

# ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No576/3/ECI/LET/FUNC/JUD/SDR/Vol-II/2017

Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2017

To,

The Chief Electoral Officers of

1. Goa
2. Manipur
3. Punjab
4. Uttarakhand
5. Uttar Pradesh

Sub: General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh - regarding. Facilities to be provided to differently abled electors.

Sir,

I am directed to invite your attention to the Commission's two letters bearing No. 509/110/2004-JS-I dated 26.10.2007 and 24-03-2009 (copies enclosed) regarding facilities to be provided to differently abled electors. Your attention is also invited to the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its Order dated 5.10.2007 in the WP(Civil) No. 187 of 2004- Disabled Rights Group Vs. The Chief Election Commissioner & Anr.

As per the instructions in the above mentioned letter, you are requested to ensure the following measures at the current General Elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh:

- The personnel at the polling station must ensure that differently abled electors are given priority for entering the polling stations, without having to wait in the queue for other electors and all necessary assistance as may be required, should be provided to them at the polling station.
- Full facility should be provided for such electors to take their wheel-chairs inside the polling stations. In the polling stations where permanent ramps have not been provided, temporary ramps should be provided for the purpose.
- The polling personnel should be specifically briefed about the provisions of Rule 49N of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which provides for permitting a companion to accompany a blind/infirm elector to assist him/her to cast the vote, if he/she so wishes.
- At the training classes for the polling personnel, they should be sensitized about the special needs of the differently abled electors, for courteous behavior towards them and for providing necessary support to them at the polling stations.
- Electors with speech and hearing impairment should also be given special care as is done in the case of other differently abled persons.

The facilities being provided, as above, may be given publicity through Press release etc.

Apart from the above measures, you may also refer to the other instructions on the subject issued from time to time.

Yours faithfully,



(N.T. Bhutia)

Under Secretary

# भारत निर्वाचन आयोग

निर्वाचन सदन, अशोक रोड,

मि.स : 576/3/ईसीआई/पत्र/व्यवहारिक/विधिक/एसडीआर/खण्ड-11/2017

दिनांक: 19 जनवरी, 2017

सेवा मे,

मुख्य निर्वाचन अधिकारी

1.गोवा

2.मणिपुर

3.पंजाब

4.उत्तराखण्ड

5.उत्तर प्रदेश

विषय:- गोवा, मणिपुर, पंजाब, उत्तराखण्ड एवं उत्तर प्रदेश विधान सभाओं का साधारण -निर्वाचन निःशक्त मतदाताओं को उपलब्ध करवाई जाने वाली सुविधाएं ।

महोदय,

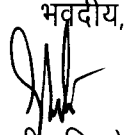
मुझे आपका ध्यान निःशक्त निर्वाचकों को उपलब्ध करवाएं जाने वाली सुविधाओं से सम्बन्धित आयोग के दिनांक 26.10.2007 और 24.03.2009 के दो पत्रों सं० 509/110/2004-जे०एस०। (प्रति संलग्न) की ओर आकर्षित करने का निदेश हुआ है । डिसएबल्ड राइट्स ग्रुप बनाम मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त एवं अन्य के मामले में माननीय उच्चतम न्यायालय की रिट याचिका (सिविल) सं० 187/2004 मे दिनांक 05.10.2007 के आदेश में दिए गए निदेशों की ओर भी आपका ध्यान आकर्षित किया जाता है ।

उपर्युक्त पत्र में दर्शाए गए अनुदेशों के अनुसार, आपसे अनुरोध है कि वर्तमान गोवा, मणिपुर, पंजाब, उत्तराखण्ड एवं उत्तर प्रदेश विधान सभाओं के साधारण निर्वाचनों में निम्नलिखित मापदंडों को सुनिश्चित करें :

