilitate ease of filing and correct filing. The regular offline submission as prescribed under the law shall continue too.

b) Candidate Permissions module: Permission module allows the candidates, political parties or any representatives of the candidate to apply online for the permission for meetings, rallies, loudspeakers, temporary offices, and others through SUVIDHA Portal <https://suvidha.eci.gov.in/>. The Candidates can also track their application status through the same portal.

c) Candidate App:

The application will be available during elections for Candidates/ Political Parties / Agents to download and use to track the nomination and permission status from the Google Play store.

III. Candidate Affidavit Portal:

Candidate Affidavit portal is a web portal that allows citizens to

view the complete list of Candidate Nominations who have applied for the elections. The citizen, political parties and media houses to know about the candidates, accesses this portal. A complete candidate profile with photo and affidavit is made public as and when the Returning Officer enters the data. The Complete list of Contesting Candidates with their profile, nomination status and the affidavits will be available for public view through Candidate Affidavit Portal. This portal can be accessed using <https://affidavit.eci.gov.in/>

IV. Know Your Candidates (KYC):

The Election Commission of India has developed a dedicated app Know your Candidate (KYC) for both Android and iOS platforms for informing about “Criminal Antecedents” status of candidates. This allows citizens to browse candidates with/without Criminal Antecedents and empowers the citizens to know the criminal antecedents of the candidates. The application is available on both the Google Play & Apple App Store.

V. Voter Turnout App:

Voter Turnout App will be used to display **two hourly approximate voter turnout details of each Assembly Constituency entered by RO (AC)/Nodal Officer.** Approximate voter turnout data of each phase of the elections will be displayed through this app. The application is available on the Google Play store and Apple App Store.

VI. ENCORE Portal:

The ENCORE portal is an end-to-end application for all election officials (CEO, DEO, RO & ARO) that has a well-

defined responsibility to perform various activity in multiple modules. This portal has multiple modules listed below with a brief introduction:

a) Candidate Nomination Module

The returning officer will fill all the required details to register the profile of the candidate in the system that will be used at multiple levels of conduct of election process. For all the received nominations, the returning officer needs to upload the affidavit against each nomination.

b) Candidate Scrutiny & Finalization Module

This system provides facility of marking nomination as Accepted / Rejected during scrutiny and marking of withdrawal if any candidate withdraws his candidature. After last date of withdrawal, the returning officer can also generate his form 7A through the system.

c) Election Permission Module

Permission module allows the election officials to process the permission request received by the candidates, political parties or any representatives of the candidate who applied the permission using SUVIDHA portal or submitted the permission request physically to election office.

d) Election Counting Module

The ENCORE counting application is an end-to-end application for AROs/ROs to digitize the EVM and postal ballot votes polled, tabulate the data each round to declare the result of the election.

e) Index Card

A facility that has been provided to the Returning Officer to fill the Index card online after counting. It contains each detail of elections from the schedule of elections to the declaration of results such as data on nomination, turnout and counting.

f) Expenditure Monitoring

This expenditure-monitoring module provides facility to all the DEOs to submit the DEO Scrutiny report, which will be prepared once all the candidate submits their expenses report to the DEOs after 25 days of completion of election.

VII.Results Website and Results Trends TV:

The timely publication of the round-wise information is vital for establishing a single source of data. The counting data entered by respective Returning Officers is available as 'Trends and Results' for public view through 'ECI Results website' <http://results.eci.gov.in/>, **The result website has been upgraded with enhanced features including map view for better users experience.**

The results are shown with the Infographics and displayed with auto-scroll panels through large display screens outside the counting hall or any public place through Trends TV. The trends & results is also available on VHA mobile App.

VIII. EVM Management System (EMS):

EVM Management System is designed to manage inventory of EVM units. One of the important modes to ensure a fair and transparent process in EVM management is the administrative protocol of the randomization of the machines before they are

deployed in the Polling stations. The randomization is done in the presence of Political Parties' representatives.

