

# ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi – 110001

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## PRESS NOTE

### **DELEGATION OF 33 YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM 19 AFRICAN COUNTRIES VISIT ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA**

A 33-member delegation of young Parliamentarians from nineteen African countries, namely Burundi/Guinea/ Ghana/Ivory Coast/Liberia/Sao Tome Principe/Madagascar/Malawi/Mauritius/Morocco/Mozambique/Niger/ Sudan/Seychelles/Somalia /Tanzania/Tunisia/Zambia & Zimbabwe visited the Election Commission of India today. The delegation is visiting India from 30 July to 05 August, 2017 under Development Cooperation Projects of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The delegation met the Chief Election Commissioner, Mr. A.K.Joti and Election Commissioner, Mr. O.P.Rawat.

Chief Election Commissioner of India, Mr. A.K.Joti, in his address, gave an overview of the election process in India and briefed the visiting delegates about the innovations and initiatives introduced by the ECI in managing the elections including the evolution of our voting system from paper ballot cast manually in 1950s to the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) being used in India for the last more than thirty years and the introduction of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT). On ECI's active international outreach programme, he mentioned that ECI's contacts with Election Management Bodies abroad have been expanding and ECI has been sharing best practices, experience and innovations with other countries for mutual benefit. ECI has signed Memorandum of Understanding with over 20 countries and four international organisations. The very first country with which India signed an MoU way back in September 2004, was an African country – Ivory Coast. Thereafter, ECI has signed MoUs with four other countries in Africa, namely South Africa, Egypt, Libya and Mauritius. Proposals for signing of MoUs with Guinea, Namibia and Kenya are under consideration. He also briefed the delegates about objectives of ECIs' Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme and initiatives like 'No Voter To Be Left Behind' taken by the ECI to optimize the enrolment of voters.

Election Commissioner, Mr. O.P. Rawat, who also addressed the delegates, mentioned that participation of youth in the democratic process is critical for the success of democracy in any country. In this regard, systematic voter education is very important. He also mentioned that a robust, efficient and objective system for redressal of grievances for the public at large is also essential so that movement like Arab Spring never arise again.



*Hon'ble Commission addressing the delegation*



*Delegation from 19 African countries during the briefing*

A PowerPoint presentation was made about the structure, role and work of ECI in managing the largest election exercise in the world. This was followed by a Question and Answer session wherein queries from the delegates relating to gender equality, appointment of CEC/EC, voting by Indian diaspora etc. were answered.

**(Suman Kumar Das)**  
Under Secretary (Media)