- मतदान केन्द्र पर कार्मिकों को यह सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए कि निःशक्त निर्वाचकों को मतदान केन्द्र में, अन्य निर्वाचकों के साथ पंक्ति में प्रतीक्षा करवाने के बजाए प्रवेश के लिए प्राथमिकता दी जाए और उनको सभी आवश्यक सहायता, जो सम्भव हो, मतदान केन्द्र पर उपलब्ध करवाई जानी चाहिए ।
- ऐसे मतदाताओं के लिए पूर्ण सुविधाएं उपलब्ध करवाई जानी चाहिए ताकि वे मतदान केन्द्रों के अंदर अपनी व्हील-चेयर ले जा सकें । ऐसे मतदान केन्द्रों पर जहां स्थाई रैम्प की सुविधा उपलब्ध नहीं है वहां अस्थायी रैम्प उपलब्ध करवाया जाना चाहिए ।
- मतदान कार्मिकों को विशेष रूप से यह ब्रीफ कर देना चाहिए कि निर्वाचनों का संचालन नियम, 1961 के नियम 49 एन के उपबन्धों के अनुसार किसी नेत्रहीन/अशक्त निर्वाचक को यदि वह ऐसा चाहे तो उसके द्वारा वोट डालने में सहायता प्रदान करने के लिए एक सहयोगी को अनुमति प्रदान करने का प्रावधान है ।
- मतदान कर्मिकों के लिए प्रशिक्षण कक्षाओं में, विभिन्न अशक्त मतदाताओं की विशेष आवश्यकताओं, उनके प्रति विनम्र व्यवहार और उनको मतदान केन्द्र पर आवश्यक सहायता उपलब्ध कराने के लिए, उन्हें संवेदनशील होना चाहिए ।
- भिन्नतः सक्षम मतदाताओं के मामले जैसे की बोलने व सुनने की क्षति वाले मतदाताओं की भी विशेष देखभाल की जानी चाहिए ।

उपलब्ध करवाई जाने वाली उपर्युक्त सुविधाओं का प्रेस रिलीज इत्यादि के माध्यम से व्यापक प्रचार किया जाए ।

उपरोक्त दिए गए उपायों के अतिरिक्त, आपका ध्यान निःशक्त निर्वाचकों के लिए सुविधाओं से संबंधित आयोग द्वारा घोषित प्रेस नोट दिनांक 4 जनवरी 2017 के पैरा (3) (b) की ओर आकर्षित किया जाता है ।

भवदीय,  
  
(एन.टी.भूटिया)  
अवर सचिव

S.No. 108 (2)

# ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No.509/110/2004-JS-I/3719-35

Dated: 26 October, 2007.

To

The Chief Electoral Officers  
of all the States and UTs

Sub: Facilities to be provided to electors with disability - Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 187 of 2004 - Disabled Rights Group Vs. The Chief Election Commissioner & Anr.

Sir,

I am directed to invite your attention to the Commission's letters of even number dated 21.04.2004 and 20.10.2005 regarding setting up of ramps in the public buildings in which polling stations are located. Your attention is also invited to the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its interim order, dated 19.04.2004 in the above mentioned writ petition. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has disposed of the above-mentioned writ petition vide its order-dated 05.10.2007, with certain directions. A copy of the order is enclosed.

2. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has taken note of the instructions issued by the Commission from time to time regarding the facilities to be provided to the electors with disability, and has directed that it should be ensured that these instructions are followed effectively. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has also directed that advance and sufficient publicity should be given in print and electronic media about the availability of the facilities for the electors with disability to exercise their franchise. In this context, attention is particularly invited to the Commission's letter of even no., dated 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2005 and letter no. 576/3/2004/JS-II, dated 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 (copies enclosed for easy reference). In the letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2005, the Commission had urged that the Government/Local Authorities may provide permanent ramps in the public buildings in which polling stations for elections are located. The Commission has addressed a separate letter to the State/UT Governments requesting for early action in this regard as directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The Chief Electoral Officers should review the position with the department concerned of the State Government to ensure that effective action is taken in compliance with the provisions of the Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, and the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The Commission should be informed about the position after such a review by the end of November, 2007.

3. Regarding the other facilities to be provided at the polling station for the benefit of the electors with disability, attention is invited to the Commission's letter 576/3/2004/JS-

ISSUED  
OCT 2007  
Election Commission of India  
New Delhi-110001

II, dated 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 referred to above. It may be ensured that the instructions in this regard are brought to the notice of all election authorities in the State, for strict compliance at all future elections. Specific instructions should be issued on the following aspects:

- The personnel at the polling station to ensure that physically challenged electors are given priority for entering the polling station, without having to wait in the queue for other electors and all necessary assistance as may be required should be provided to them at the polling station.
- Full facility should be provided for such electors to take their wheel- chair inside the polling station. In the polling stations where permanent ramps have not been provided, temporary ramps should be provided as per the order dated 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2004, of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the above-mentioned petition (copy enclosed).
- The polling personnel should be specifically briefed about the provisions of Rule 49N of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which provides for permitting a companion to accompany a blind/infirm elector to assist him/her to cast the vote.
- At the training classes for the polling personnel, they should be sensitized about the special needs of the disabled, for courteous behavior towards them and for providing necessary support to them at the polling station.
- Electors with speech and hearing impairment should also be given special care as in the case of other disabled persons.