IX. Voters' Service portal:

Through <https://voters.eci.gov.in/>, a user can avail and access various services such as access the electoral list, apply for voter id card, apply online for corrections in voter's card, tracking form status, view details of Polling booth, Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary constituency, and get the contact details of Booth Level officer, Electoral Registration Officer among other services.

X. Voter Helpline Mobile App (VHA):

Citizen can avail and access various services such as apply for voter id card, apply online for corrections in voter's card, view details of Polling booth, Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary constituency, and get the contact details of Booth Level officer, Electoral Registration Officer among other services. The mobile app is available on both the platform Google Play store & Apple Store.

XI. Persons with Disability Application (Saksham App):

Saksham app is meant for Person with Disabilities. The PwD elector can make requests for marking them as PWD, request for new registration, request for migration, request for correction in EPIC details, request for wheelchair. It utilizes the Accessibility features of mobile phones for voters with blindness and hearing disabilities. The Application is available on the Google Play Store and Apple App store.

XII. BLO App:

BLO App (erstwhile known as GARUDA App) is a dedicated Mobile App for BLOs for performing their tasks digitally. The application is available on both the Google Play & Apple Store. Following are the main features of BLO App:

- a. Checklist/Field Verification of Forms
- b. Collection of Assured Minimum Facility (AMF) and Essential Minimum Facility (EMF)
- c. Capturing of GIS co-ordinates of Polling Stations.
- d. Update of Photos of Polling Stations
- e. Form Submission on behalf of Electors
- f. House to House Verification through online BLO Register

XIII. ERONET:

ERONET is a web-based system for around 10 lakh Electoral officials, in 14 languages and 11 scripts, to handle all processes pertaining to Form 6/6A/7/8. It standardised forms processing, standard database scheme, and a standard template for E-Roll printing. It automates the process of electoral roll management starting from elector registration, field verification of electors, decision support system for Electoral Registration Officers and for providing extensive integrated value-added services. All 28 State and 8 UTs are sharing common infrastructure at National Level. UNPER (Unified National Photo Electoral Roll) is a common database for all State and UTs with data of more than 98 crore electors. The URL of system is <https://officials.eci.gov.in/>

XIV. Service Voter Portal:

The Service Voter Portal is a web-based application to help service voters register to vote and manage their voter

registration details. In India, there are more than 19 lakh registered service voters in the system. The Election Commission of India has separately handled the registration process of service voters. The service voter registration process is a bit different from the general electors. The responsibility of enrollment of a service voter is given to the Record Officer of that service voter. The record office ensures the filling of forms and uploads the XML in the required format on the Service Voter portal. The URL of system is <https://svp.eci.gov.in/>

XV. Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Management System (ETPBMS) for Service Voter:

It is upgraded version of ETPBS having enhanced features and Dashboard & Reporting modules for all stakeholders. The system is use to generate and transmit Postal Ballot through Electronic means to the Service Voters. The system has also been integrated with Department of Post so that Service voter can send his/her Ballot after casting vote, through speed post without paying any charges. Detailed instructions are sent, along with Postal Ballot, to each service elector. On the day of counting, the same system will be used to validate the Postal Ballot received by post to verify whether the received ePostal Ballot is generated by the system or not.

The Postal ballots sent to service electors electronically are called Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballots (ETPBs). The return of ETPB is through postal services. Earlier, the envelopes for postal ballot were forwarded by the CEOs to the Record Officers in order to dispatch polled ETPBs by the service voters through post. Now, the Commission has decided

that the CEOs are not required to send envelopes to the Record Officers for this purpose. The Record Officer/Unit Officer/Commandant or any other competent authority, as the case may be, shall procure the envelopes and provide them to the Service Voters for dispatching their polled ETPBs to the respective Returning Officers. The URL of system is <https://etpbms.eci.gov.in/>

XVI. National Grievances Services Portal:

The Election Commission has developed a National Grievance Service Portal (NGSP). This system is developed in such a manner that in addition to providing redress to the complaints of the Citizens, Electors, Political Parties, Candidates, Media and Election Officials at National, State and District level, it also serves as a common interface for providing services through a common interface.

