

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi 110 001

K.N. Bhar
Secretary

No.51/8/7/2010

Dated: 23rd September, 2010

To,

1. The Chief Electoral Officer, Bihar, Patna.
2. Chief Electoral Officers of all States and UTs (except Bihar).

Reference: 1. Commission's letter No. 51/8/7/2007-PLN-IV, dated 12/10/2007.
2. Commission's letter No. 464/OBS/EVM/2007 PLN-IV, dated 12/10/2007.
3. Commission's letter No. 51/8/7/2008-EMS (Inat.-I), dated 11/8/2008.

Sub: Preparation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) during elections- reg.

Sir,

In addition of the instructions of the Commission on the subject cited, the following shall also be strictly done during process of preparation of EVMs during elections.

- 1. Preparation of EVMs shall be done in the presence of representatives of candidates.**

Preparation of EVMs for elections shall be done invariably in the presence of representatives of candidates. The Returning Officer shall draw a schedule for preparation of EVMs. Preparation of EVM should start as soon as possible after the last date of withdrawal of candidatures. Sufficient time should be provided for preparation of EVMs for each Assembly Constituency in the case of Assembly Elections and for each assembly segment in the case of Parliamentary Elections. It may be noted that the time required for preparation of EVM under the new instructions will be sufficiently more than the time required earlier. Therefore, the schedule should be fixed in such a manner that preparation of EVM is not done in a hurried manner. Ideally, the Returning Officer should fix between 3-5 days for each assembly segment for this purpose. In case of Parliamentary Elections, preparation of EVM for assembly segment should be supervised by Assistant Returning Officers. The schedule should be made in such a manner that preparation of EVMs is done for all the assembly segments in separate halls and is completed at least 8 – 10 days before the poll. Candidates should be informed in

writing of the schedule for preparation of EVMs and should be requested to be present or send their representatives at the time of preparation of EVMs. On the day of the preparation, a register in Annexure-A will be kept by the Returning Officer in which the signature of candidates or their representatives will be taken as token of their presence.

2. Arrangements in the premises of preparation of EVM.

Preparation shall be carried out in a large hall which can accommodate all EVMs to be prepared. The hall should be able to accommodate officers nominated by the District Election Officer, engineers of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL) and also representatives of candidates. Before the hall is used for preparation, it shall be fully sanitized to ensure that the hall is free from any other electronic device or components of electronic devices. Every entry to the hall shall be guarded by police force. Every hall shall have a doorframe metal detector. Every person who enters the hall shall be frisked at every entry. Entry to this hall shall be on production of Identity Card of the authorized officials/passes issued by the District Election Officer (DEO). Nobody will be allowed to carry any electronic device inside the hall including cell phones, camera and spy pens. Similarly, nobody will be allowed to carry anything out of the preparation hall.

3. Manpower for preparation.

Only the authorized engineers of BEL and ECIL shall be associated with the preparation of EVMs. BEL and ECIL shall be fully responsible for the integrity, efficiency and competence of their engineers. List of engineers deputed by BEL and ECIL for carrying out task during the preparation of EVM in a district alongwith their identity card numbers etc. shall be communicated in writing by BEL and ECIL to the DEO. No engineers, technicians or other technical staff except authorized engineers/technical staff of BEL and ECIL shall be allowed to enter the preparation hall. Authorized persons will be allowed to enter the preparation hall only after proper identification using photo identity documents. It may be noted that a separate team will be required for each EVM in which 1000 votes are cast during mock poll because the time required for casting of 1000 votes will be at least 4 hours.