4. At the time of every election, the Chief Electoral Officer shall issue instructions to the District Election Officers to give wide publicity to the availability of above-mentioned facilities for persons with disability to exercise their franchise, as directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Apart from the facilities for the physically challenged electors as enumerated above, the publicity should also cover the facility of Braille signage being available on the EVMs. The publicity should be given through print media as well as through radio/television. The political parties/candidates may also be briefed about such facilities at the meetings held with them by the DEO/RO in connection with elections.

5. Please acknowledge receipt of this letter alongwith its enclosures immediately and also confirm action taken as required above at the earliest.

Yours faithfully,



**(K. F. WILFRED)  
SECRETARY**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) NO.187 OF 2004

Disabled Rights Group

... Petitioner

Vs.

Chief Election Commissioner & Anr.

... Respondents

With

TP (C) No. 718-719 of 2005

ORDER

W.P. (C) No.187/2004 :

A letter written by a Disabled Rights Group, an NGO, to this Court was registered as a writ petition in public interest. The grievance expressed in the letter related to the absence of facilities to persons with disabilities to exercise their franchise in the elections. The petitioner referred to the need for : (a) wooden ramps at polling stations to enable disabled persons to have an easy access; (b) the numbers in the electronic voting machines (EVMs) being written in Braille to enable visually impaired voters to feel the numbers and press an appropriate button to cast the vote; (c) separate queues and special arrangements for persons with disability at polling stations; and (d) the polling station personnel to be

courteous and render necessary assistance to enable persons with disability to exercise their franchise with least inconvenience.

These suggestions were reiterated by the amicus curiae. The Election Commission of India have responded to these suggestions. Apart from drawing attention to Rule 49-N of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 and Para 39 of the 'Handbook for Returning Officers' issued by Returning Officers (relating to recording of votes of blind/infirm electors), the Commission stated that it has issued instructions to Chief Electoral Officers of all States and Union Territories, to provide ramps to enable physically handicapped persons to use their wheel chairs to go into the polling stations, to have separate queues for physically handicapped, and to sensitize poll personnel about the special needs of the disabled and be courteous to them. In regard to the suggestion relating to printing of serial numbers in Braille, the Election Commission stated that it will evolve an appropriate and satisfactory solution in consultation with the Ministry of Social Welfare and Empowerment, representatives of NGOs. engaged at the national level in the welfare of visually challenged, as also Technical Experts from the ECIL and BEL, (the two firms manufacturing EVMs). It is stated that even the existing EVMs. have been designed keeping in view the needs of the visually handicapped and hearing-impaired electors.

On 19.4.2004, this Court directed the Chief Secretaries of respective States, in coordination with the Chief Electoral Officers of those States, to make available wooden ramp facilities at polling stations situated in cities and in urban areas. By communication dated 20.10.2005, the Election Commission instructed all State Governments/Union Territories to make provisions for good quality permanent ramps in all public buildings where polling stations are located. By affidavit dated 23.4.2007, Election Commission has confirmed that in the election held after 19.4.2004, specific instructions have been issued to provide ramps at polling stations.

It is also stated that new EVMs. containing Braille numerals by the side of the ballot buttons have been introduced to assist the visually challenged. Thus Election Commission has broadly dealt with the grievances aired by the petitioner.

The learned counsel for the petitioner stated that though instructions had been issued by the Election Commission, they are not being followed in their letter and spirit by the respective Governments and several polling stations are not provided the facilities. It is true that the Election Commission should also ensure that the instructions are followed effectively.

