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# ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

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No. 437/6/INST/2009-CC&BE

Dated:23rd February, 2009

To

1. The Cabinet Secretary,  
Cabinet Secretariat,  
New Delhi.
2. The Chief Secretaries of  
All States and Union Territories.
3. The Chief Electoral Officers of  
All States and Union Territories.

**Subject:** Publication of advertisements in connection with occasions like World Habitat Day, Pulse Polio/HIV awareness campaigns and celebrations of various 'Diwas' like Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti, State Formation days.

Sir,

The Commission receives various references from the Ministries/Departments seeking clearance for the publication of advertisements on the occasions of World Habitat Day. Pulse Polio Immunization/HIV awareness campaigns during the run-up to General/Bye-elections to the Lok Sabha/State Legislative Assemblies when the model code of conduct is in force.

Objecting to the publication of advertisement on important social issues is never intended by the Commission. It only wants to ensure that the party in power does not misuse the Government machinery in the garb of spreading a social message which is against the spirit of providing a level playing field and so violate the spirit of free and fair election. Election Commission of India has therefore, taken a clear stand that there will be no objection to the release of such advertisements if they do not contain the photograph or political message of any Minister/political dignitary and do not highlight the achievements of the party which may influence the voters and induce them to vote in their favour.

Different important historical days like Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanti, Shivaji Jayanti and State Formation Days are celebrated with much fanfare which are attended to by Central/State Ministers who, at time, make it a platform for gaining political advantage by highlighting the achievements of the party in power or their political functionaries contesting the elections. The Commission has taken a serious note of this and decided that while the Ministers can participate in such celebrations the theme of their speeches should be confined only to the historical background, deeds and achievements of the historical figures and they must take utmost care not to make any political speech converting the forum into a platform for political campaign.

For similar reasons, there will be a complete ban on celebrations like “xxx years/days in power” during this period as such occasions are virtually utilized to highlight the achievement of the party in power.

Yours faithfully,

**(K. AJAY KUMAR)**  
**SECRETARY**

Copy forwarded to the Director General, DAVP, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for his information and necessary action.