The application provides for a single interface for handling complaints by the Election officials. All Electoral Officers, District Election Officers, CEO and ECI Officials are part of the system. Thus, issues are directly assigned to the respective user upon registration. The citizen can use this service using <https://voters.eci.gov.in/>

XVII. Election Seizure Management System (ESMS):

In order to ensure inducement free elections, Election Commission of India has embedded technology into the monitoring process through the Election Seizure Monitoring System (ESMS) Mobile App which is proving to be a catalyst, as it brought a wide array of Central and State enforcement agencies together for better coordination and intelligence

sharing. ESMS Mobile App is being used to digitize data for intercepted/Seized items (Cash/Liquor/Drugs/ Precious Metal/Freebies/Other Items) direct from field. This enable stakeholder to get automate desired report in required format; avoid duplicate data entry by Agencies and analysis on received data at CEO Level.

XVIII. IEMS:

Integrated Election Expenditure Monitoring System (IEMS) is a user-friendly, secure online platform which enables Political Parties to submit online prescribed document like Contribution report (From 24A), Annual Audit Account, Election Expenditure. Key features for IEMS are as follows:

- Digitize details of contribution received and submit online
- Realtime compliance status on Dashboard
- Capture Mandatory Info/ Validations/Verification to increase data quality
- Bulk import feature to quickly upload data through Excel format
- Email/ SMS based alerts / acknowledgements to increase compliance
- Aadhaar based e-Sign

XIX. Media Voucher Online (<https://timevoucher.eci.gov.in>)

The Election Commission of India's "Go Green" initiative is a commendable step towards a more environmentally responsible and efficient electoral system. By adopting digital vouchers, the Commission is demonstrating its commitment to sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and modernization. This initiative not only benefits the environment but also enhances

the experience for political parties involved in the electoral process. It sets a positive example for other governmental bodies and organizations to follow, highlighting the importance of embracing digital solutions and eco-friendly practices in a rapidly changing world.

XX. Observer Portal

Observer portal is an online portal for data management of all types of observer's i.e. general observer, police observer and expenditure observes. The deployment schedule of the observer, report submission and many other activities are completed with the help of this portal. The observers also get multiple facilities like filling & submission of reports, notification from the commission, downloads of all the required documents and many more. Parallel to the web portal a mobile app is also provided that includes all the features that are available in the web application.

37. Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs):

- i) EVMs and VVPATs-**The Commission shall deploy Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) along with Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) at every polling station in the General Elections to Legislative Assemblies of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir to enhance the transparency and credibility of the election process as VVPAT allows the voter to verify his/her vote. Arrangements have already been made to ensure availability of adequate number of EVMs and VVPATs for the smooth conduct of elections.
- ii) Awareness on EVM and VVPAT:** Digital outreach for awareness on use of EVMs and VVPATs will be conducted.
- iii) Randomization of EVMs and VVPATs-**EVMs/VVPATs are

randomized twice using “EVM Management System (EMS 2.0)” while being allocated to an Assembly Constituency/segment and then to a polling station ruling out any pre-fixed allocation. First randomization of EVMs and VVPATs is conducted by the District Election Officer to allocate the units Assembly Constituency/Segment wise in the presence of the representatives of the recognized political parties. The lists containing unique IDs of machines are shared with them. After finalization of list of the contesting candidates, second randomization of EVMs and VVPATs will be conducted by the Returning Officers to allocate the units polling station-wise in the presence of the contesting candidates/their representatives. Lists of randomized EVMs/VVPATs are also shared with recognized political parties/contesting candidates.

