

Most Immediate
Bye-Election to 31-Huzurabad A.C.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, TELANGANA
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (ELECTIONS) DEPARTMENT

5th Floor, North Block, Buddha Bhavan, Tank Bund Rd., Secunderabad – 03

Memo No.3193/Elecs.A/A2/2021-5

Dated:05.10.2021

Sub: Sub: Elections – Model Code of Conduct - Bye-Election to 31-Huzurabad Assembly Constituency, Karimnagar district of Telangana State – Scheduled to be held on 30.10.2021 (Saturday) – Randomization of Polling Personnel and Counting Personnel – Dignity of Polling Staff – Instructions - Regarding.

- Ref: 1. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST/2008/EPS, dated 19.09.2008.
2. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST-DPS/2013-EPS, dated 18.03.2014.
3. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST/2014-EPS, dated 04.03.2014.
4. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST/2014-EPS, dated 10.03.2014.
5. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST/2014-EPS, dated 12.03.2014.
6. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST/2014-EPS, dated 28.03.2014.
7. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.464/INST/2014-EPS, dated 04.04.2014.
8. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.470/2007/PLN-I, dated 29.08.2007.
9. ECI, New Delhi Lr.No.470/INST/2013-EPS, dated 02.05.2013.
10. ECI, New Delhi, Press Note No.ECI/PN/83/2021, dated 28.09.2021.

Copies of the references 1st to 9th cited are enclosed herewith. The Collector & District Election Officers of Karimnagar and Hanumakonda are informed that the Election Commission of India has issued detailed instructions regarding dignity of Polling Staff, vide reference 2nd cited; randomization of Polling Personnel / Police Personnel / Female Polling Personnel and sealing of strong room and scrutiny of Form-17A, vide references 1st to 7th cited; and randomization of counting officials, vide references 8th and 9th cited.

2. They are, therefore, requested to follow the said instructions of the Election Commission of India scrupulously during the ensuing Bye-election to 31-Huzurabad Assembly Constituency, Karimnagar district to be held on 30.10.2021 without giving room for any complaints.

Dr. SHASHANK GOEL
CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER &
E.O.SPL. CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To

The Collectors & District Election Officers of Karimnagar and Hanumakonda (w.e)

Copy to :

The Director General of Police, Telangana, Hyderabad (w.e)

The Commissioners of Police, Karimnagar and Warangal (w.e)

Sri D. Chiranjeevi, P.M. (IT) / Sri T.V.V.N. Sudhakar, Dy. P.M (IT), SLA, O/o CEO.

(with a request to coordinate with districts on randomization software)

SF/SC

// FORWARDED :: BY ORDER //


ASSISTANT SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT


भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

EPABX 011-23717391-98
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निर्वाचन सदन
अशोक रोड, नई दिल्ली- 110001
Nirvachan Sadan,
Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001.

No. 464/INST-DPS/2013 -EPS

Dated:- 18th March, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All the States and Union Territories.

**Subject: General Election to the Lok Sabha, 2014 – Dignity of Polling Staff –
Regarding.**

Madam / Sir,

In spite of adoption of automation and technology in various activities, the conduct of election in our country primarily requires human intervention at every stage. The personnel involved in the conduct of election shoulder their duty in demanding situations. Therefore, the least that can be done is to treat them with propriety and to provide for certain basic amenities. The need for human resource management in conduct of election can never be over emphasised.

2. Though instructions have been issued over a period of time that cover almost all the major concerns and aspects of human resource management, the Commission has observed with great concern that still there are gaps in actual implementation of these instructions. The Commission desires that facilitation of the polling personnel should be an integral part of election management plan. Starting from the top level in the field to the last Polling Personnel, the well-being of personnel related to conduct of election should receive adequate attention.

3. In continuation of the Commission's instructions issued vide its letters listed in Annexure-I on the subject mentioned against each, the following instructions on appropriate treatment of personnel engaged in conduct of election shall be followed strictly:

Nodal Officer

While preparing the district machinery for the conduct of election, the District Election Officer shall identify a senior officer as the Nodal Officer to coordinate and supervise polling personnel welfare measures on the lines of a District Welfare Officer, wherever prevalent. Similarly, each Returning Officer shall identify a Nodal Officer for the above purpose. The name and designation, office and residential address, telephone numbers including mobile number and e-mail ID of the nodal officer shall be mentioned in the district / constituency election management plan. The contact numbers should also be brought to the notice of the polling personnel drafted for election duty.

Seniority

The Commission has been receiving representations regarding assigning of election duty without due consideration to the Seniority of personnel drawn from different Departments/ Organisations. There were litigations filed in this regard by few aggrieved personnel in the past and directions of various Courts are also available in the matter. The Commission desires that while assigning election duties to various officials, their seniority should be taken into account and it should be ensured that a senior official is not put on duty under an official who is junior to him/ her. The existing instructions in the matter are explanatory and should be implemented in letter and spirit without any deviation.

Dispatch Centre & Receiving Centre Arrangement

The Commission is greatly concerned with chaotic situation at the dispatch centres and receiving centres that remains a persistent problem. The dispatch centres for issuing polling material and reception centres for polled election materials shall be managed efficiently and professionally by senior officials. Arrangements for health care and refreshment should be made without disturbing the distribution and receiving of election materials. The polling personnel shall not be held up unnecessarily at the reception centre after they have handed over all polling material. Once EVMs and other documents are handed over, the polling staff shall be relieved from the duty without any delay. Advance measures should be in place to

ensure that transport facility including public bus service etc. is available for them to reach their home, at the earliest.

Food & Civic Amenities

The polling personnel should not be put into difficulty for lack of provision in remote areas for getting their food. An exercise shall be undertaken through Sector Officers as to how such problems can be sorted out. It is relevant to note that it may not be desirable on the part of polling personnel to venture out for the sake of getting food in remote locations. It is also undesirable to avail the local hospitality as that may lead to complaints. In some States there is a practice of providing a Gr.-IV staff in the polling team who cooks food and serves the polling party. The DEO shall review the situation and ensure that proper alternative arrangements are made depending on the local conditions and limitations.

Health Care

The health care of the polling personnel is another important concern. At the training centre as well as in dispatch / reception centres, there should be separate arrangements for providing health care/first-aid assistance to the polling personnel. Medical staff/para-medical staff shall be stationed in those locations to be available in case of any requirement.

Every polling party shall be supplied with oral rehydration salts for their own use as well as for any voter needing the same due to heat-stroke. A hand-bill on 'Do's and Don'ts' in case of heat stroke may be prepared **and supplied to each of the polling parties**. A small First-Aid kit containing basic medicines with user instructions should be provided to each polling party. In this regard, the DEO should prepare a standard list of medicine and user instructions in consultation with the District Chief Medical Officer, in English/ Hindi/ Regional Languages as the case may be, for the benefit of polling personnel.

The DEO shall requisition the services of para-medical staff from the offices of the Chief District Medical Officers and one such Para Medical Staff member shall accompany every mobile Patrol Unit and Sector Officer in their vehicles along with essential heat-stroke medicines. Such mobile patrol units shall touch every polling station once in every hour so that instant medical assistance would be available to any voter needing such help besides the first aid facilities given to the polling parties.

Transportation

A senior officer should supervise the arrangement made for providing transport vehicles for the travel of the polling personnel. The movement of the polling personnel/security forces shall be tracked closely and a confirmatory report should be obtained through Sector Officer on the safe arrival of the polling personnel at the polling stations.

