

**BY FAX/CAMP BAG**

# **Election Commission of India**

**Nirvachan Sadan, Ashok Road, New Delhi -110001**

No. 464/MR-LA/2012(Inst.)

Dated: 01.03.2012

To

The Chief Electoral Officer,  
Manipur,  
Imphal.

**Sub:- General Election to Manipur Legislative Assembly - Counting of Postal Ballot Papers-regarding.**

**Sir,**

I am directed to state that the Commission has received some complaints in respect of Thoubal and Bishnupur districts that some electors who were requisitioned for poll duty or security personnel drafted for maintenance of law and order on the poll day and accordingly issued with Postal Ballot Papers, also voted in person on EVM at the polling station on the poll day.

2. In view of the above, the Commission has decided that on the day of counting of votes of the Assembly Constituencies falling within these two districts, special steps would be taken to reject these Postal Ballots.

3. The Commission has decided that the following methodology may be adopted for counting of postal ballot papers of the concerned constituencies of Thoubal and Bishnupur Districts of Manipur:

I. If anyone of the candidates, their election agents or counting agents present at the RO/ARO's Table, where postal ballots are being counted, raises a doubt in respect of any postal ballot paper on the ground that the person has also voted at the polling station on the day of poll, those postal ballot papers shall not be taken up for counting unless action is taken by the RO/ARO concerned to satisfy himself that the elector has actually not cast his vote in person at the polling station.

II. In order to arrive at such satisfaction, the following documents should also be kept inside the counting hall: -

- (a) The **REGISTER** showing the account of Postal Ballot Papers issued to electors on the basis of applications received in Form-12;
- (b) Sealed packet containing the **counterfoils of Postal Ballots issued**;
- (c) **Marked copies of Electoral Roll** for all polling stations in which **PB/PBFC** markings have been made;
- (d) **Registers of Voters in Form-17A** used at the polling stations to mark the presence of the electors who voted in person at the polling station on the day of poll.

4. The following procedure shall be followed for counting of Postal Ballots received before commencement of the counting of votes: -

(i) The covers in Form 13C received in time should be opened one after another.

(ii) As each cover is opened, the RO/ARO in charge of counting of postal ballot papers should take out the *Declaration made by the elector in Form 13-A* and the cover in Form 13-B and scrutinize the declaration. If the declaration in Form 13-A is not found in the cover or the declaration has not been duly signed and/or not attested by an officer competent to do so or is otherwise substantially defective or if the serial number of ballot paper appearing in the declaration is different from the serial number on the cover in Form 13-B, the cover containing the postal ballot paper should not be opened and the cover and the ballot paper contained therein should be treated as rejected. Each such rejected cover in Form 13-B should be endorsed suitably and the declaration and the cover should be placed back in the cover in form 13-C. All such covers in Form 13-C should be kept together in a separate packet duly sealed and full particulars such as the name of the constituency, the date of counting and a brief description of contents should be noted thereon for easy identification.

(iii) The name of the elector mentioned in the declaration in Form 13-A, which is found to be in order, should then be *read out aloud* so that the candidates/their election agents/counting agents present to oversee the counting of postal ballot papers can hear it.

(iv) In case, any doubt is raised in respect of such name by anyone present, then the said declaration in Form 13A, together with its cover “B”(Form 13-C) and the cover “A” (Form 13-B) in which the polled postal ballot is put by the elector, should be kept aside.

(v) In case of those declarations in Form13A for which no doubt is raised after the name is read out aloud, those declarations shall be kept in separate packet in order to ensure that the secrecy of the postal ballot is kept inviolate.

(vi) After all the declarations in Form 13A are read out and the ones for which doubt has been raised are kept aside, action should be taken to identify the particulars of the doubtful electors, i.e. the electoral roll part no. and the serial no. within that part where the name of the person is entered.

(vii) For this purpose, the sealed packet containing the counterfoils of postal ballot papers issued shall be opened and from the serial no. of the ballot paper noted on the declaration in **Form 13-A**, the concerned **counterfoil** should be taken out and the part no./serial no of the elector mentioned thereon should be noted.

(viii) Thereafter, the **Register of Voters in Form 17A** of the concerned polling station should be examined to find out whether the serial no. of that elector also appears in Col. (2) of that Register and to verify whether the elector has also voted in person. In case it is found to be true, then the Postal Ballot should be cancelled with the remark “cancelled as the elector also voted in person at the polling station”.

(ix) After all the declarations in Form 13A have been scrutinized in the above manner, the ones found proper should be kept inside a packet and then be sealed noting thereon the particulars regarding the name of the constituency, the date of counting and brief description of the contents. This should be done before the covers in Form 13-B containing the ballot papers are opened.

(x) The covers in Form 13B containing the Postal Ballots of the undisputed declarations in Form 13A should be opened one after the other and the validity of the ballot papers determined after due scrutiny and counted. The instructions given in the RO Handbook for counting of Postal Ballots shall be scrupulously followed.

5. The above instructions may be brought to the notice of Returning Officers, Observers and all concerned. The instructions issued from your office in this regard, may also be endorsed to the Commission for its information and record.

Yours faithfully,

(ANUJ JAIPURIAR)  
SECRETARY