iv) Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs-After finalization of list of the contesting candidates and second randomization of EVMs and VVPATs, entire process of commissioning (candidate setting) of EVMs and VVPATs is done in the presence of the contesting candidates/their representatives. TV/Monitor will be installed in commissioning hall for simultaneous viewing of symbol loading in VVPATs by candidates/their representatives for greater transparency. After commissioning (candidate setting) of EVMs and VVPATs, in every EVM and VVPAT, mock poll with one vote to each candidate including NOTA is done. Additionally, mock poll of 1000 votes is conducted in 5% randomly selected EVMs, as well as VVPATs. The electronic result is tallied with paper count. Candidates/their representatives are allowed not only to select 5% machines randomly but also to do mock poll.

After commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs, Symbol Loading Units (SLU) will be sealed and kept under the custody of the District Election Officer concerned till Election Petition period. Only reserve SLU (not used for symbol loading) will be returned back to the

authorised BEL/ECIL engineer on P+1 Day. In case of Election Petition, used SLUs will be kept till final disposal of Election Petition.

v) GPS tracking of movement of EVMs and VVPATs- The Commission has instructed the Chief Electoral Officers of all State/ UTs that end-to-end movement of all EVMs and VVPATs including reserve shall be carefully monitored at all times, for which vehicle carrying EVMs and VVPATs shall mandatorily be fitted with GPS tracking system.

vi) Mock Poll on Poll Day-

a) On poll day, 90 minutes before start of actual poll, mock poll is conducted by casting at least 50 votes ensuring that votes are recorded for each of the contesting candidates including **NOTA** at every polling station, in the presence of polling agents of the candidates and the electronic result of the Control Unit and the VVPAT slips count are tallied and shown to them. A certificate of successful conduct of mock poll shall be made by the Presiding Officers in Presiding Officer's Report.

b) Immediately after mock poll procedure, the CLEAR button on Control Unit (CU) is pressed to clear the data of the mock poll and the fact that no votes are recorded in the CU is displayed to the Polling Agents present in the polling stations. The Presiding Officer also ensures that all mock poll slips shall be taken out from the VVPAT slip compartment are stamped "MOCK POLL SLIP" and kept in separate sealed black envelope before the start of actual Poll.

c) After mock poll, EVMs and VVPATs are sealed in the presence of polling agents and signature of polling agents are obtained on seals, before starting actual poll.

vii) Poll Day and Storage of polled EVMs and VVPATs at Strong Rooms-

a) After completion of poll, Presiding Officer shall press the "CLOSE" button of the Control Unit of the EVM so that no further vote can be cast. EVMs and VVPATs are sealed in the respective carrying

cases in the presence of polling agents and signature of polling agents are obtained on seals.

b) On poll day a copy of Form-17C having details of total polled votes, seals (unique number), serial numbers of EVMs and VVPATs used in polling stations is provided to polling agents of candidates.

c) Polled EVMs and VVPATs are escorted back to the strong room for storing in double lock system in the presence of candidates/their representatives under videography. Candidates/Polling Agents are also allowed to follow the vehicles carrying EVMs and VVPATs from polling stations to Reception Centre for the purpose of storing in the Strong Room.

d) Candidates or their representatives can also camp in front of the strong room. These strong rooms are guarded 24x7 in multilayers, with CCTV coverage facilities.

viii) Counting of Votes at Counting Centers-

a) On the day of counting, strong room is opened in the presence of Candidates, their authorised representatives, RO/ARO and ECI Observer under videography.

b) Only Control Units of the polled EVMs are brought to the Counting Hall(s) under security, under CCTV coverage and in the presence of candidates/their agents.

c) Round-wise CUs are brought to the counting tables from Strong Rooms under continuous CCTV Coverage.

d) On the counting day, before retrieving the result from the Control Units, the seals are verified, and unique serial number of CU is tallied before counting agents deputed by the candidates.

