

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi – 110001.

No. EC/PN/3/2015

Dated : 12th January, 2015

PRESS NOTE

Subject:- Schedule of General Election to the Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi, 2015. – Regarding.

The last Legislative Assembly of National Capital Territory of Delhi was dissolved by the President of India with immediate effect vide his Order No. G.S.R. 773(E), dated 4th November, 2014, issued under clause (b) of sub-Section (2) of Section 6 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 (1 of 1992) read with clause (a) of the Order No. S.O. 410 (E), dated the 16th February, 2014, issued under Article 239AB of the Constitution, in relation to the NCT of Delhi.

2. By virtue of its powers, duties and functions under Article 324 read with Section 5 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act 1991 and Section 15 of Representation of the People Act, 1951 and following the principle laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Reference Case No.1 of 2002 (Reference by the President under Article 143 relating to General Elections to the Gujarat Legislative Assembly on its premature dissolution), the Commission is under mandate to hold elections to constitute the new Legislative Assembly in the National Capital Territory of Delhi within six months from the date of dissolution of the last NCT of Delhi Legislative Assembly, i.e., by the 3rd May, 2015.

(1) Assembly Constituencies

The total number of Assembly Constituencies in the NCT of Delhi and seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, as determined by the Delimitation Commission under the Delimitation Act, 2002 is as under: -

Total No. of Assembly Constituencies	Reserved for SCs	Reserved for STs
70	12	---

(2) Electoral Rolls

The Electoral Rolls of all the Assembly Constituencies in the NCT of Delhi revised with reference to 1.1.2015 as the qualifying date have been finally published on 05.01.2015. The number of electors in the NCT of Delhi is 13085251.

(3) Photo Electoral Rolls

Photo electoral rolls will be used during the forthcoming general election in the NCT of Delhi. The photo percentages in Photo Electoral Rolls is 100%.

(4) Electors Photo Identity Cards (EPIC)

Identification of the voters at the polling booth at the time of poll shall be mandatory. Electors who have been provided with EPIC shall be identified through EPIC. Presently, the EPIC coverage in the NCT of Delhi is 100%.

All the residual electors, if any, are advised to obtain their Elector Photo Identity Cards from the Electoral Registration Officers of their Assembly Constituencies urgently.

In order to ensure that no voter is deprived of his/her franchise, if his/her name figures in the Electoral Rolls, separate instructions will be issued to allow additional documents for identification of voters, if needed.

(5) Polling Stations

There are 11763 Polling Stations in the NCT of Delhi on the date of final publication of electoral rolls.

For the facility of physically challenged persons, instructions have been issued to ensure that all polling stations as far as practicable, are located at ground floor and ramps are provided. Facilitation shall also be provided for locating electors' names in a polling station or a group of polling stations through help lines and facilitation centers.

(6) Basic Minimum Facilities (BMF) at Polling Stations

The Commission has issued instructions to the Chief Electoral Officer of NCT of Delhi to ensure that Polling Stations are equipped with Basic Minimum Facilities (BMF) like drinking water, shed, toilet, ramp for the physically challenged voters and a standard voting compartment etc.

(7) Polling Parties and Randomization

Polling parties shall be formed randomly, through special application software, three-stage randomization will be adopted. First, from a wider district database of eligible officials, a shortlist of a minimum 120% of the required numbers will be randomly picked up. This group will be trained for polling duties. In the second stage, from this trained manpower, actual polling parties as required shall be formed by random selection software in the presence of General Observers. In the third randomization, the polling stations will be allocated randomly just before the polling party's departure. There shall be such randomization for Police Constables and Home guards also, who are deployed at the polling stations on the poll day.

(8) Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)

The poll in the NCT of Delhi will be conducted at all polling stations using EVMs. VVPAT Electronic Voting Machines will be used in 2 (two) Assembly Constituencies. The Commission has already made arrangements to ensure availability of adequate number of EVMs for the smooth conduct of elections. The Commission has issued a new set of instructions with regard to the First Level Check of EVMs, that will be used in the poll in the NCT of Delhi. A two-stage randomization of EVMs will be made. In the first stage, all the EVMs stored in the district storage centre will be randomized by the District Election Officer (DEO) in the presence of the representatives of the recognized political parties for allocation assembly constituency-wise. EVMs will be prepared and set for elections after finalization of the contesting candidates. At this stage also, candidates or their agents/representatives will be allowed to check and satisfy themselves in every manner about the functionality of the EVMs. After the EVMs in a constituency are prepared for the poll by the Returning Officer and the ballot units are fitted with ballot papers, then the EVMs will again be randomized to decide the actual polling stations in which they will be ultimately used. The Second Stage randomization will be done in the presence of Observers, Candidates or their Election Agents.