Payments

Arrangements for prompt payment of remuneration etc. should be made by all DEOs. Apart from this, the system of making ex-gratia / compensation payment in case of an unfortunate event of injury or death of polling personnel requires prompt disposal. Computerized data-base of Polling Personnel may be updated with the Savings Bank Account Numbers of all Polling Personnel, in this regard.

Exemption

The Commission has exempted certain offices / institutions for the purposes of election duty in view of the essential nature of duties / services discharged by the institutions. Further, physically challenged persons are not to be deployed for polling duty. There are guidelines to engage female employees for polling duty. Engagement of child labour in election related work is strictly not acceptable. These instructions should be kept in view at all times to avoid violation of relevant Acts enacted for this purpose.

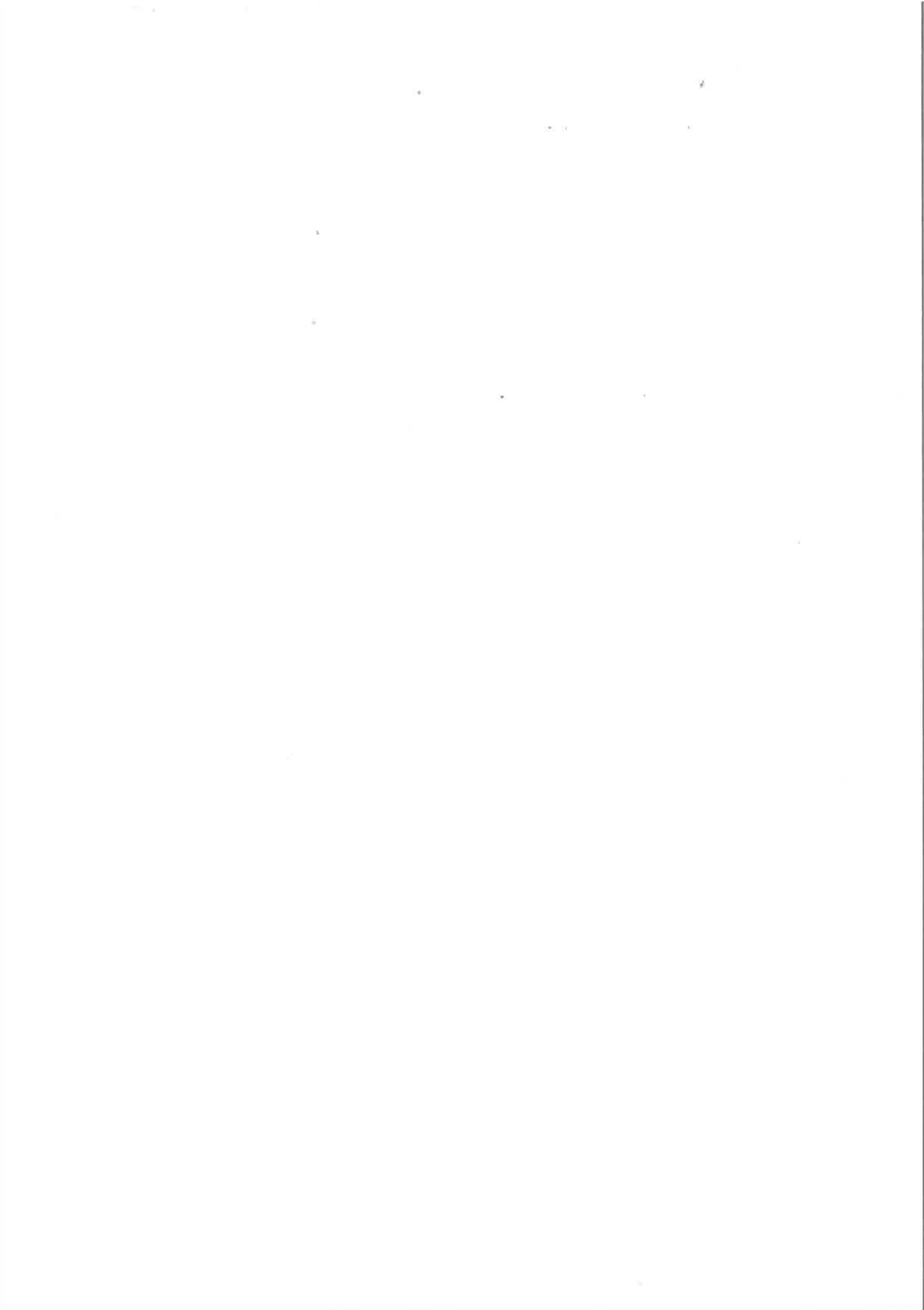
Please acknowledge receipt of the letter.

Yours faithfully,


(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)
SECRETARY

Annexure-I

464/INST/2008/EPS	12.09.2008	HR Issues in the Polling Personnel Management.
576/3/2004/JS-II	09.08.2004	Assigning election duties - Seniority of officials to be taken into consideration.
458/4/96/PS-IV/Vol-II	22.07.1996	Provision of Minimum Facilities to Pregnant Women Polling Personnel During Poll.
464/INST/2008/EPS	11.02.2009	General Election to Lok Sabha, 2009 - Drafting of Teachers / Women / Pregnant Women as Polling Personnel.
464/INST/2008/EPS	23.12.2008	Drafting of Physically Challenged Personnel for Election Duty.
464/Inst./2004-PLN-I	06.03.2004	General Election to Lok Sabha, 2004- Deployment of Officers and Staff.
464/INST/2008-EPS	26.12.2008	General Election to Lok Sabha, 2009 - Deployment of Officers and Staff.
464/INST/2004-PLN-I	24.03.2004	-- Requisitions of Staff and Vehicles.
464/Inst/2005/PLN-I	13.04.2005	Exemption from Election Duty.
464/INS/2007-PLN-I	11.12.2007	Exemption from Election Duty.
464/INST/2009/EPS	1.05.2009	Engagement of Child Labour in the Election Process.
464/INST/2009/EPS	9.01.2009	Fixing of Uniform Rate of Remuneration for Payment to Staff Deployed on Poll / Counting Duty and for Provision of Minimum Facilities.
218/4/96/PLN-IV	9.02.1996	Payment of 100% TA / DA as Advance to Persons Put on Election Duty.
218/6/2009/EPS	17.02.2009	Payment of Ex-gratia Compensation to the Families of Polling Personnel Who Die or Sustain Injuries While on Election Duty.
464/INST/2013-EPS	18.10.2013	Payment of Ex-gratia Compensation to the Families of Polling Personnel Who Die or Sustain Injuries While on Election Duty.



ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

NO. 464/INST/2008/EPS

DATED: 19th September, 2008

To,

1. The Chief Secretaries of All States/UTs.
2. The Chief Electoral Officers of All States/UTs.

Subject: Drafting of Polling Personnel for election duty – Randomization of Polling Personnel.

Sir,

It has always been endeavor of the Commission to ensure free and fair elections and towards that end it has issued instructions from time to time on various aspects of election process including formation of polling parties. The duties discharged by polling personnel in the conduct of elections are of vital importance. They are the face of the Commission in the minds of electorate, polling agents, media and the candidates etc. Therefore, sufficient care is needed to draft and deploy such personnel and formation of unbiased polling parties in the interest of free and fair election. Accordingly, the Commission lays down the following instructions for formation of polling parties:-

- (i) A District Election Officer-wise database, of all eligible poll personnel shall be maintained in electronic format, which can facilitate computerized randomization. All relevant particulars like Name, Sex, Place (constituency) of residence, work place, Home Constituency, Designation, Office and Department/Institutions should be entered.
- (ii) The database shall contain, distinctly and separately, the State Govt. employees including Public Sector Undertakings, teachers etc. who can be employed as polling personnel.
- (iii) Similarly the data base shall distinctly and separately contain all Central Govt. employees including PSU, Bank, etc.
- (iv) Separate database shall be prepared of Retired Government of India and State Government officials as well as of Members of NCC & NSS [and reputed NGOs, if & as approved by the Commission]. They shall

be used in specified manner only with express prior approval of the Commission.