e) On counting day, counting agents can verify the polled votes displayed on CU with that of Form-17C. Candidate-wise polled votes are recorded in Part-II of Form-17C and signature of counting agents are obtained thereof.

f) EVMs & VVPATs are stored back in Strong Room in the

presence of candidates/their representatives till the completion of the Election Petition period.

ix) Mandatory Verification of VVPAT Paper Slip-In pursuance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India's Order dated 8th April, 2019, the Commission has mandated VVPAT slips count of Five (5) randomly selected Polling Stations in each Assembly Constituency/Segment of the Parliamentary Constituency of the State/UTs by the Returning Officer, by draw of lot in presence of candidates/their counting agents & ECI Observer, for verification of the result obtained from the Control Unit. This mandatory verification of VVPAT slip count of five (5) polling stations in each Assembly Constituency/Segment shall be in addition to the provisions of Rule 56(D) of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961.

x) None of the Above (NOTA) in EVMs, VVPATs and Postal Ballot: As usual, there will be 'None of the Above' option for the electors. On the BUs, below the name of the last candidate, there will be a button for NOTA option so that voters who do not want to vote for any of the candidates can exercise their option by pressing the button against NOTA. Similarly, on Postal Ballot Papers there will be a NOTA Panel after the name of the last candidate. The symbol for NOTA as given below will be printed against the NOTA Panel.



As part of the SVEEP, there are awareness programmes to bring this option to the knowledge of electors and all other stakeholders.

xi) Photographs of Candidates on EVM Ballot Paper: In order to facilitate the electors in identifying the candidates, ECI has prescribed an additional measure by way of adding provision for printing the

photograph of candidate on the Ballot Paper to be displayed on the EVM (Ballot Unit) and on Postal Ballot Papers. This will help voters to avoid any confusion, which may arise when candidates with same or similar names contest from the same constituency. For this purpose, the candidates are required to submit to the Returning Officer, their recent stamp-size photograph as per the specifications laid down by the Commission.

38. Deployment of Polling Personnel, Randomization and their voting facilities:

- a) Polling parties shall be formed randomly, through the special randomization IT application.
- b) There shall be such randomization for Police personnel and Home Guards also, who are deployed at the polling stations on the poll day.
- c) All persons appointed on election duty who are not able to cast their vote at the polling station where they are enrolled as a voter are entitled to the facility of either an EDC or a Postal Ballot.
- d) In case, they are put on election duty in the same constituency in which they are enrolled as a voter, they are entitled to get an EDC which entitles them to vote at the polling station where they are on duty.

39. Voters' Facilitation Centers for Polling Personnel:-

As per new Rule 18A inserted in the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, now a Voter on Election Duty, shall receive his postal ballot, record his vote thereon and return the same at the Facilitation Center set up by the Returning Officer. Therefore, in view of the extant rule position, all the Voters on Election Duty, deployed in a

constituency where they are not enrolled as a voter, shall cast their votes only at the Facilitation Centers and not in any other manner. They shall sign the declaration in Form 13A in presence of, and have the signature attested by, any Group A or Group B officer or the presiding officer of the polling station at which they are on election duty.

40. Increased Remuneration of Polling Personnel:-

Polling parties on the ground are the epitome of grit and resilience. Their determination to keep the spirit of democracy reigning supreme truly is an inspiration to one and all. Further, in view of the arduous and difficult journey that polling teams have to undertake to ensure that no voter is left behind, ECI has recently doubled the remuneration of polling officials heading for election duty three days or more in advance to reach polling stations located in remote and difficult areas. Till now, the remuneration for polling Officials used to be uniform per diem amount for all polling personnel.

41. Conduct of Officials:

The Commission expects all officials engaged in the conduct of elections to discharge their duties in an impartial manner without any fear or favour. They are deemed to be on deputation to the Commission and shall be subject to its control, supervision and discipline. The conduct of all Government officials who have been entrusted with election related responsibilities and duties would remain under constant scrutiny of the Commission and strict action shall be taken against those officials who are found wanting on any account.