The remedy is for the Election Commission to give appropriate directions to the officials manning the polling stations, regarding the special facilities for the physically disabled electorate at all polling stations. This should be done well-in-advance and sufficient publicity should also be given in the print and electronic

338

media about the availability of such facilities so that the persons with disabilities are aware of the facilities beforehand and are, thus, encouraged to go and exercise their franchise. Further, its observers should also satisfy that such facilities are given. The absence of such facilities should be notified to the respective Government for remedial/future action. On behalf of the Election Commission of India it is stated that the appropriate directions will be given in this behalf. We are of the view that the above directions/observations will meet the needs of the disabled voters. We accordingly dispose of the writ petition.

**T.P. (C) Nos. 718-19 of 2005 :**

In view of the disposal of this writ petition, there is no need to transfer the two petitions pending before the Bombay High Court (W.P. (PIL) No.3063/2004) and the Jharkhand High Court (W.P.(PIL) No.753/2005) on the same subject-matter. The respective High Courts may deal with the said petitions and may dispose them appropriately. The Transfer Petitions are accordingly disposed of.

*sd/-*  
.....CJI.  
(K G Balakrishnan)

New Delhi;  
October 5, 2007.

*sd*  
.....J.  
(R V Raveendran)



## ITEM NO. 75

Election Commission's letter No. 509/110/2004-JS.I, dated 21.04.2004 addressed to the Chief Secretaries of All States/Union Territories and the Chief Electoral Officers of all States/Union Territories.

**Subject: In the Supreme Court of India – WP (Civil) No. 187 of 2004 -Disabled Rights Group Vs. Chief Election Commissioner & Anr.**

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of the order dated 19.4.2004 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the above cited matter for information and strict compliance.

It may be noted that the Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed that the Chief Secretaries of the respective States (and UTs) should ensure, in coordination with the CEOs that as far as possible, ramps are provided in polling stations for the poll on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2004. For the poll on 5<sup>th</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> May, the Hon'ble Court has directed that wooden ramps shall be compulsorily provided in polling stations at least in the cities and urban areas.

Kindly acknowledge the receipt and confirm, action taken.

पत्र : निर्वाचन  
नई दिल्ली  
Gr. : ELEC COM  
NEW DELHI

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग सचिवालय  
SECRETARIAT OF THE  
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

टेलिफोन : एनडी 31 - 61312  
Telex : N D 31 - 61312  
फैक्स : 3713412/3739944  
Fax : 3713412/3739944

संख्या  
No.  
तारीख 199  
Dated.....199

Sl. No. 62(1)

निर्वाचन सदन  
अशोक रोड, नई दिल्ली - 110 001  
NIRVACHAN SADAN  
ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110 00

No.: 509/110/2004/JS-I/ 285 to 2870

dated the 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2005

To  
The Chief Secretaries of  
all States/Union Territories.

Subject: Providing facilities to the disabled voters.

Sir,

I am directed to invite your attention to the interim order dated 19.4.2004 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in W.P.(C) No. 187 of 2004 (Disability Rights Group Vs. Chief Election Commissioner and another) communicated to you vide the Commission's letter of even number dated 21.4.2004. In the said order, the Hon'ble Apex Court had given directions for providing ramps in all polling stations in urban areas at the then general election to the House of the People, 2004. In pursuance of the said interim order, temporary ramps were provided by the State Govts. in the polling stations in urban areas in the constituencies that went to poll in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> phase of the said election. In all subsequent elections also, the state Governments have been advised to comply with the directions on providing ramps.

The Commission has considered this issue further. Under the provisions of the Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, the Central/State Govts. and local authorities concerned, are responsible for providing ramps in public buildings so as to make them accessible to disabled people.

Polling stations for elections to the House of People and State Legislatures are located in public buildings, in most of the cases. The Commission is of the view that the issue of ramps at polling stations could be resolved, if the Govt./local authorities concerned provide permanent ramps at the public buildings where polling stations are located. As the public buildings are used by the general public every day for one purpose or the other, permanent ramps in such buildings would serve the purpose of the 1995 Act, and also make the polling stations disabled friendly on a permanent basis. Such permanent ramps would also be economically more viable as compared to setting up temporary ramps at each election.

|  |  |            |                           |  |
|--|--|------------|---------------------------|--|
|  | Particulars to be printed on ballot paper. | 18.09.2015 | 35. no. 52/2015/SDR/Vol I |  |
|--|--|------------|---------------------------|--|

In view of the above, the Commission desires that good quality permanent ramps may be constructed in all public buildings in which Polling Stations for elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies are located. The list of locations of polling stations in the State is available with the Chief Electoral Officer, who will furnish the same to you. The Commission desires that the work may be taken up on priority basis.