- (v) Unless otherwise advised, the polling parties shall be formed out of the State Govt. employees. The Central Govt. employees including PSUs and Banks, etc. shall be utilized for selecting suitable persons as Micro Observers.
- (vi) Presiding Officers and Polling Officers shall be classified on the basis of scale of pay and their post and rank. As far as practicable, Gazetted Officers will be deployed as Presiding Officers and failing that officials who are working in supervisory capacity only should be deployed as Presiding Officers. The Presiding Officer should be of higher scale/grade in comparison to other Polling Officers of that formation.
- (vii) In view of the recent instructions regarding issue of postal ballot papers, Assembly Constituency No., Part No., Sl. No. of each and every official shall be indicated. In case, he is not a voter, in the process of continuous updation he should be enrolled in the electoral roll of Assembly Constituency concerned and Elector Photo Identity Card issued. Similarly, the personnel meant for being appointed as Micro observers should invariably be enrolled as voter and Elector Photo Identity Card issued. Therefore, persons put on polling duties should invariably be voters. Further, no person will be assigned polling duties in an assembly constituency in which he is posted or in which he resides or the constituency, which is his home constituency.
- (viii) In order to avoid any allegation of collusion among the polling personnel in favour of any candidate or political party and to instill confidence in the minds of Political Parties and candidates about free and fair elections, proper mix of polling personnel drawn from different offices and departments at the time of formation of a polling party should be ensured. Two officials of the same serial group/category should not be put together. Further, two members of the polling party should not be from the same department (in case of school teachers, they should not be from the same school).
- (ix) Polling personnel database should include personnel both from the State Government departments as well as the Central government offices. Central Government employees should be utilized for micro observer duties to be decided by Observers. Polling personnel to be posted within the district unless specifically directed otherwise.

Following procedure should be adopted for formation of polling parties:-

- (x) Database & software should be prepared and developed by the CEO and distributed among DEOs. District Election Officers should obtain a complete database of officers eligible for polling party duties from respective authorities. All relevant information should be entered into an electronic database of the computerized randomization application software approved by the CEO for that state.
- (xi) From this full database of officers, a list of 120% of the required number of polling persons should be generated (including reserve) randomly, using the software. This is the first of the three-stage randomization process. Presence of observers is not required at this stage. It should be noted that this randomized list is DEO-wise and not at any other level like subdivision, tehsil, block, assembly constituency etc. This is only to identify and select the officials that would be given training for poll duties as presiding and polling officers in whichever constituency of that district. In no case, at this stage, the identity of the assembly constituency to which the polling personnel are likely to be deployed will be known. All that the polling personnel will know at this stage is whether he (or she) is a presiding officer or a polling officer and the venue and time of trainings.
- (xii) The second stage of randomization exercise should be done in the presence of the Observers deployed in the constituency. At this stage actual polling parties shall be formed on random basis using the randomization software. **The Observer must be present at this stage.** At this stage though the actual polling station will not be known, however, the Assembly Constituency and the team composition may be known. This randomization should not take place before 6 or 7 days from the day of poll. For the purpose of serving the appointment letters, the DEO can use the services of the sponsoring departments/ authority and/or organize a training programme of poll personnel in team formation on that date when final briefing can be given and appointment letters issued to them. It will also facilitate Postal Balloting.
- (xiii) The third stage of randomization exercise shall take place at the time of dispersal of polling parties when the allocation of polling stations to the polling parties will be done. This third stage randomization for final allocation of Polling Stations to each Polling Party should also be done in the presence of Observers. The actual polling station allotted to individual polling personnel is to be disclosed just before the polling party actually leaves the dispersal centre.

(xiv) In order to ensure that above instructions are complied with strictly, the Commission directs that the District Election Officer shall furnish to the Election Commission through the Observers and separately to the Chief Electoral Officer of the State/UT a certificate to the following effect immediately after the polling parties have been formed for an election:-

“Certified that:-

(I) The polling parties have been formed by a proper mix of officials drawn from different offices and departments, in presence of Observers and

(II) The officers have been drawn from the State Government departments as well as from the State Public Undertaking etc. as far as practicable.

(III) For the purpose of making polling parties complete data base of all eligible employees in the district has been used.”

(xv) It is clarified that the entire randomization exercise except the first stage must invariably be done in the presence of the Observers sent to the constituency. If, by any chance, the forming of the polling parties through randomization (second stage) has been done in the absence of the Observers, then the 2nd stage randomization exercise should be done afresh in the presence of Observers and compliance report should be submitted in this regard. The Observers should make a special reference to the randomization exercise observed by them in their constituencies while submitting the report.

Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,

(SHANGARA RAM)
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

By Speed Post/Gamj

19

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001.

F. NO. 464/INST/2014-EPS

Dated:- 4th March, 2014

To, The Chief Electoral Officer of All States/Union Territories.

Subject: General Election to the Lok Sabha 2014 – Randomization of Police Personnel – Regarding.

Madam,

I am directed to state that the randomization of Police personnel at the Polling Station on the day of poll may be done in the following manner:

- a) Those Police Constables / Home Guards coming from outside the District can be deployed without randomization.
- b) In case of Constables / Home Guards of the same District, it would be ensured that they shall be deployed in the Polling Stations falling outside the area of the Police Station where they are presently posted.
- c) As far as practicable, randomization should be done in such a manner that they are posted in the same Parliamentary Constituency where they are enrolled as voters to allow them to exercise their franchise through EDC.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
JIMIT MUKHERJEE
SECRETARY

Pl. communicate
to all the DE os / SPs /
D.G. P. for me.