42. COVID Guidelines:

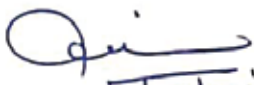
The Commission has issued COVID Guidelines to be followed

during conduct of General Election and Bye Elections which is available at Commission's website at link <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/14492-covid-guidelines-for-general-electionbye-elections-to-legislative-assemblies-reg/>.

43. Schedules of General Elections:

The Commission has prepared the Schedule for holding General Election to the Legislative Assemblies of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir after taking into consideration all relevant aspects, like the Post Flood Situation & Climatic Conditions including Snowfall in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir and factors like Academic calendar, Board Examinations, Major Festivals, prevailing law and order situation in the State/UT, availability of Central Armed Police Forces, time needed for movement, transportation and timely deployment of forces and in-depth assessment of other relevant ground realities.

The Commission, after considering all relevant aspects has decided to recommend to the Hon'ble Governor/Lt. Governor of the State of Haryana and UT of Jammu and Kashmir to issue notifications for the General Election under the relevant provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, as per the **Annexure -I & II**. The Commission seeks the active cooperation, close collaboration and constructive partnership of all the esteemed stakeholders in the electoral process and strives to employ the collective synergies towards Delivering a smooth, free, fair, peaceful, participative and festive General Assembly Elections, 2024 in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir.


16/08/2024

(SANJEEV KUMAR PRASAD)
SECRETARY

Schedule for the General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir

Poll Events	Phase-I (24 ACs)	Phase-II (26 ACs)	Phase-III (40 ACs)
Date of Issue of Gazette Notification	20.08.2024 (Tuesday)	29.08.2024 (Thursday)	05.09.2024 (Thursday)
Last Date of making nominations	27.08.2024 (Tuesday)	05.09.2024 (Thursday)	12.09.2024 (Thursday)
Date for Scrutiny of Nominations	28.08.2024 (Wednesday)	06.09.2024 (Friday)	13.09.2024 (Friday)
Last date for the withdrawal of candidatures	30.08.2024 (Friday)	09.09.2024 (Monday)	17.09.2024 (Tuesday)
Date of Poll	18.09.2024 (Wednesday)	25.09.2024 (Wednesday)	01.10.2024 (Tuesday)
Date of Counting	04.10.2024 (Friday)		
Date before which election shall be completed	06.10.2024 (Sunday)		

***Details of ACs going to poll during the phases enclosed.**

**LIST OF 24 (TWENTY FOUR) ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES OF
JAMMU AND KASHMIR GOING TO POLL IN 1ST PHASE**

Number of AC	Name of Assembly Constituency
32	Pampore
33	Tral
34	Pulwama
35	Rajpora
36	Zainapora
37	Shopian
38	D.H. Pora
39	Kulgam
40	Devsar
41	Dooru
42	Kokernag (ST)
43	Anantnag West
44	Anantnag
45	Srigufwara - Bijbehara
46	Shangus - Anantnag East
47	Pahalgam
48	Inderwal
49	Kishtwar
50	Padder - Nagseni
51	Bhadarwah
52	Doda
53	Doda West
54	Ramban
55	Banihal

**LIST OF 26 (TWENTY SIX) ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES OF
JAMMU AND KASHMIR GOING TO POLL IN 2ND PHASE**

Number of AC	Name of Assembly Constituency
17	Kangan (ST)
18	Ganderbal
19	Hazratbal
20	Khanyar
21	Habbakadal
22	Lal Chowk
23	Channapora
24	Zadibal
25	Eidgah
26	Central Shalteng
27	Budgam
28	Beerwah
29	Khansahib
30	Chrar-i-Sharief
31	Chadoora
56	Gulabgarh (ST)
57	Reasi
58	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi
83	Kalakote - Sunderbani
84	Nowshera
85	Rajouri (ST)
86	Budhal (ST)
87	Thannamandi (ST)
88	Surankote (ST)
89	Poonch Haveli
90	Mendhar (ST)

