

**PANCHAYAT  
ELECTION URGENT**

**WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTION COMMISSION  
18, SAROJINI NAIDU SARANI  
(Rawdon Street)  
KOLKATA - 700 017**

No. 3083(17)-SEC/5C-9/2013

Date : 26.07.2013

From : The O.S.D. & E.O.  
Joint Secretary,  
West Bengal State Election Commission,

To : The District Panchayat Election Officer &  
District Magistrate, Cooch Behar / Jalpaiguri / Uttar Dinajpur /  
Dakshin Dinajpur / Malda / Murshidabad / Nadia / North 24-Parganas /  
South 24-Parganas / Howrah / Hooghly / Purba Medinipur /  
Paschim Medinipur / Purulia / Bankura/ Burdwan / Birbhum.

**Sub: Eighth Panchayat General Elections, 2013 – additional guidelines for  
counting.**

Sir,

In continuation of this Commission's Order No.3052(17)-SEC dated 24.07.2013, I am directed to draw your kind attention to the provision of Rule 88 of the West Bengal Panchayat Elections Rules, 2006 and to state that, the ballot papers taken out of each ballot box shall be arranged in convenient bundles as stated in para 2 (b) of the Order of this Commission referred to above and scrutinized in the following manner :

The Counting Officer shall reject the ballot papers on the following grounds :-

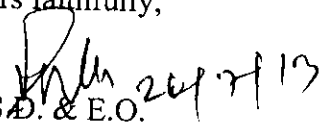
- a) If it bears any mark or writing by which the elector can be identified , or
- b) If, to indicate the vote, it bears no mark at all or bears a mark made otherwise than with the instrument supplied for the purpose , or
- c) If votes are given on it in favour of more candidates than the number of candidates to be elected , or
- d) If it is a spurious ballot paper, or
- e) If it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established, or
- f) If it bears a serial number, or is of a design different from the serial numbers, or as the case may be, design, of the ballot papers authorized for use at the particular election at the particular polling station, or
- g) If it does not bear both the mark and the signature which it should have borne under the provision of sub-rule(3) of rule 57, or
- h) If it is found in a ballot box other than the ballot box in which it should have been inserted.

However, it is further to state that, the ballot papers shall not be rejected on the ground that the mark indicating the vote is indistinct or made more than once, if the intension that the vote shall be for a particular candidate clearly appears from the manner the paper is marked and where a counting officer is satisfied that any such defect as in mentioned in clause (f) & (g) has been caused by any mistake or failure on the part of the Presiding Officer or any Polling Officer the ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground of such defect.

Before rejecting any ballot paper, the counting officer shall allow the candidate or his election agent, and each counting agent present a reasonable opportunity to inspect the ballot paper but shall not allow him to handle it or any other ballot paper.

The matter may be informed to all the Panchayat Returning Officers concerned with the instruction to brief the mater to all the Counting Officers at the time of imparting training for them.

Yours faithfully,

  
O.S.D. & E.O.

Joint Secretary,

West Bengal State Election Commission