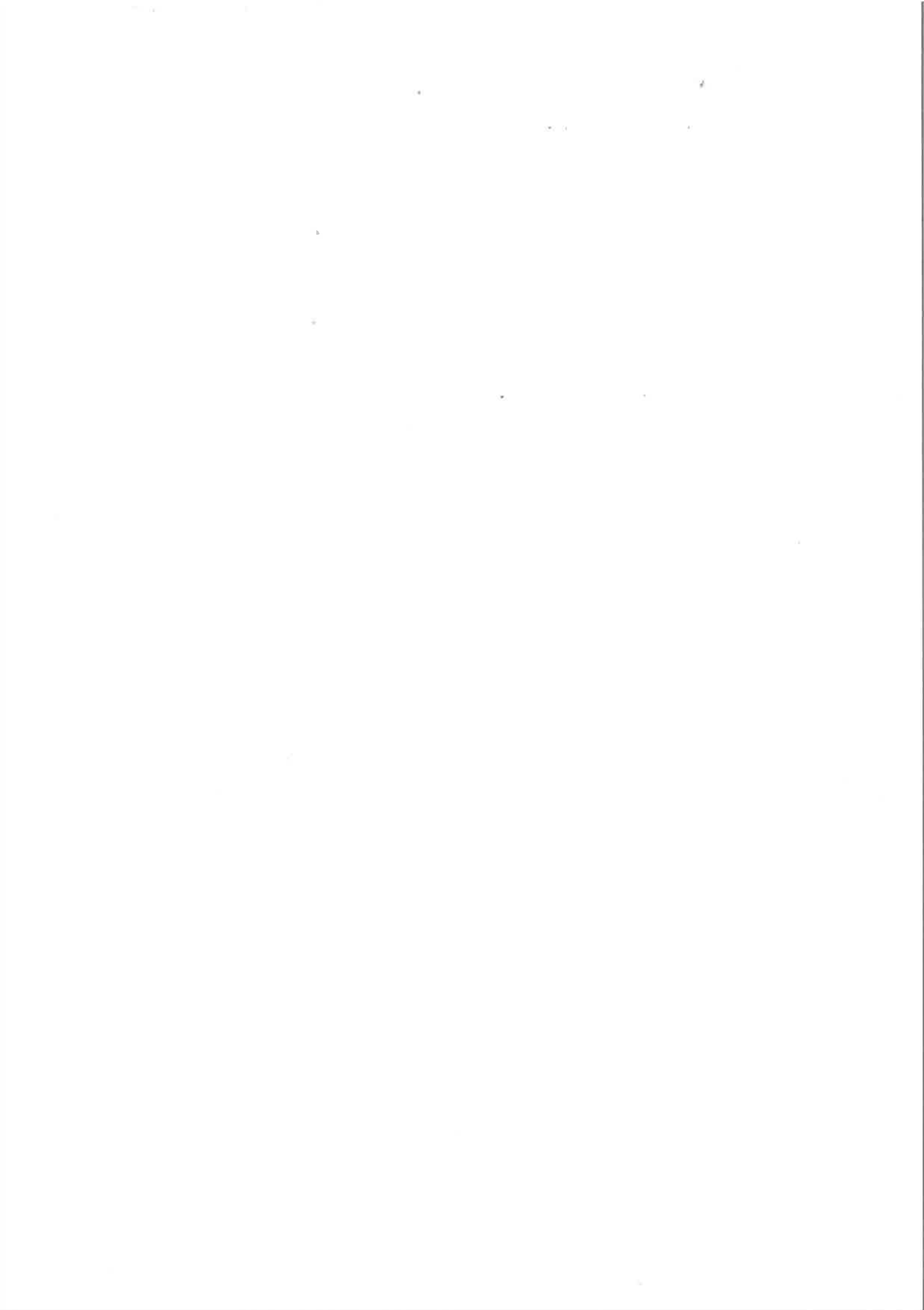
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ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No. 464/INST/2014-EPS

Dated:- 10th March, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers,

Of all the States/UTs.

Sub: General Election to Lok Sabha, 2014 – Drafting of Polling Personnel –
Randomisation of female polling personnel – regarding.

Sir/Madam,

Please refer to the Election Commission's letter dated 19-09-2008 regarding randomisation of polling personnel wherein it has been instructed that the appointments of Polling Personnel at the Polling Stations are made by randomisation and as per the existing instructions no person (neither Male nor Female) is to be appointed in the Constituency in which he or she resides or works and also in the Constituency which is his/her home Constituency. The Polling party is required to reach the polling station assigned to it latest by the late evening of the day before polling, all polling personnel including women are required to stay overnight at the Polling Station for security and safe custody of Polling material.

During the CEOs' conference held on 10th February, 2014, this issue was also raised and it was proposed to adopt randomization process during ensuing General Elections to Lok Sabha for the appointment of female personnel in such a way that the female polling personnel can reach the polling station at least 2 hours before the start of polling and assume their duties well in time. For this purpose, the Commission directs that the randomisation of female polling staff should be done under following four categories:

First category:- In completely rural ACs, female staff shall be randomized manually in such a way that they are not posted in the Gram Panchayat where they have been residing working.

Second category:- In the Urban areas having two or more urban Assembly Constituencies, the randomization of female staff shall be done inter-Assembly Constituency wise among these ACs.

Third category:- In the Urban ACs whose contiguous ACs are Rural randomization shall be done within the same urban Assembly Constituency in such a way that the female staff is not posted at the polling station location/ward where she has been residing or working.

Fourth category:- In the Urban-Rural mixed ACs whose Contiguous ACs are rural randomization for rural areas shall be done in such a way that a female staff would not get posted in the Gram Panchayat where she has been residing or she has been working and in urban areas female staff shall not be posted in the polling station location where she has been residing. However, it must be ensured that female staff should not get posted outside the block when she has been residing or working.

Yours faithfully,


(Sumit Mukherjee)
Secretary

209
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- 23

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001.

No.464/ INST / 2014-EPS

Dated: 12th March, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers
of the all States/UTs.

GI subject: General Election to the Lok Sabha, 2014 – Drafting of Polling Personnel for
election duty – Randomization of Polling Personnel – regarding.

Sir/Madam,

The Commission has laid down the procedure for formation of polling parties vide its instruction No. 464/INST/2008/EPS dated 19th September, 2008 so that sufficient care is taken to draft and deploy such personnel and formation of unbiased polling parties in the interest of free and fair elections.

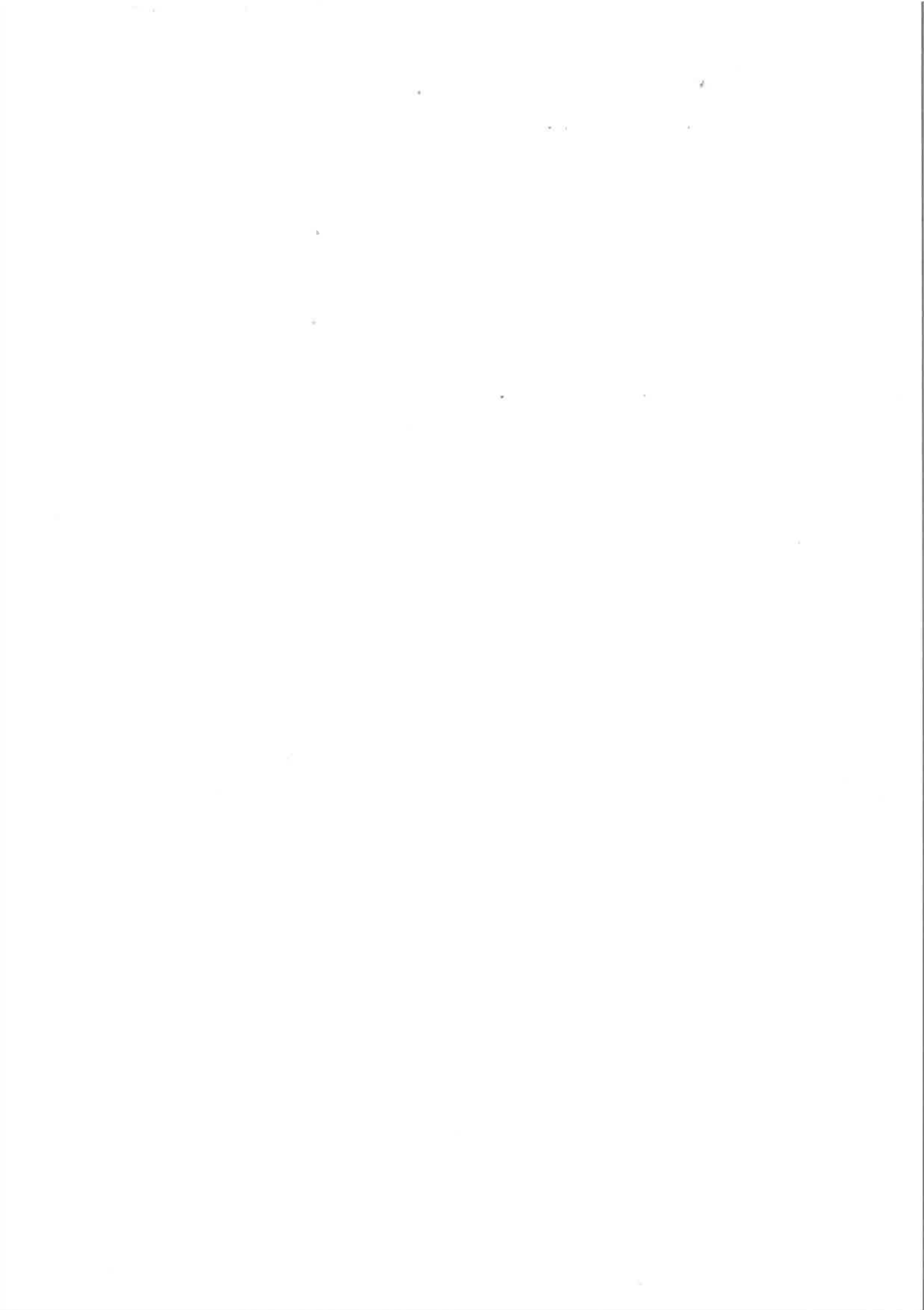
2. In the recently held CEOs Conference, some CEOs proposed for undertaking third randomization of polling personnel on P-2 day (in place of P-1 day) in presence of the Observers to ensure timely service of the results/orders of the randomization and dispatch the teams to the polling stations. The matter was considered by the Commission and it has been decided that –