LIST OF 40 (FORTY) ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR GOING TO POLL IN 3RD PHASE

Number of AC	Name of Assembly Constituency
1	Karnah
2	Trehgam
3	Kupwara
4	Lolab
5	Handwara
6	Langate
7	Sopore
8	Rafiabad
9	Uri
10	Baramulla
11	Gulmarg
12	Wagoora - Kreeri
13	Pattan
14	Sonawari
15	Bandipora
16	Gurez (ST)
59	Udhampur West
60	Udhampur East
61	Chenani
62	Ramnagar (SC)
63	Bani
64	Billawar
65	Basohli
66	Jasrota
67	Kathua (SC)
68	Hiranagar
69	Ramgarh (SC)
70	Samba
71	Vijaypur
72	Bishnah (SC)
73	Suchetgarh (SC)
74	R.S. Pura – Jammu South
75	Bahu
76	Jammu East
77	Nagrota
78	Jammu West
79	Jammu North
80	Marh (SC)
81	Akhnoor (SC)
82	Chhamb

Schedule for the General Election
to the Legislative Assembly of Haryana

Poll Events	Haryana (All 90 Assembly Constituencies)
Date of Issue of Gazette Notification	05.09.2024 (Thursday)
Last Date of making nominations	12.09.2024 (Thursday)
Date for Scrutiny of Nominations	13.09.2024 (Friday)
Last date for the withdrawal of candidatures	16.09.2024 (Monday)
Date of Poll	01.10.2024 (Tuesday)
Date of Counting	04.10.2024 (Friday)
Date before which election shall be completed	06.10.2024 (Sunday)

***Details of ACs going to poll during the phase enclosed.**

LIST OF ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES OF HARYANA	
Number of AC	Name of Assembly Constituency
1	Kalka
2	Panchkula
3	Naraingarh
4	Ambala Cantt.
5	Ambala City
6	Mulana (SC)
7	Sadhaura (SC)
8	Jagadhri
9	Yamunanagar
10	Radaur
11	Ladwa
12	Shahbad (SC)
13	Thanesar
14	Pehowa
15	Guhla (SC)
16	Kalayat
17	Kaithal
18	Pundri
19	Nilokheri (SC)
20	Indri
21	Karnal
22	Gharaunda
23	Assandh
24	Panipat Rural
25	Panipat City
26	Israna (SC)
27	Samalkha
28	Ganaur
29	Rai
30	Kharkhauda (SC)
31	Sonipat
32	Gohana
33	Baroda
34	Julana
35	Safidon
36	Jind
37	Uchana Kalan
38	Narwana (SC)
39	Tohana

40	Fatehabad
41	Ratia (SC)
42	Kalanwali (SC)
43	Dabwali
44	Rania
45	Sirsa
46	Ellenabad
47	Adampur
48	Uklana (SC)
49	Narnaund
50	Hansi
51	Barwala
52	Hisar
53	Nalwa
54	Loharu
55	Badhra
56	Dadri
57	Bhiwani
58	Tosham
59	Bawani Khera (SC)
60	Meham
61	Garhi Sampla-Kiloi
62	Rohtak
63	Kalanaur (SC)
64	Bahadurgarh
65	Badli
66	Jhajjar (SC)
67	Beri
68	Ateli
69	Mahendragarh
70	Narnaul
71	Nangal Chaudhry
72	Bawal (SC)
73	Kosli
74	Rewari
75	Pataudi (SC)
76	Badshahpur
77	Gurgaon
78	Sohna
79	Nuh
80	Ferozepur Jhirka

81	Punahana
82	Hathin
83	Hodal (SC)
84	Palwal
85	Prithla
86	Faridabad NIT
87	Badkhal
88	Ballabgarh
89	Faridabad
90	Tigaon