4. **Additional tasks during preparation.**

Detailed instructions of the tasks to be done during preparation of EVMs have been given in the letters referred to above. In addition to these tasks, following additional tasks shall be performed: -

- (a) **Checking of Balloting Units (BUs)**: BUs shall be opened completely and shown to candidates and their representatives at the time of preparation of EVMs. BU shall be examined by BEL and ECIL engineers who will certify as in Annexure-B that all components of BUs are original. If any BU is found defective, it will be kept aside and can be taken back to the factory of BEL and ECIL for repairs. No repairs shall be carried out in the field. Changing of components in the field is strictly prohibited. Detailed instructions of checking of BU shall be issued separately by BEL and ECIL for their respective machines. These instructions will include a list of equipment which the engineers will be required to carry within the preparation hall. Security personnel will not allow any other equipment to be carried into the preparation hall.
- (b) **Conduct of Mock Poll**: Casting of votes against all 16 candidate switches, observation of result & clearing of mock poll data will be done for each EVM. In 10 % (ten percent) of EVMs at least 1000 votes shall be polled during the mock poll. In rest of the machines number of votes polled during the mock poll should be to the satisfaction of the representatives of candidates. Representatives of candidates shall be allowed to do the mock poll themselves. Signature of representatives of candidates shall be taken in a register in Annexure –C as a token of having done mock poll themselves. It may be ensured that the pink paper seal of the CU which has been applied on the CU at the time of FLC is not damaged in any manner in this process.
- (c) **Demonstration of printout of results**: A printout of the results of mock poll as well as a sequential print out of every vote polled during the mock poll shall be taken out for at least 10% of EVMs and shown to the representatives of political parties. Representatives of candidates shall be allowed to pick machines randomly for this purpose. Signatures of representatives of candidates shall be taken in a register in Annexure- D as a token of having seen the print out and confirm that there is no discrepancy between the votes polled during the mock poll and results in the print out.

- (d) **Sealing of plastic cabinet of BU with pink paper seal:** Detailed instructions of BU with thread seals already exists. Those instructions shall be followed. In addition, the BU shall be sealed with a special “pink paper seal” supplied by India Security Press, Nasik, in the presence of candidates or their representatives at the time of preparation of EVMs. Pink paper seal shall be fixed at the lower most portion of the BU in such a manner that no candidate’s button or candidate’s name or symbol is hidden by the seal. After affixing the pink paper seal, BEL and ECIL engineer shall put his signature on the pink paper seal. Candidates or their representatives shall also be allowed to put their signatures on the pink paper seal with name of the candidate, party before the signature. Candidates and their representatives should also be allowed to note down the serial number of the pink paper seal on the CU. A register in Annexure - E shall be maintained to note down the serial no. of the pink paper seal used on the ballot unit by clearly mentioning unique ID of the BU and pink paper seal no. Signatures of candidates and their representatives will also be obtained on this register. Photo copies of this register will be given free of cost to all candidates once preparation is over.
- (e) **Supervision of the preparation:** Preparation shall be supervised either personally by the RO or one of the AROs deputed by the RO for this purpose. The process of preparation of EVM should be fully videographed.

Copy of this letter should be given to all the national and State level political parties. Copy of this letter should also be given to all contesting candidates after the withdrawal of candidates in any election.

Yours faithfully,

(K.N. Bhar)

Annexure-A
(Register for Preparation of EVMs)

Name of State/UT:

Name of District:

Address of Preparation of EVM hall:

Date:

S.No.	Name of candidate	Name of representative of candidates with party affiliation, if any	Identity document No. with date	Signature of candidates/ His representative	Remarks, if any.

Note: If a candidate or his representative is absent the proof of due service of notice to the candidate should be pasted in the register.

(Name and signature of engineers of BEL/ECIL with ID No.)

(Name, designation, signature of officers nominated by District Election Officer)

Annexure-B
(Certification of EVMs by BEL/ECIL)

Name of State/UT:

Name of District:

Address of hall:

Date:

It is certified that tests prescribed by BEL/ECIL to ascertain that all components are original were carried out on the Ballot Unit listed below on..... (date). On the basis of these tests it is certified that all components of the Ballot Unit listed below are original.

BU Identification No.

(Name & signature of BEL/ECIL engineers with ID No.)