- (i) The Randomization can be done on P-2 day in presence of the Observer.
- (ii) The result of randomization, along with appointment orders shall be printed in presence of the Observer.
- (iii) The same shall be sealed in separate covers (AC wise, and sector wise) with the signature of the Observer.
- (iv) The sealed covers shall be sent to the AROs of the respective Assembly Segments.
- (v) The ARO shall open the covers only on the P-1 day at the dispatch center in the presence of Observer, if the latter is present there.

2. The same may be brought to notice of all concerned.

Yours faithfully,

(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)
SECRETARY



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

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

No.464/INST/2014-EPS

Dated 28th March, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All the States & Union Territories.

Subject: Drafting of Polling Personnel for Election Duty – Second Randomisation of
Polling Personnel – Regarding.

Madam / Sir,

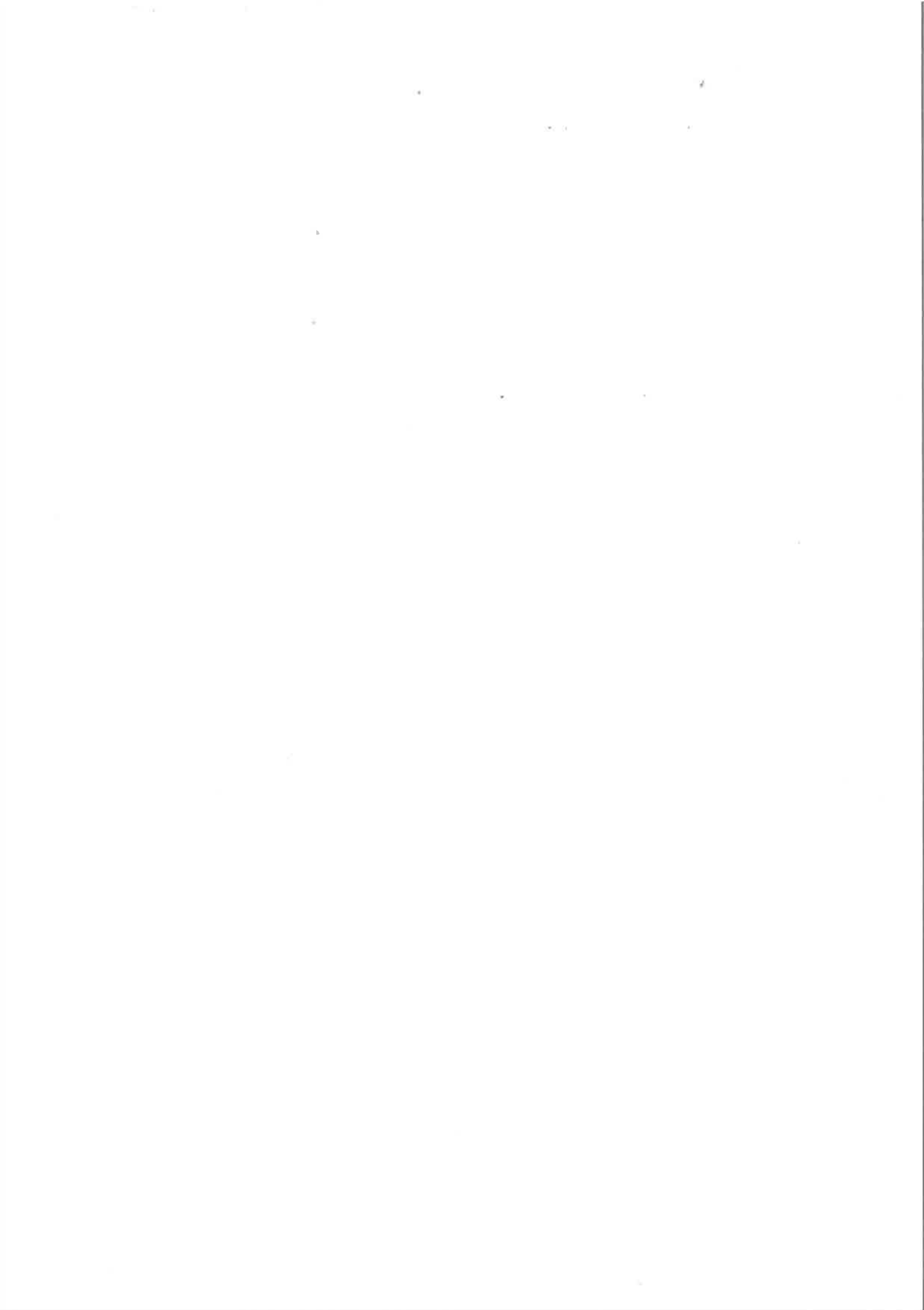
Please refer to the Commission's instructions No.464/INST/2008/EPS, dated 19th September, 2008 regarding drafting of polling personnel, wherein the Commission directed that second randomisation of polling personnel should not take place before six or seven days from the day of poll.

2. The Commission has reviewed the matter and decided to permit the second randomisation of polling personnel as soon as after the completion of scrutiny of nomination papers, for effective and systematic implementation of the Commission's instructions for issuance of Election Duty Certificate (EDC) and Postal Ballot (PB). The second randomisation of polling personnel should be done in the presence of the Observer. The second training of polling personnel may be conducted as per the convenience of the Returning Officer.

This may be brought to the notice of all concerned. Please acknowledge receipt of the letter.

Yours faithfully,


(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)
SECRETARY



Election Urgent
By Fax/Camp Bag

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110 001.

No 464/INST/2014-EPS

Dated: 4th April, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
all States and Union Territories.

Sub: Presence of Observer during randomization of polling personnel, sealing of strong room, scrutiny of Form-17A and during counting.

Sir / Madam,

The Commission has been issuing instructions on the subject cited from time to time. In this context, the presence of Observers during vital events such as randomization of polling personnel, sealing of strong room, scrutiny of Form-17A and during counting, has been prescribed vide Commission's instructions in the past and have been reiterated from time to time.

It has been brought to the notice that in some Parliamentary Constituencies, there will be a mismatch in number of observers available and the locations in which such vital activities as referred to above are taken place as there is no uniformity in terms of locations of strong rooms/counting centres, district headquarters, RO's headquarters, etc. To handle this situation, over and above the existing instructions of the Commission, the following instructions are issued which shall be followed depending on the requirement of the parliamentary constituency/district by the ROs/DEOs and the Observers collectively:-

1. **Randomization of polling personnel:-**

The instructions regarding randomization have already been issued. Depending on the number of observers available within the constituency, the DEO/RO concerned in consultation with the observers will decide the location where such randomization will take place. In the process it shall be ensured that one of the observer remain present at

the time of any such randomization takes place. In order to ensure compliance to this, wherever necessary, the ARO may bring the software/database for randomization in the presence of observer and take the list of polling personnel in the sealed cover.