(9) None of the Above (NOTA) Option in EVMs

In its judgment dated 27th September, 2013 in Writ Petition (C) No. 161 of 2004, the Supreme Court has directed that there should be a "None of

the Above" (NOTA) option on the ballot papers and EVMs. The Court has directed that the Commission should implement it 'either in a phased manner or at a time with the assistance of Government of India'.

On the Balloting Unit, below the name of the last candidate, there will now be a button for NOTA option so that electors who do not want to vote for any of the candidates can exercise their option by pressing the button against NOTA.

The Commission is taking steps to bring this to the knowledge of voters and all other stakeholders and to train all field level officials including the polling personnel about the NOTA option.

(10) Affidavits of candidates – 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, which among other things makes it obligatory for the Returning Officer "to check whether the information required is fully furnished 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 columns. If any column in the affidavit is left blank, the Returning Officer will issue a notice to the candidate to file the affidavit with all columns filled in. After such notice, if a candidate fails to file affidavit complete in all respects, the nomination paper will be liable to be rejected at the time of scrutiny. The Chief Electoral Officer has been directed to brief all Returning Officers about the judgment of the Supreme Court and the Commission's instructions.

(11) Communication plan

The 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 Officer of Delhi to coordinate with the officers of Telecommunication Department in the State headquarters, MTNL, BSNL authorities, the representatives of other leading service providers in Delhi so that network status is assessed and communication shadow areas be

identified. The CEO has also been advised to ensure best communication plan in the NCT of Delhi.

(12) Videography

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 nominations, scrutiny thereof and allotment of symbols, First Level Checking, preparations and storage of Electronic Voting Machines, important public meetings, processions etc. during campaign, process of dispatching of postal ballot papers, polling process in identified vulnerable polling stations, storage of polled EVMs, counting of votes etc. Webcasting, Videography and Digital cameras will also be deployed inside polling booths wherever needed. CDs of video recordings will be available on payment to anyone who wishes to obtain a copy of the same.

(13) Law and Order and Deployment of Forces

Conduct of elections involves elaborate security management. It includes ensuring the security of polling personnel, security at the polling stations, security of polling materials and also the overall security of the election process. Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) are deployed for area domination prior to poll in order to build confidence in the minds of voters specially vulnerable voters viz. weaker section, minorities etc.

The Commission has taken various measures to ensure free and fair elections by creating an atmosphere in which each elector is able to access the polling station without being obstructed or being unduly influenced/intimidated by anybody.

Based on the assessment of the ground situation, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and State Armed Police (SAP) drawn from other States will be deployed during these elections. The CAPF and SAP will be used generally for safeguarding the polling stations and for providing security to the electors and polling personnel at the polling stations on the poll day. Besides, these forces will be used for securing the strong rooms where the EVMs are stored and for securing the counting centers and for other purposes, as required.

The Commission has been issuing instructions from time to time with

regard to the advance preventive measures to be taken by the District Magistrates and Police authorities to maintain the Law & Order and to create atmosphere conducive for the conduct of free and fair elections. The Commission will be constantly monitoring the ground situation closely and will take appropriate measures to ensure peaceful, free and fair polls in these States.

(14) Protection to SC/ST Electors

As per Section 3 (1) (vii) of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, 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 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 the Government of NCT of Delhi to bring these provisions to the notice of all concerned for prompt action.

(15) General Observers

The Commission will deploy General Observers in adequate number to ensure smooth conduct of elections. The Observers will be asked to keep a close watch on every stage of the electoral process to ensure free and fair elections. Their names, addresses within the district/constituency and their telephone numbers will be publicized in local newspapers so that the general public can quickly approach them for any grievance redressal. The Observers will be given a detailed briefing by the Commission before their deployment. Commission may also deploy Police Observers to keep a close watch on law & order situation.

(16) Election Expenditure Monitoring

Comprehensive instructions for the purpose of effective monitoring of the election expenditure of the candidates have been issued, which include formation of flying squads, static surveillance Teams, video surveillance Teams, involvement of Investigation Directorates of Income Tax Deptt. etc. State Excise Departments and police authorities have been asked to monitor production, distribution, sale and storage of liquor and other intoxicants during the election process.

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 that very account. The Investigation Directorate of Income Tax Dept. has been asked to open Air Intelligence unit in the airports located in NCT of Delhi and also to gather intelligence and take necessary action against movement of large sum of money in these states.

Expenditure Observers and Assistant Exp. Observers from Central Government are being appointed to keep close watch on election expenditure of the candidates. Control room and Complaint Monitoring Centre with 24 hours toll free numbers shall be operative during the entire election process. Banks and financial intelligence units of Government of India have been asked to forward suspicious cash withdrawal reports to the election officials.

All candidates must ensure that they file their affidavits in the revised format (Form 26) only. The revised format is available on the ECI website and in Returning Officer's handbook.

(17) Paid News

To deal with the issue of 'Paid News', a mechanism has been laid out with three tier of Media certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC) at District, State and ECI level. Revised comprehensive instructions on 'Paid News' are available on the Commission's Website.

