

ELECTION URGENT

**WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
18, SAROJINI NAIDU SARANI
KOLKATA - 700017**

No. 4205(29)-SEC/1M-20/2013

Date : 21.11.2013

From : Smt. Mira Pande,
State Election Commissioner, West Bengal.

To : 1) District Municipal Election Officer for Kolkata Municipal Corporation
& District Magistrate, South 24-Parganas.

2) District Municipal Election Officer
& District Magistrate, Cooch Behar / Jalpaiguri /
Darjeeling / North 24-Parganas / South 24-Parganas /
Howrah / Hooghly / Purba Medinipur / Paschim Medinipur/
Burdwan/ Purulia / Bankura / Murshidabad / Nadia.

(3) The Superintendent of Police,
Cooch Behar / Jalpaiguri / Darjeeling / North 24-Parganas / South 24-Parganas /
Howrah / Hooghly / Purba Medinipur / Paschim Medinipur/
Burdwan/ Purulia / Bankura / Murshidabad / Nadia.

Sub.: Arrangements for Municipal General & Bye-Elections, 2013.

Sir,

In connection with the ensuing Municipal General & Bye- Elections 2013, I would like to invite your special attention to some of the salient points which are required to be pursued with utmost care and diligence. Relevant circulars have already been issued to you by the Commission in this connection.

1. As per earlier norms and conventions, the print and electronic media are not permitted to enter polling booths to record proceedings unless specifically authorised on behalf of the Commission – in order to maintain privacy of the voters and the voting process as well as to maintain decorum within the booths concerned. The electronic and print media are free to go around the constituencies and outside the polling premises to secure information;
2. Within the polling booths, the entry of all unauthorised persons, is prohibited – apart from voters entry being confined to the MROs / AMROs, polling personnel, candidates and their election agents, polling agents, Observers, and to other persons as may be permitted by the presiding officers. All concerned need to be vigilant to ensure that there is no obstruction or manipulation or disruption in the voting process and that there are no instances of booth capturing. Any such event must be reported by the MRØ concerned to this Commission so that appropriate decision can be taken regarding re-polling, if found justified;
3. It should be your constant endeavour to ensure that outsiders from adjoining Wards or from other districts or outside the State intent on creating trouble during the polling process are not allowed to enter the municipal constituencies. A special drive, must be carried out to check vehicles entering the Wards far to prevent carriage of illegal weapons and ammunition.

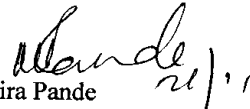
4. As per earlier advice of this Commission, preventive arrests of possible miscreants / history-sheeters and seizure of arms and ammunitions and bombs has probably begun. This drive must be continued with full vigour, after the campaign period is over, in order to ensure that such persons are not utilised to vitiate the polling process;
5. Voters are free to enter polling booths, in queues, unhindered and unobstructed – while voters who are sick or handicapped or disabled may be accompanied by helpers;
6. On the day of the Poll, the camps of the candidates or political parties need to be located beyond the prescribed limits of the booths – this also applies to festoons, hoardings, posters, banners, etc. of the different candidates / political parties.
7. The campaigning for these elections ended by 3 P.M. on P-2 day. Campaigning with microphones should cease by 10 P.M. on each day of campaigning and by 3 P.M. on P-2.
8. Commission's direction regarding use of vehicles on the day of Poll by the candidates and Political Parties should be strictly observed.
9. Restriction on the sale of liquor from all retail outlets should be enforced from P-I day to P+1 day and again on the date of counting in order to prevent unruly behaviour during the election process.
10. The use of cell phones (other than by those on duty authorised by this Commission) within 100 metres of the polling stations or within the boundaries of the counting centers is strictly prohibited;
11. The WBPDCCL have been advised to maintain uninterrupted power supply. Strict watch needs to be kept to ensure that this essential facility is not disrupted;
12. All polling personnel must be extremely careful to identify genuine voters (according to the criteria already prescribed) in order to prevent impersonation of voters and to prevent false voting on the day of poll;
13. Observer have already been appointed for the General Elections and advised regarding their respective duties. You should keep in constant touch with them on the day of Poll;
14. The polling would be from 7 A.M. to 3 P.M. However, it is likely that a number of voters would still be in queues waiting to cast their votes at 3 P.M. in different booths. Such voters should be allowed to cast their votes thereafter as per prescribed rules;
15. In case, number of tendered votes in a particular booth is abnormal, a report should be sent immediately to this Commission to decide as to whether re-polling in such booths is justified.
16. It is the imperative duty of all of you to ensure that electors are able to move freely without fear or intimidation and to cast their votes in their respective polling booths freely and fairly.

Wide publicity needs to be given to this facility to the electors and to the above mentioned provisions by you through the electronic and print media to ensure that there is maximum turnout of willing electors to come forward and cast their votes without any hindrance;

17. Since on the day of the polls, a large number of electors are expected to be out of their homes, to cast their votes at different times of the day, special precautions must be taken to ensure that miscreants taking advantage of vacant homes, do not attempt robberies or such other crimes in the neighbourhood;
18. Adequate security arrangements are to be made in all the polling centers and counting centers/ premises and in all the constituencies to ensure that the electors, candidates, election and polling agents and political parties are not hindered to perform their lawful duties.

All these provisions are being brought to your personal attention. Please ensure that all concerned in your administration continue to be well-aware of these matters. Please give wide publicity of the same to the electorate to ensure a free and fair polling process.

Yours faithfully,


Mira Pande
State Election Commissioner
West Bengal State Election Commission

No. 4205(29)/1(2)-SEC/1M-20/2013

Date : 21.11.2013

Copy forwarded to:

1. Shri Sanjay Mitra, IAS
Chief Secretary to the Government of West Bengal.
Nabanna, 325, Sarat Chatterjee Road,
Howrah-711102.
2. Shri Basudeb Bandyopadhyay, IAS
Additional Chief Secretary & Home Secretary,
Nabanna, 325, Sarat Chatterjee Road,
Howrah-711102.


Secretary
West Bengal State Election Commission