

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/41/2017

Dated:17th May 2017

PRESS NOTE

Workshop on Electoral Risk Management Tool

International IDEA and ECI officials gather for an exchange on ERMT



Honourable Commission and senior officers of ECI at ERMT workshop

Strategic Plan (2016-2025) prepared by Election Commission of India has envisaged Electoral Risk Management as its 15th Pillar for implementation for which a committee constituted by the Commission drafted an Electoral Risk Management Manual. In furtherance of the Risk Management objectives, IIIDEM facilitated a one day workshop at ECI premises with representatives from International IDEA on May 15, 2017 and senior ECI officials.

Senior officials of Election Commission of India, selected Chief Electoral Officers and Mr. Adhy Aman and Mr. Sead Alihodzic of International IDEA participated in the workshop.

Inaugurating the workshop, Chief Election Commissioner Dr. Nasim Zaidi said that Risk Management tools are helpful to conduct free and fair elections. This ensures the trust and confidence of people in the election management process. He said that with close to 180 identified risks in election management being mentioned in the ERM manual, it is now important to study the risks carefully for appropriate identification and mitigation so that these risks or the new ones that may arise can be tackled accordingly.

Dr Zaidi further advised IIIDEM to incorporate targeted courses on Electoral Risk Management in its annual work plan wherein customized training is conducted for all officers even at the basic level. These are to be held right before any Parliament or Assembly Elections to ensure that all the staff involved in conduct of elections is abreast with electoral risks in an appropriate and timely manner.

Welcoming the initiative undertaken by IIIDEM, Election Commissioner Mr. O.P. Rawat said “Since Risk Management in Elections is continuously evolving; visualizing risks also needs to be a continuing process.” He elaborated that “even the smallest of slips here and there, during election management can lead to major debacles, hence it is important to sharpen such tools that can help mitigate any future risks in election management”.

In his address, Election Commissioner Mr. A. K. Joti commended that India has traversed a journey of 67 years in conducting successful elections. It is during this 67 year journey that ECI has established itself globally for being a transparent body wherein no voter is left behind. However it is imperative to adhere to innovative methods for adopting technology and mitigating risks since there are a large number of stakeholders involved such as political parties, candidates, media and civil society et.al. He congratulated the Manual Drafting Committee and International IDEA for their efforts in bringing out the ERM manual by assimilating the various risks that pose a threat to Indian election management.

Later, Mr Adhy Aman and Mr Sead Alihodzic talked about how International IDEA began their work on developing the ERM tool in 2009 but formally launched it in 2013. They mentioned that despite the tool being generic it is customizable. International IDEA, in collaboration with ECI, is interested in developing the tool further for appropriate Electoral risk Management. It was pointed out that ERM Manual published by the ECI is first document on ERM, outside International IDEA and will go a long way for other EMBs of the world to replicate it.

Mr C.B. Prasad, CEO Delhi made a presentation on the ERM Manual prepared by the ECI and Mr Umesh Sinha Deputy Election Commissioner, ECI made presentation on Vulnerability exercise undertaken by ECI before every election. Participants made valuable contributions by their inputs. Attention of the participants was invited to the recommendation made in the manual to create appropriate IT tools to make ERM more effective to which Mr. Sead offered sharing of the source code of their ERMT free of cost in case ECI is interested. The ECI can customize the tool to the local requirements as necessary. He also offered to train a team of experts in International IDEA HQ for taking the customization forward.

CEOs of Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur, Goa and West Bengal also attended the workshop and shared the theoretical and practical considerations for Risk Management of elections.

(Dhirendra Ojha)
Director