Kindly acknowledge the receipt.

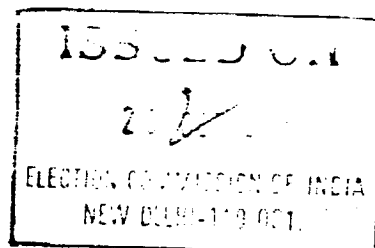
Yours faithfully,

  
(K.F. WILFRED)  
SECRETARY

Copy to:

- (i) The Chief Electoral Officers of all States/Union Territories for information and necessary action of co-coordinating with the State Govt.
- (ii) Judicial Section-II
- (iii) Computer Section for website.

  
(K.F. WILFRED)  
SECRETARY



814

**ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA**  
Nirvachan Sadan, Ashok Road, New Delhi-110 001

No 576/3/2009/SDR

Dated: 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

To

Chief Electoral Officer  
of all States/Union Territories

**Subject: - Facilities to be provided to electors with disability – Order of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (civil) No. 187 of 2004 – Publicity of Commission's instructions – Reg.**

Sir/Madam

I am directed to invite your attention to Commission's letter No. 509/110/2004-IS-I/RCC dated 12.03.2009 requesting you to bring the Commission's instructions contained in letter of even number dated 26.10.2007 to the notice of all District Election Officers and Returning Officers for compliance. It may be noted that one of the directions in the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the above mentioned petition was that the facilities being made available for the disabled electors may be given wide publicity over the electronic media and the Press to make them aware of these facilities so as to encourage such electors to exercise their franchise.

2. The District Election Officers/ Returning Officers may be asked to comply with the above directions.

Yours faithfully,

(NARENDRA.N.BUTOLIA)  
UNDER SECRETARY

P/X

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग  
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

TELEPHONE: 011-2377391-98  
FAX: 011-23773432-23773094  
Website: www.eci.nic.in

निर्वाचन आयोग  
भारतीय निर्वाचन आयोग  
Nirvachan Sadan,  
Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. 464/INST-PDF/2013 -EPS

Dated: <sup>th</sup>27 January, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of  
All the States and Union Territories.

**Subject: Polling Day Facilitation of Voters at Polling Stations –Regarding.**

Madam / Sir,

The Commission is getting regular feedback on lack of facilitation at the polling stations on the polling day. Lack of proper guidance, long waiting hours and chaos at the polling station, often dissuade people from voting whereas, hassle free voting encourages voters for greater participation.

2. In order to facilitate hassle free voting on the poll day, the Commission desires that the following measures should be strictly implemented in addition to the existing instructions (Annexure-I) :

**A. Facilities to be provided to the voters at the polling stations:**

**I. Help Desk**

In the polling station locations having multiple polling stations, a Help Desk should be set up with the objective of providing assistance to the voters, facilitating the voters to locate their particular polling station and issuance of voter slips. The Help Desk shall be set up at a prominent spot so that the same is easily visible and approachable to voters as they approach the premise/building.

**II. Proper Signage**

Proper signage should be put at the polling station locations for guidance of the voters about the route / layout of the location, facilities available (like ramp, toilet, drinking water etc.) and Help Desk.

**III. Queue Handling**

(a) Physically challenged electors shall be given priority for entering the polling stations without having to wait in the queue for other electors and all necessary assistance as may be required should be provided to them at the polling stations.

(b) The polling personnel should be specifically briefed about the provisions of Rule 49N of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961.

- which provides for permitting a companion to accompany a blind / infirm elector to assist him / her to cast the vote.
- (c) Electors with speech and hearing impairment should also be given special care as in the case of other disabled persons.
  - (d) There should be separate queues for men and women electors. Men and women voters should be admitted into the polling station by turns. Two women voters may be allowed entry into polling stations for entry of each male voter.
  - (e) Infirm / senior citizens voters and women voters with babies in arms may be given precedence over other voters in the queue.

