

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001.

No.437/6/INST. /2014-CC&BE

Dated : 18th March, 2014

To

- (i) The Chief Secretaries of all States and UTs.
- (ii) The Chief Electoral Officers of all States and UTs.

Sub:- Model Code of Conduct- Ban on Video Conferencing.

Sir,

I am directed to invite reference to the Commission's letter No. 437/6/2004- PLN III, dated 30-12-2004, on the above subject. In the said letter, it was directed that during the period of operation of MCC, no video-conferencing shall take place between the Chief Minister/Ministers/ political functionaries of the Union and State Govts. with the officials.

2. The Commission has re-considered the matter in the light of certain requests to permit video-conferencing to assess/monitor situation in the event of natural calamity. The Commission has decided that in the immediate aftermath of any calamity of significant scale/magnitude, if video-conferencing is considered essential, then Chief Minister or Minister concerned may hold one video-conferencing with the officials concerned subject to the following conditions:-

- (i) The CEO of the State shall be approached by the Department concerned and approval of the CEO should be obtained before holding the VC. For any subsequent VC, permission from the Commission shall be obtained;
- (ii) Only the Collector/District Magistrate and senior officials in charge of the relief in connection with the natural calamity of the area concerned alone shall be called to attend the video-conferencing;
- (iii) No issue other than rescue/relief and other aspects connected to the calamity shall be discussed in the VC;
- (iv) No publicity whatsoever shall be given for the VC, either before or after the VC,

- (v) The VC should not be open to media;
- (vi) An Audio/Video recording of the proceedings of the VC shall be maintained by the Department concerned and a copy of the same given to the CEO;
- (vii) No announcement or promise of any grant, assistance in cash or kind, and no statement of political nature or announcement capable of influencing the electors shall be made through the VC.
- (viii) A representative of the CEO will be present during the VC.

3. It may be noted that the above exception is only in the immediate aftermath of a calamity of significant scale/magnitude, and the ban on video-conferencing by Ministers and political functionaries with the officials during the period of operation of MCC will continue to apply as generic principle.

4. These instructions may be brought to the notice of the State Govt. and all election officials in the State.

Yours faithfully,

(K. AJAYA KUMAR)
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY