

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI -110001.

No. 52/2012/SDR

Date: 13th August, 2012

To

The Chief Electoral Officers
of all States/U.T.s.

Subject: Guidelines for smooth management of Postal Ballot Papers for Drivers/conductors and cleaners of vehicles requisitioned on poll duty -regarding.

Ref: - ECI letters No. 52/2008 JS-II dated 21.10.2008, No. 52/2009/JS-II/SDR dated 04.02.2009 and No.59/2009/SDR(JS-II) dated 25.03.2009.

Sir,

The Commission has issued detailed guidelines for smooth management of Postal ballot Papers to service voters, polling officials drafted for poll duty, police and security personnel and drivers/ cleaners/ helpers who are attached to the vehicles requisitioned for election duty, vide its above cited letters.

2. There has been considerable improvement in the system of issue of Postal ballot papers and their return to the Returning Officer after voting. However there is still scope for further improvement in the system. The following supplementary guidelines are issued to further improve the system of postal ballots for Drivers/conductors and cleaners of vehicles requisitioned on poll duty: -

- a) The District Election Officer should nominate a nodal officer for requisition of vehicles for poll duty. It shall be the duty of the nodal officer to collect information needed to issue postal ballots to drivers/conductors/cleaners of requisitioned vehicles. The nodal officer shall first make an effort to collect this information from vehicle owners. For this purpose, the nodal officers should enclose a format for collection of information about EPIC number, complete postal address, serial number in part of electoral roll,

name and number of Assembly constituency, name and number of polling station where the driver/conductor/cleaner is enrolled along with the requisition order sent to the owner of the vehicle to be requisitioned with a request to send this information to the nodal officer as early as possible. Vehicle owners should also be informed that this information can be easily found out by doing a name search on the internet at the website of the CEO and also by sending an SMS query. Vehicle owners should also be directed that the drivers/conductors/cleaners of requisitioned vehicles should bring their EPIC when they report for duty. If they are not enrolled in the electoral roll they should be immediately asked to fill up a Form 6 for enrollment. For this purpose blank Form 6 should be sent to the vehicle owners along with requisition order. This information should be entered in the database of requisitioned vehicles as soon as it is received.

- b) A computer with internet connection should be provided at the place where requisitioned vehicles report for duty. One officer fully trained in the process of elector search both on the website and by SMS should be available at this place. A register with format for collection of information required for issuing postal ballots should be available with this officer. As soon as a requisitioned vehicle reports on duty, this officer should fill information about EPIC number, complete postal address, serial number in part of electoral roll, name and number of Assembly constituency, name and number of polling station where the driver/conductor/cleaner is enrolled in the register. The officer concerned may get this information from the EPIC of the driver/conductor/cleaner. The officer may use elector search facility on CEO website and SMS query facility to search for the elector information in case the driver/conductor/ cleaner do not remember their elector information and have not brought EPIC with them. The information should be entered in the database of requisitioned vehicles on a daily basis.

- c) In case any Driver/conductor or cleaner on poll duty is not registered in the electoral roll and is eligible for enrollment, he/she should be advised by the officer to fill up the application in FORM- 6 for inclusion of his/ her name. If he/she fills up the application in Form 6, it should be immediately sent to the concerned ERO, who should enroll the concerned person after following due procedure and also issue an EPIC to him/her. The ERO should then communicate the information about AC, Part and serial number in the Part, to the DEO and RO, so that this information can be entered in the database.
- d) If the driver/conductor/cleaner concerned is already enrolled but does not have an EPIC, the nodal officer should get a Form 8 filled by the concerned person and send it to the ERO concerned for making EPIC. EPIC will then be made by the ERO, who will get it delivered to the concerned driver/conductor/cleaner through the nodal officer.
- e) Software for printing applications in Form 12 for requesting the issue of postal ballots should be developed by the CEO. RO should print application forms in Form 12 for all the drivers/conductors/cleaners of requisitioned vehicles and send them to nodal officer in charge of vehicle requisition. The nodal officer of vehicle requisition shall get Form-12 signed by the drivers/conductors/cleaners of requisitioned vehicles and send them back to the RO at least 7 days before the poll date so that the RO can issue postal ballots to them and make entries of "PB" in the marked copy of the roll. Postal ballots should then be sent to the nodal officer.
- f) Returning officer should prepare postal ballot papers for all drivers/conductors/cleaners whose application forms in Form-12 are received from the nodal officer of vehicle requisition. The nodal officer should then organize a special facilitation camp for drivers/conductors/cleaners on poll duty for facilitation of casting of postal ballots by them. This can be done one day before the date of dispatch of

polling parties, on the day of dispatch of polling parties or on the day of return of polling parties. Pre-prepared postal ballot papers should be given to the nodal officer in advance for every driver/conductor/cleaner on poll duty from whom Form 12 is received. This officer shall maintain a register to keep an account of postal ballot papers received by him and issued to the drivers/conductors/cleaners on poll duty. Signatures of drivers/conductors/cleaners on poll duty, who are issued postal ballot papers, shall be obtained in the register as a token of having received the postal ballot. Pre-prepared postal ballot papers which are not issued for any reason such as the driver/conductor/cleaner being absent, shall be returned to the RO. The RO will keep these postal ballot papers in his safe custody and attempt to issue them to drivers/conductors/cleaners in any subsequent facilitation camps by following the same procedure which is described above.

- g) The RO shall keep all unissued pre-prepared postal ballot papers in a separate sealed cover with proper record of drivers/conductors/cleaners who could not be issued postal ballot papers.
- h) In the past there have been complaints that taxi and vehicle unions and some other persons have tried to influence the postal ballots of drivers/conductors/cleaners. In order to prevent such a thing from happening it shall be ensured that during the time when postal ballots are being cast nobody except a person authorized by the Returning Officer and the persons who have to cast their postal ballot shall remain present in the room where postal ballots are being cast. A separate enclosure shall be made in the room so that the voter can mark his postal ballot in complete secrecy and privacy without interference from anybody. The RO shall ensure that one Gazatted officer is present for verification of declaration in Form 13A. A ballot box shall be kept at the facilitation center, and voters who have been issued postal ballot papers should be told that they can post their postal ballots in this ballot box after marking

them. The procedure of marking and posting of postal ballot papers should be explained in a clear and succinct manner. Time should also be given for filling up declaration in Form 13A, verification by Gazetted officer, marking of postal ballot, and posting of postal ballot in the ballot box. The procedure to be followed before the postal ballot is dropped in the ballot box should be clearly explained.

3. You are requested to bring these instructions to the notice of all concerned and obtain acknowledgement from them.
4. These instructions should also be brought to the notice of all recognized political parties and candidates.

Yours faithfully,

(Ashish Chakraborty)
SECRETARY