

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

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PRESS NOTE

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ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA TO CONDUCT SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR ASIAN ELECTION OFFICIALS

ECI CHAIRS EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING OF ASSOCIATION OF ASIAN ELECTION AUTHORITIES

Election Commission of India hosted the 2015 Executive Board meeting of the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA) in New Delhi today, coinciding with the International Day of Democracy (September 15), as declared by the United Nations. Dr. Nasim Zaidi, being chairperson of AAEA for two years term presided over the meeting as the current Chair of the Executive Board. Senior representatives from Election Commission of Bhutan, Mongolia and Republic of Korea participated in the deliberations of the Executive Board.



AAEA Executive Board members with Dr. Nasim Zaidi, Chief Election Commissioner of India and Chairperson of AAEA along with Election Commissioners Sh. A. K. Joti and Sh. O. P. Rawat.

Dr. Zaidi stressed that AAEA should make itself truly representative by admitting more Asian countries. He also reiterated ECI's commitment to experience sharing and capacity building of EMBs in the region. The Executive Board decided to invite Election Authorities from other Asian countries to seek membership of the Association. The Executive Board also agreed on an updated Work Plan for 2015-16, which would include exchange of experiences through election visits, conferences and seminars on election-related themes and capacity building of Election Authorities in the region. As part of the agreed Work Plan, ECI will conduct a special training programme in 2016 for AAEA members.

The Executive Board meets annually to discuss important issues and report to the General Assembly of the Association which meets every two years.

After the Executive Board meeting, ECI also hosted a half-day seminar on election-related themes where presentations were made by delegates from Bhutan, Mongolia and India. The presentations from Bhutan and India focussed on voter education and inclusiveness in the electoral process, while Mongolia's presentation focussed on the use of automated systems in voter enrolment, voting and counting. Besides Dr. Nasim Zaidi, Election Commissioners, Mr. A.K. Joti and Mr. O.P. Rawat and senior officers of ECI participated in the Seminar. The participants acknowledged the seminar as an extremely useful way of sharing experiences and learning from one another.

India is a founding member of AAEA which was established in 1998 and, with admission of three new members in 2014, now has 20 member-countries. Besides India, other members are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The organisation's vision is to promote and institutionalize open and transparent elections, independent and impartial election authorities, professionalization of Asian election authorities, citizen participation in the electoral and civic process, information sharing, and the development of resources for election-related information and research.

(Dhirendra Ojha)
Director