2. **Sealing of strong room:-**

Wherever the number of strong rooms exceed the number of observers, following action shall be taken:-

In case of more than one strong rooms in the same premises or in the same town, the sequencing of closure or sealing of strong room can be coordinated in such a way that one of the Observer remain present at the time of closing of each strong room without any deviation. In case strong room locations are distributed in the constituency, observers of the PC and the DEO/RO will, in advance, decide which observer will remain present at the time of closure of which strong room. The information should also be made available to the contesting candidates or their election agents in advance. Even after making these arrangements, if the number of observers is still less than the number of strong rooms, the RO and Observer concerned shall authorize one of the Micro Observers to remain present as a representative of the Observer. In such case, the RO and observer have to take due care to select a most suitable micro observer from the list of micro observers and give advance information to all concerned. In such cases, the DEO/RO shall ensure that one senior officer alongwith ARO of the district administration remain present. In such cases, a joint report alongwith videography will be submitted by the ARO and Micro Observer jointly to the RO and Observer. After getting joint report from ARO/Micro Observer, the RO and the Observer shall record their satisfaction about the process of closure of strong room. Similarly, candidates or their agents may also have the problem of not being available in all strong rooms. In such a situation, the candidates may be allowed to send an authorized representative who will have the authority of the candidate in writing, also carry a photo ID card and who should be a voter within the concerned parliamentary constituency.

3. **Scrutiny of Form-17A:-**

The scrutiny of Form-17A alongwith other documents will be taken up at 11:00 A.M. on the day following the day of poll at the headquarters of the Returning Officer and in presence of Observer. All contesting candidates shall be given an advance notice in

writing under proper acknowledgement so that they or their agent/representatives remain present. An assembly constituency wise schedule for taking up scrutiny shall be prepared and it will be ensured that all documents with regard to assembly segments where strong room is at the place different from the RO's headquarters are brought by the ARO to RO headquarters in time to scrutiny to be undertaken.

4. **Security of Strong Room:**

The strong room shall be opened at the time so appointed in the presence of candidates and their representatives after verifying the intactness of the seal. After taking out copies of Forms 17C and the packets containing Forms 17A and marked copies of electoral roll in respect of such polling stations (where polling has been more than the percentage as prescribed by the Commission after the end of poll) for scrutiny, the strong room shall be duly closed and sealed after making entry in the log-book and obtaining the signatures of all candidates or their representatives as may be present. The whole process shall be videographed.

5. **Transportation of Form 17-A, Marked Copy of the Electoral Roll, Presiding Officer Diary Form 17-C etc.**

All relevant papers required for scrutiny of Form 17-C shall be transported from strong room to RO headquarter under proper police escort along with executive magistrate. Candidates and their representatives shall be allowed to follow the vehicle transporting relevant papers. In this regard proper information about the travel plan should be given to the candidates/their Election Agents or their authorized representatives.

6. During the process of scrutiny the candidates / their election agents or their authorized representatives may watch the proceedings so that they can get a clear view of the proceedings but, are not able to handle the election papers/material or interfere with the proceedings.

7. **Post-scrutiny procedure :**


After scrutiny, the Forms 17A, 17C and marked copies of electoral roll for each polling station, other documents and material shall be re-sealed with the seal of the Returning Officer. The candidates or their election agents/representatives present, may also be allowed to affix their seal or signature thereon, if they so desire. These sealed envelopes shall then be kept back in the strong room from which they were taken out.

This shall also be done in the presence of the candidates or their election agents/representatives. The room shall then be sealed with the seal of the Returning Officer. The candidates or their representatives may also affix their seals/signatures thereon if they so desire.

8. After scrutiny of Forms 17A, 17C and other documents and materials, the Returning Officer and Observer shall make necessary recommendations to the Commission for repoll, wherever considered necessary, giving reasons polling station wise. In case of any difference of opinion, the same shall be reflected indicating the reason for the same in their respective reports.

This may be brought to the notice of all concerned.

Yours faithfully,


(Sumit Mukherjee)
Secretary

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

K.N.BHAR
UNDER SECRETARY

No: 470/2007/PLN-I

Date: 29th August 2007

To,

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States and Union Territories

Subject: Counting of votes for General/Bye-elections to the House of People/State
Legislative Assembly-ensuring transparency –regarding

Sir/Madam,

The Commission has issued detailed instructions regarding the arrangements for counting centers and management of counting process including the security arrangements vide its order number 470/2007/PLN-I dated 11th January 2007.

In order to ensure a higher level of transparency in the counting process, the following arrangements would also be put in place by all District Election Officers and Returning Officers. A copy of these instructions should be given to all the Observers immediately on their arrival so that they have time to familiarize themselves with this and to take action accordingly.

Randomization of counting officials

1. The posting of Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants must be done randomly in such a way that the counting official come to know of the Assembly Constituency and the table assigned to them only at the time of their arrival at the Counting Center on the day of the counting.
2. The District Election Officers shall issue photo-identity cards to all counting staff . After the Randomization, explained in the following paragraphs is over, the reserve staff would be seated separately in an enclosure within the counting centre campus.
3. The District Election Officer must keep a pool of well trained officials (including the reserved pool) available for counting purposes. The counting officials be directed to reach the counting center at 6 am on the date of counting. As already mentioned in Para 1 above, these officials would not be allotted the Assembly Constituency or the Table number in advance.
4. The Observers and the District Election Officer would assemble at one place for carrying out the randomization at 5 am on the day of the counting. This place may be the NIC center, Counting Center or any other office where the process can be conveniently carried out. The list of trained officials would be provided by the District Election officer to the Observers. There would be

two lists, one of Counting Supervisors and another of Counting Assistants and each counting official would be assigned a unique serial or code number which would be so labeled as to indicate clearly the category to which he belongs i.e. whether he is a Counting Supervisor or a Counting Assistant.

5. The randomization would be carried out either manually or by using a computer. For manual randomization, the senior most Observer present would randomly assign the Constituency and the table number to the counting officials by the draw of lots. This has to be done with the two lists mentioned above separately and independently so that for each of the tables the name of one Counting Supervisor and one Counting Assistant is generated. The District Election Officer would make all prior arrangements to ensure quick and smooth conduct of this randomization process. This would include preparing chits of the unique serial numbers assigned to counting officials and the constituency/table numbers.
6. Alternatively, the District Election Officer may make arrangements for carrying out the abovementioned randomization with the aid of a computer in consultation with the Observers. However, before using a computer aided method the Observers must fully satisfy themselves that the process is free from all errors and that it truly generates the results in a random manner.
7. The District Election Officers would ensure that Videography of the process of randomization is carried out for record.
8. To illustrate it by a practical example, let us assume a district has 10 Ac's, with 14 counting tables each. For this district 154(including 10% reserve) Counting Supervisors and 154 Counting Assistants would be required. These many officials would have been already trained and given codes while issuing the duty orders. On the date of counting at 5 am, these 154 codes each of Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants, written on individual slips, would be kept in two separate boxes. The senior most Observer, in the presence of District Election Officer and all other Observers would start the randomization process for a particular assembly constituency by randomly picking up one slip each from the two boxes. The Counting Supervisor and the Counting Assistant so picked up on the first set of draws would be assigned table no 1 in that Constituency. This would continue in a similar way till each of the 14 tables are assigned one Counting Supervisor and one Counting Assistant. The same process would then be repeated for other Assembly Constituencies in a similar manner. The officials who are left at the end of this exercise would be treated as part of the reserved pool.
9. Once the randomization process is over, the Constituency wise posting lists, duly signed by the District Election Officer and the Observers would be brought to the Counting Center by the Observers and District Election Officer, in time, to be handed over to the respective Returning Officers and the control room staff by 6 a.m.

