

IMMEDIATELY
BY SPECIAL MESSENGER

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. 481/2012/CC&BE

Dated : 24th July, 2012

To

The Returning Officer for
Vice-Presidential Election-cum-
Secretary General, Lok Sabha,
Parliament House,
New Delhi.

Subject: Vice-Presidential Election, 2012- Media coverage during counting of votes-reg.

Sir,

I am directed to state that the following steps may be taken for facilitating coverage by the Media persons of the process of counting of votes of Vice-Presidential Election, 2012:-

- (1) Counting Hall and its immediate vicinity shall be a sanitized zone where only the holder of Authority Letter issued by the Commission shall be allowed in a controlled and guided manner. Returning Officer shall make proper and adequate arrangement to make the stay of media persons comfortable in a nearby room/space. Adequate communication facilities should be made in this media room.
- (2) The Media persons, **who hold valid authority letters of the Commission**, can and should be allowed to get coverage of the arrangements made for counting of votes and counting process. For coverage of counting in progress inside the counting hall, controlled and guided access, in small and manageable audio-visual groups, for short duration may be allowed.
- (3) For such guidance and control of the media persons and groups, the Returning Officer must identify and deploy one or two senior officers who can effectively liaise with media persons. The Official designated by the Returning Officer for this purpose must conduct and escort media groups during the conducted tour of counting in progress inside the counting hall.
- (4) Counting hall shall strictly be a silent zone. Any disorderly behavior inside the counting hall shall not be allowed. Mobile phones shall not be allowed inside the counting hall.

(5) The media persons, holding the authority letters of the Commission to cover the counting process should also be allowed to re-enter on the basis of the very same authority letters. **All entry at all times, however, is subject to the overall requirement of maintenance of discipline, proper decorum and the conduct of peaceful counting.**

(6) It may also be noted that **no static (fixed) camera- still or video- of the media is allowed inside counting hall.** No **camera stand** should, therefore, be allowed to be taken inside counting hall. Further, while taking audio visual coverage of the counting process with camera carried in hand or on visual coverage of the counting process with camera carried in hand or on shoulders, under no circumstances, the actual votes recorded on any individual ballot papers is to be photographed or covered by audio visual coverage. **The exact location upto which the camera persons with or without still and video camera can move, should be indicated by the Returning Officer in advance marked by a line of string for guidance of all concerned.**

After the process of counting of votes is over and result is compiled, the Returning Officer shall declare result of counting of votes before the representatives of candidates and also through the public address system with sound boxes fixed outside the counting hall.

Yours faithfully,

(K. N. BHAR)
SECRETARY