#### **IV. Health Care**

- (a) Provide covered shelter for the electors at every polling station and, if necessary, have the extra rooms available in the building opened for electors to take rest.
- (b) First-aid facility for the voters should be provided.
- (c) Every polling party shall be supplied with oral rehydration salts for their own use as well as for any voter needing the same due to heat-stroke. A hand-bill on 'Dos and Don'ts' in case of heat stroke may be prepared and supplied to each of the polling parties.
- (d) A small First-Aid kit containing basic medicines with user instruction should be provided to each polling party. In this regard, the DEO should prepare a standard list of medicine and user instruction in consultation with the District Chief Medical Officer.
- (e) Issue an appeal to the electors to carry wet towels to protect themselves against dehydration and also advise women electors to avoid bringing children along with them to polling stations due to hot weather conditions.
- (f) The DEO shall requisition the services of para-medical staff from the offices of the Chief District Medical Officers and one such Para Medical Staff member shall accompany every mobile Patrol Unit and Sector Officer in their vehicles along with essential heat-stroke medicines. Such mobile patrol units shall touch every polling station once in every hour so that instant medical assistance would be available to any voter needing such help besides the first aid facilities given to the polling parties.

## **B. Long Queue Management Measures**

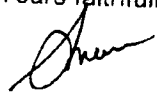
- I. Based on the past voting pattern and experience of the field staff, the polling stations / polling station locations prone to long queues should be identified.
- II. Dynamic tracking of long queues on the poll day should be done through the Sector Officers.
- III. Decongestion measures should be initiated at the polling stations prone to / having long queues.
- IV. Reserve staff and vehicles should be kept ready for deployment at the polling stations with long queue to help out the polling staff.
- V. Members from the National Cadet Corps and National Service Scheme may be mobilised to manage the queue.

## **C. Appointment of Nodal Officers:**

While preparing the district machinery for the conduct of election, the DEO shall identify a senior officer as the nodal officer to coordinate and supervise amenities at the polling stations as well as polling personnel / voters welfare measures. Similarly, each RO shall identify a nodal officer for the above purpose. The name and designation, office and residential addresses, telephone numbers including mobile number and e-mail ID, if any, of the nodal officer shall be mentioned in the district / constituency election management plan. The contact numbers should also be brought to the notice of the polling personnel drafted for election duty.

Please acknowledge receipt of the letter.

Yours faithfully,

  
(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)  
SECRETARY



Annexure-I

|                        |            |  |
|------------------------|------------|--|
| 509/110/2004-JS-I      | 26-10-2007 | Facilities to be Provided to Electors with disability – Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(Civil) No.187 of 2004 – Disabled Rights Group Vs. The Chief Election Commissioner & Anr. – Regarding. |
| 464/2009-EPS           | 30-04-2009 | Facilities for Senior citizen and Physically Challenged Voters – Regarding.  |
| 576/11/ES024/94-J.S.II | 21.10.1994 | General elections to State Legislative Assemblies -1994 – Special facilities in Polling Stations for Women Electors – Regarding.   |
| 464/INST/2011/EPS      | 26-12-2011 | Special facilities in polling stations for women electors – Regarding.   |
| 458/4/98/PLN-IV        | 01.06.1998 | Bye-elections in June, 1998 - Facilities at Polling Stations During the Hot Weather Conditions.  |
| 23/LOCATOR//2007-ERS   | 05-11-2007 | Preparation of Electoral Roll in Alphabetical Order – Regarding.   |

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग  
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

LPASA, DELHI 2271701/08  
PIN 110027/13412/22730044  
Website: www.eci.nic.in

भारत निर्वाचन आयोग  
निर्वाचन सदन  
आशुका रोड, नई दिल्ली-110001

No. 464/INST-BMF/2013 -EPS

Dated: -27<sup>th</sup> January, 2014

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of  
All the States and Union Territories.

**Subject: Assessment and Inventory of Polling Stations – Basic Minimum Facilities (BMF) to be Provided – Regarding.**

Madam / Sir,

Polling Stations represent one of the most crucial aspects and the focal symbol of electoral democracy. Section 25 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 envisages that the District Election Officer (DEO) is responsible for the provision of polling station and publication of the list of polling stations. With some advance intervention at the level of DEO, the conditions at the polling stations can be vastly improved.

