

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/28/2015

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Press Release

The Election Commission of India organized a National Consultation on "Political Finance and Law Commission Recommendations" which was held at Vigyan Bhawan on 30th March 2015.

This consultation had been initiated on the backdrop of the 255th Report of the Law Commission which had been presented on the 12th March 2015, making various recommendations for electoral reforms in the country.

The seminar was attended by Justice A. P. Shah, Chairman, Law Commission, Former Chief Election Commissioners Sh. Lyngdoh, Sh. Krishnamurthy, Sh. Gopaldaswami, Sh. Chawla and Sh. Quraishi, Sh. Satyanand Mishra, Former Chief Information Commissioner, Sh. S. S. Khan, Former Member, CBDT, and other distinguished guests comprising of representatives of political parties, eminent lawyers, academicians, Media representatives, Civil Society representatives and student representatives.

The session was started with welcome by Sh. P. K. Dash, Director General, ECI, opening remarks by Dr. Nasim Zaidi, Election Commissioner and address by Sh. H. S. Brahma, Chief Election Commissioner. Justice A. P. Shah, Chairman, Law Commission addressed the general session giving brief overview of the Law Commission recommendations on Political Finance.

This was followed by Technical Sessions on four different topics namely:- International Best Practices on Political Finance, Law Commission recommendations and expanding in-kind Government subsidy during election campaign; recommendations on contribution to political parties and candidates and Law Commission recommendations and reforms on accounting and disclosure of election expenses by parties, candidates and 3rd party campaigners and reforms on vote buying.

The topics were discussed and deliberated in great detail by the participants in their respective groups. The groups made presentations summarizing their views on the topics deliberated by them.


Finally, the day long National Consultation was concluded with a valedictory address by the Chief Election Commissioner Sh. H. S. Brahma and Dr. Nasim Zaidi, Election Commissioner.

The consultation groups made important observations and gave their considered opinion on various aspects of political finance in India and recommendations made by the Law Commission in its 255th Report.

There was broad consensus on the following issues . However, it is not exhaustive list.

1. 'Big Money' in election to be controlled.
2. Vote buying to be controlled within law.
3. Transparency of accounts of parties / candidates .
4. No corporate donation to political party.
5. National Electoral Trust under the control of Election Commission for corporate donations.
6. ECI to be given power to make rules.
7. Third party campaigners to be monitored.
8. Fast Track Courts to try election offences.

The detailed report on National Consultation will be compiled and will be made available on the Commission's Website.


(Dhirendra Ojha)
Director