Necessary instructions have been issued to the CEO of the NCT of Delhi to ensure briefing of political parties and Media in the districts about 'Paid News' and the mechanism to check 'Paid News'. The MCMCs have been trained to do their job.

(18) Police Observers

The Commission may deploy IPS officers as Police Observers at district level, in the poll going State depending upon the need and sensitivity. 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.

(19) Micro Observers

In addition to General Observers, the Commission will also deploy Micro Observers to observe the poll proceedings in the polling stations on the poll day in selected critical polling stations. They will be

chosen from Central Government/Central PSUs officials. Micro-Observers will observe the proceedings at the polling stations on the poll day right from the mock poll to the completion of poll and the process of sealing of EVMs and other documents to ensure that all instructions of the Commission are complied with by the Polling Parties and the Polling Agents. They will report to the General Observers directly about any vitiation of the poll proceedings in their allotted polling stations.

(20) Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)

Comprehensive measures for voters' education were taken up during the Special Roll Revision process in the poll going state. These measures will continue during the electoral process. Chief Electoral Officer of the poll-going state has been directed to ensure wide dissemination of election related information and also for carrying out Voter Education campaigns as well as adequate facilitation measures for ensuing wider participation of people in polling.

Model polling stations will also be set up in identified districts. Voter-helplines, Voters' Facilitation Centres, web and SMS based search facilities are active for assistance of voters. There are special facilities in place for those, who are physically challenged or have special needs.

(21) 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.

The Commission has already given instructions that no election related official or Police officer of the rank of Inspector and above shall be allowed to continue in his home district. Besides, instructions have also been issued that election related officials including police officials of Inspector level & above who have completed three years in a district during last four years should be transferred out of that district. Police officers of the rank of

Sub Inspectors who have completed three years in a Sub Division/Assembly Constituency or are posted in their home sub division/assembly constituency shall be transferred out of that Sub Division and the Assembly Constituency.

The Commission has also instructed the Government of NCT of Delhi not to associate any officer with the electoral process against whom charges have been framed in a court of law in any case.

(22) District Election Plan

The District Election Officers have been asked to prepare a comprehensive district election plan in consultation with District Police Officials and Sector Officers including the route plan and communication plan for conduct of elections. These plans will be vetted by the Observers taking into account vulnerability mapping exercise and mapping of critical polling station in accordance with Election Commission of India's extant instructions.

(23) Model Code of Conduct

The Model Code of Conduct comes into effect immediately from now onwards. All the provisions of the Model Code will apply to the whole of poll going State (NCT of Delhi) and will be applicable to all candidates, political parties, the State Government. The Model Code of Conduct shall be applicable to the Union Govt. for the State concerned.

The Commission has made elaborate arrangements for ensuring the effective implementation of the MCC Guidelines Any violations 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 understanding/interpretation.

(24) Photo Voter Slips

To facilitate the voters to know where he/she is enrolled as a voter at a particular polling station and what is his/her serial number in the Electoral roll, the Commission has directed that voter slip along with Photo (wherever present in the roll) will be distributed to all enrolled voters by the District Election Officer. It has also been directed that the said voter slip

should be in the languages in which electoral roll is published for that Assembly Constituency.

(25) Complaint Redressal Mechanism – Call Centre and Website Based

The poll going State shall have a complaint Redressal mechanism based on website and call centre. The number of call centre is 1950, which is a toll free number. The URL of the complaint registration website will be announced by the Chief Electoral Officer separately. Complaints can be registered by making calls to the toll free call centre numbers or on the website. Action will be taken within time limit on all complaints. Complainants will also be informed of the action taken by SMS and by the call centre. Complainants can also see the details of the action taken on their complaints on the website.

(26) Schedule of Election

The Commission has prepared the schedule for holding General Election to the Legislative Assembly of National Capital Territory of Delhi after taking into consideration all relevant aspects, like the climatic condition, academic calendars, festivals, prevailing law and order situation in the State, availability of Central Police Forces and timely deployment of forces, and assessment of other ground realities.

The Commission, after considering all relevant aspect, has decided to recommend to the Lieutenant Governor of the National Capital Territory of Delhi to issue notification for the General Election to the Legislative Assembly of National Capital Territory of Delhi under the relevant provision of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The election schedule is appended at **Annexure-1.**



**(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)
SECRETARY**

Schedule of General Election to the Legislative Assembly of NCT of Delhi- 2015

Date of Notification	14.01.2015 (Wednesday)
Last date of making nomination	21.01.2015 (Wednesday)
Date of Scrutiny	22.01.2015 (Thursday)
Last date of withdrawal	24.01.2015 (Saturday)
Date of Poll	07.02.2015 (Saturday)
Date of Counting	10.02.2015 (Tuesday)
Date before which the Election Shall be Completed	12.02.2015 (Thursday)