10. The counting officials on reaching the control room at the counting center would be provided the posting details and directed to reach the counting hall of the assigned Constituency at the respective table.
11. It must be ensured that the whole process of randomization is over by 6:00 am so that the counting officials are able to reach their assigned position conveniently before the scheduled start of the counting process.

Reserved Pool

12. The officials who have not been assigned any Constituency/table would form a reserved pool.
13. There would be no deployment of officials in shifts as the counting process would normally not take more than 6 to 8 hours. However, the District Election Officers would have the liberty of replacing officials in case such an exigency arises, but this replacement would also be done randomly from the pool of officials in reserve after consulting the Observer of the constituency concerned

Cross checking by the Observers at random

14. As per the instructions issued earlier, after each round of counting, the Returning Officer would do the tabulation of the round based on the table wise result provided by the Counting Supervisors. The table wise result of the round is to be countersigned by the Observer before the Returning Officer announces the result of the round.
15. A system is now being introduced through the present instructions by which there would be a random checking by the Observers, in the manner indicated below, of the table wise results provided by the counting officials.
16. During the course of counting (for a round) the observer shall keep oscillating between counting tables and closely observe the counting process.
17. At the closure of each round, the Observer would randomly select any two EVM control units from amongst the Control units of the concerned round which has been counted. He would then direct the counting staff specifically deployed for this purpose by the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer through **random selection** to independently note down from the Control units selected, the details of the votes polled as indicated by the machine. These details he would then compare with the details provided by the officials in the table wise result to check for any discrepancy between the two. Care must be taken that the staff assigned for random checking is not aware of the details provided in the table wise result.
18. The District Election Officer/Returning Officers would ensure that there is a separate and sufficient space earmarked in the same counting hall for this

random cross-checking so that the normal counting of vote for subsequent round continues without any hindrance.

19. The staff to assist the Observer for this cross checking would be randomly selected from the reserved pool. If required, after a few rounds, fresh staff from the reserved pool should replace this staff.
20. Only after being satisfied that the result displayed by the Control Unit and that shown in the round wise result sheet and Form 17C match would the Observer countersign the result sheet of the round. The Observers would ensure that this exercise is carried out in each round and the selection of the two control units is absolutely random.
21. If any discrepancy is found between the result obtained from the table and that ascertained through the random checking by the observer as mentioned above, then:
 - (i) The result of that round for each table shall be reverified from the EVMs.
 - (ii) Such staff as is found to be wrongly noted the counting result would be taken off and replaced by another set of staff. Severe disciplinary action should then follow on the erring staff for their omissions and commissions.
 - (iii) The result provided by such staff (and table) in the preceding rounds would be checked again in presence of observer and corrected sheets prepared wherever necessary.
22. The counting officials as well as candidates and their counting agents would be informed about this provision of random cross checking to be carried out by the Observers. It would also be informed that any discrepancy found during this randomized cross checking would be viewed seriously by the Commission and could result in serious disciplinary action and prosecution of the responsible officials.
23. The Observers would continuously maintain their presence in the counting hall and periodically inspect the counting tables to ensure that counting is going on according to the instructions of the Commission in a transparent and systematic way.
24. The Observers, in their final report after the counting would specifically mention that the randomization of personnel and the random checking of Control Unit details was carried out as per the instructions of the Commission
25. All District Election Officers and Returning Officers would ensure that these instructions are strictly followed and would make all necessary arrangements for the same.
26. Apart from one Counting Supervisor and one Counting Assistant for each counting Table, one additional staff would be seated in each of the 14 counting tables. The additional staff will invariably be a Central Govt./ Central Govt. PSU employee. This additional staff will note down the details

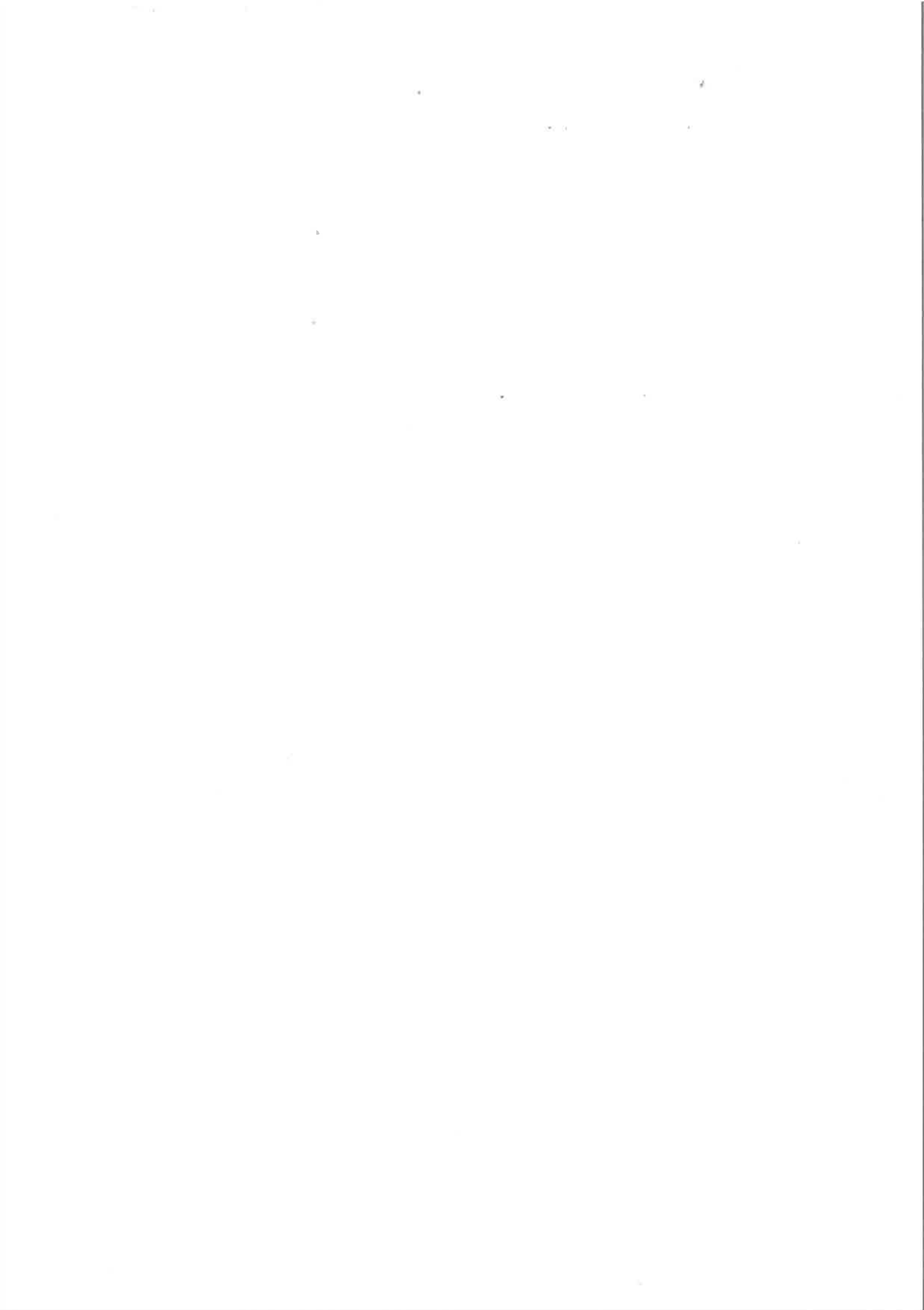
of votes exhibited by the EVMs being counted in each round in that Table. These additional counting staff would be provided with a pre-printed statement on which there will be space for noting down the CU No., Round No., Table No., Polling Station Number and thereafter the names of all the contesting candidates as they appear in the ballot paper. They will put their signature at the end of the statement and shall hand over the statement to the Observer after each round.