2. Though instructions have been issued over a period of time that cover almost all the major concerns and aspects of polling station management, the Commission has observed with great concern that there are gaps in actual implementation of these instructions. The Commission attaches greater importance to the voter participation and his / her experience at polling station and in the past, provisions for voter friendly facilities and amenities have been incorporated in the Commission's directions. In continuation of the Commission's instructions issued vide its letters mentioned at Annexure-I on the subject mentioned against those, the following instructions on facilities to be provided at the polling stations and to the voters shall be followed strictly.

3. The Commission identified the list of Basic Minimum Facilities (BMF) which every DEO shall provide at each polling station within his district. These Basic Minimum Facilities are:

- i. Provision for ramp
- ii. Provision for drinking water
- iii. Adequate furniture
- iv. Proper lighting
- v. Help Desk

vi. Proper signage

vii. Toilet

A note on assessment and inventory of Basic Minimum Facilities at Polling Stations is enclosed herewith.

3. The Commission desires that the following instructions, to assess and make inventory of the polling station locations in the States / UTs, are carried out strictly and scrupulously:

- I. The DEO and the Returning Officer (RO) shall do an advance exercise well before the election to get the conditions of the polling stations physically verified by the field officials. The Sector Officers should visit each polling station / location within his / her jurisdiction to assess whether it is use worthy. The Returning Officer should physically verify 10% of the polling stations / locations.
- II. The DEOs should form territorial teams / squads to visit each and every polling station location and prepare a video documentation on the condition of polling station and existing amenities and a feedback on action to be taken for each such polling station as per Annexure-II. During videography, the following points should be covered:
  - a. access / entry of the polling station locations;
  - b. surroundings of the polling station;
  - c. existence of boundary wall; if any.
  - d. building area, open space, number of rooms;
  - e. actual location of Polling Station within the premises/campus;
  - f. availability / location of civic amenities like drinking water, toilets, electricity, ramp, furniture, shades etc.
- III. At the beginning of videography, the following should be displayed on a card board and captured on camera, as well as spelt out in voice-over:
  - a. District Name;
  - b. AC Number & Name;
  - c. PS Location Number & Name;
  - d. PS Number and address.

- IV. The final CD / DVD should be labelled properly, clearly mentioning District Name, AC Name & Number and PS Location Number and name, number and address, so that the problem of identification does not arise.
- V. The DEO should initiate remedial measures, where required, on the basis of the above physical verification reports and send an 'Action Taken Report' to the CEO, at the earliest. In the process of ensuring BMF at the Polling Stations, the DEO should make optimal use of funds available under the relevant election expenditure budget head and / or explore the possibilities of synergising the objective of BMF at polling station with any of the suitable ongoing schemes / projects, provided the activity is covered under the parameters of such schemes or dovetail the requirements of BMF with ongoing / existing schemes of the local bodies within the district as most of the polling stations are normally located in the government / local body school building and other government buildings.
- VI. The review of the polling stations on above parameters is to be completed as per the following schedule:

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Review to be completed by the DEO   | By 5 <sup>th</sup> February, 2014  |
| Meeting to be held by the DEO with the representatives of political parties.                  | By 15 <sup>th</sup> February, 2014 |
| Report to be sent by the DEO to the CEO   | By 17 <sup>th</sup> February, 2014 |
| Compiled report to be sent by the CEO to the Zonal Secretaries / Principal Secretaries of ECI | By 20 <sup>th</sup> February, 2014 |

4. The CEOs should explore the possibility of setting up some model polling stations at the metropolitan cities / State capitals / major cities of the States. The thrust of such initiative should be more on voter friendly environment and superfluity should be avoided.

Please acknowledge receipt of the letter.

Yours faithfully,

  
(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)  
SECRETARY

**Note on Assessment and Inventory of  
Basic Minimum Facilities at Polling Stations**

---

**i. Condition of Polling Station**

As far as possible, the polling station should be established in a good building worthy of use (and not in a dilapidated one). The building / location having room(s) with proper windows, ventilation and space should be identified as polling stations. It may also be ensured that the polling station(s) should normally be situated at the ground floor of the building.

**ii. Entrance and Exit**

The polling stations should have separate entrance and exit for voters. If there is only one door at the polling station(s), separate entrance and exit can be provided with the help of a temporary fencing in the middle of the doorway using bamboos and ropes.

**iii. Ramp Facility**

A ramp should be provided at the polling stations to facilitate the physically challenged voters, as per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. In the polling stations where permanent ramps have not been provided, temporary ramps should be provided.

**iv. Drinking Water**

There should be a proper arrangement for drinking water and toilet facilities at the polling station(s). In case, there is no provision for drinking water, make adequate arrangements at that polling station(s) for storage of drinking water in earthen pots and one employee or a daily wage-earner shall be deployed at that polling station(s) to refill the water pots and serve water to the voters standing in queue.

**v. Electricity Arrangement**

Make sure that the inside of the voting compartment is sufficiently lighted. If necessary, arrangement for a suitable lighting should be done for each compartment. There should be proper electricity arrangements at the polling stations. If the power connection is available, the condition of switches / bulbs / fans should be checked. If power connection is not there, alternative arrangement should be made by hiring generator sets etc. so that, on the poll day, those polling stations are properly lighted.

**vi. Furniture etc.**

There should be proper provision for basic amenities like tables, chairs, benches, and shade for voters standing in the queue at the polling stations.

**vii. Help Desk**

In the polling station locations having multiple polling stations, a Help Desk should be set up with the objective of providing assistance to the voters, facilitating the voters to locate their particular polling station and issuance of voter slips. The Help Desk shall be set up at a prominent spot so that the same is easily visible and approachable to voters as they approach the premise/building.

**viii. Proper Signage**

Proper signage should be put at the polling station locations for guidance of the voters about the route / layout of the location, facilities available (like ramp, toilet, drinking water etc.) and Help Desk.

**ix. Toilets**

There should be separate toilets for men and women electors. In the polling station locations having multiple polling stations, one employee or a daily wage-earner shall be deployed to keep the toilet clean throughout the day.



Annexure-I

|                                     |            |   |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---|
| 576/3/98/JUD-II                     | 19-01-1998 | General Elections to the House of People and State Legislative Assemblies, 1998 - Facilities to be Provided to the Electors Having Physical Disabilities - Regarding.                     |
| 576/3/2004/JS-II                    | 07-04-2004 | General Elections to the House of People and State Legislative Assemblies, 2004 - Facilities to be Provided to the Electors Having Physical Disabilities - Regarding.                     |
| 509/110/2004-JS-I                   | 21-04-2004 | In the Supreme Court of India - WP (Civil) No.187 of 2004 - Disabled Rights Group Vs. Chief Election Commissioner & Anr.  |
| 509/110/2004-JS-I                   | 20-10-2005 | Providing Facilities to the Disabled Voters.  |
| 509/110/2004-JS-I                   | 26-10-2007 | Facilities to be Provided to Electors with Disability - Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(Civil) No.187 of 2004 - Disabled Rights Group Vs. The Chief Election Commissioner & Anr. |
| 509/110/2004-JS-I (Vol.II)/RCC/1730 | 17-10-2008 | Facilities to be Provided to Electors with Disability - Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(Civil) No.187 of 2004 - Disabled Rights Group Vs. The Chief Election Commissioner & Anr. |
| 576/3/2009/SDR                      | 24-03-2009 | Facilities to be provided to electors with disability - Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(Civil) No.187 of 2004 - Publicity of Commission's Instructions - Regarding.              |
| 51/8/2009-EMS                       | 12-02-2009 | Introduction of Braille Signage Features in Electronic Voting Machines.   |
| 51/8/2009-EMS                       | 18-03-2009 | Introduction of Braille Signage Features in Electronic Voting Machines.   |
| 464/2009-EPS                        | 30-04-2009 | Facilities for Senior citizen and Physically Challenged Voters - Regarding.   |
| 576/11/ESO24/94-J.S.II              | 21-10-1994 | General elections to State Legislative Assemblies -1994 Special Facilities in Polling Stations for Women Electors.  |
| 464/INST/2011/EPS                   | 26-12-2011 | Special Facilities in Polling Stations for Women Electors - Regarding.  |
| 458/4/98/PLN-IV                     | 01-06-1998 | Byc-elections in June, 1998 - Facilities at Polling Stations During the Hot Weather Conditions.   |
| 23/LOCATOR/2007-ERS                 | 05-11-2007 | Preparation of Electoral Roll in Alphabetical Order - Regarding.  |