27. The Observer/Returning Officer will cross check the figures noted in Part-II of Form 17C as submitted by the Counting staff with the additional statement submitted by the additional staff.
28. Wherever adequate number of Central Govt. staff are not available, the shortfall will be made good by the Divisional Commissioner by mobilizing the required number of staff from the neighbouring districts within the Division. The additional staff will be given a brief orientation training before being deployed at the counting center as above. The additional staff also will be provided a ID Card by the District Election Officer. The constituency-wise and subsequently Table-wise deployment of such additional staff shall also be done randomly by the Observer.
29. All District Election Officers would ensure that these instructions are given wide publicity amongst the general public, the political parties, candidates, counting officials and other election related officials. It is repeated that a copy of these instructions would be provided to each election Observers immediately upon their arrival in the district.

All concerned will also strictly follow the other existing instructions of the ECI regarding the counting process. A confirmation report shall be submitted by all District Election Officers through Chief Electoral Officers by 5 p.m. of the date, one day prior to the date of counting that all necessary steps have been taken for strict implementation of the above instructions.

Yours faithfully,

(K.N.BHAR)



PROFORMA FOR RECORDING OF VOTES BY ADDITIONAL COUNTING STAFF

No. and Name of A.C. -

Round No.-

Table No.-

C U Number:

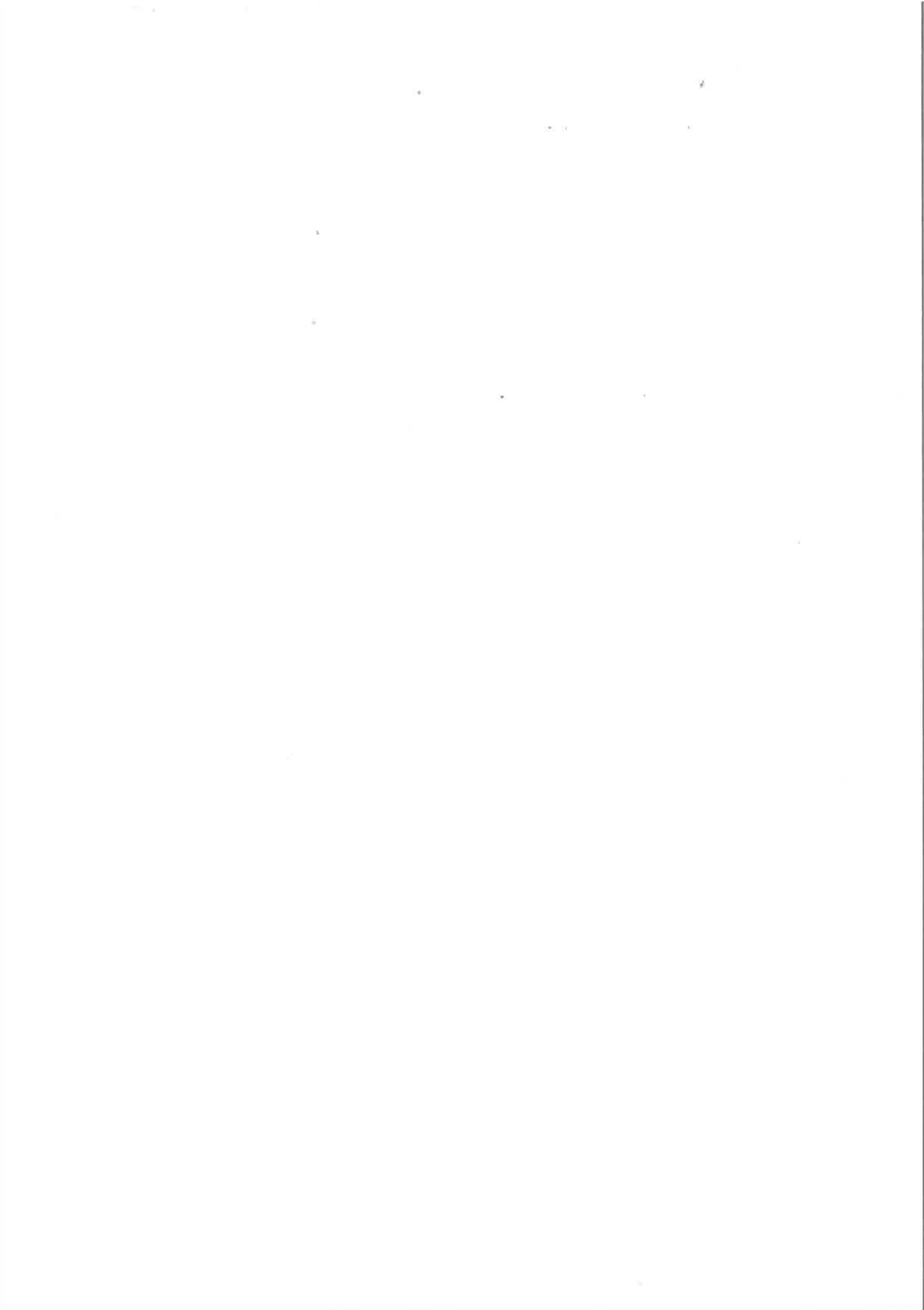
Polling Station Number:

Sl. No.	Name of Candidate (Pre-printed)	No. of votes recorded

Date:

Signature of Addl. Counting staff (With full name)

* To be handed over to the Observer only.



ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. 470/INST/2013-EPS

Dated:- 2nd May, 2013

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States and UTs.

Subject: Counting of voters – Randomization of counting staff – Regarding.

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to invite your attention to the Commission's letter No. 470/2007/PLN-I, dated 29th August, 2007 and letter No 470/TN-LA/2011-SS-I, dated 5.5.2011, on the subject cited, and to state that various District Election Officers have pointed out that there is lot of confusion regarding the procedure of Randomization of counting officials, viz, as to whether DEOs or ROs are supposed to issue the orders regarding appointment of Counting officials, etc.

The Commission has considered the matter and it is clarified that:-

- (i) A list of 120% of the required number of officials (Counting Supervisors/Counting Assistants/Micro Observers) required for counting in the district, should be generated (including reserve) randomly, using the software by the District Election Officers one week prior to the date of counting. This is the first of the three-stage randomization process. Presence of observers is not required at this stage. This is only to identify and select the officials that would be given duty for counting as Counting Supervisors/Counting Assistants/Micro Observers in whichever constituency of that district. In no case, at this stage, the identity of the assembly constituency to which the Counting personnel are likely to be deployed will be known.
- (ii) The Assembly Constituency wise randomization shall be done by the District Election Officers in presence of Observer(s) 24 hours prior to commencement of counting. Thereafter, the Returning Officer shall issue the appointment letters to these officials assigning them concerned allotted ACs.
- (iii) Randomization for allotment of Tables in the counting hall to these Counting Supervisors/Counting Assistants/Micro Observers shall be done by the concerned R.O. in the presence of Observer at 5 AM on the day of Counting.

These instructions will be strictly and scrupulously followed by the all concerned.

Yours faithfully,

(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)
SECRETARY