

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi – 110 001

No. ECI/PN/5/2009

Dated : 3rd February, 2009

PRESS NOTE

Subject : Meeting with all recognized political parties to discuss issues related to conduct of elections.

The Commission convened a meeting today with all recognized National and State political parties to discuss issues related to the forthcoming general elections. Representatives of all the seven National parties and 26 out of the 40 State parties attended the meeting. A list of the parties, which were represented in the meeting, is annexed.

The Commission emphasized on observance of the Model Code of Conduct in letter and spirit. The Commission urged the parties to strictly avoid communal overtones in election campaign. The Commission also mentioned about the need to curb corrupt practices and malpractices of bribing of electors with money, liquor and gifts in various forms, and about the need to monitor and curb surrogate advertisements. The Commission urged the political parties to avail the facility of appointing Booth Level Agents to help improve the quality of the electoral rolls.

The political parties gave their views on the timing and phasing of elections. Most of the parties suggested shortest possible duration of the whole election process, while taking into account various National, State holidays, Board exam schedule and other sensitivities. They suggested that in States where single day poll had been held in the past, the same procedure should be followed. Most of the parties stressed the need to have Central Police Forces coverage in all places for ensuring free and fair poll, while a

few parties had the view that Central Police Forces should be need based and not as a general rule.

The parties dealt with the issue of electoral rolls, and about the need for sustained efforts at the field level to remove the errors in the rolls and in the maximization of Electoral Photo Identity Cards. They agreed with the Commission on the need for effective steps for ensuring compliance with the Model Code of Conduct and level playing field for all parties and candidates. The parties almost unanimously pleaded for taking effective measures to combat surrogate advertisements and attempts to misuse the print media to plant customized reports projecting particular candidates/parties. Several parties demanded ban on publishing the results of opinion polls and exit polls till the completion of poll in all phases. Some parties requested for relaxation in the matter of use of posters and banners, wall writing for election campaign and some called for a total ban on hoardings and large sized banners and flags. While acknowledging the initiatives taken to streamline the postal ballot procedure for persons on election duty, some parties emphasized the need for further close monitoring of this procedure. There were also demand for counting of votes in such a manner that the booth-wise voting pattern is not known in order to prevent chances of post election victimization and intimidation of electors.

All the parties assured the Commission of their whole-hearted support in the conduct of smooth, free and fair elections.

(S.K.RUDOLA)
SECRETARY

POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH ATTENDED THE MEETING ON
3RD FEBRUARY, 2009

NATIONAL PARTIES

Sl. No.	Name of the Party
1.	Bahujan Samaj Party
2.	Bharatiya Janata Party
3.	Communist Party of India
4.	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
5.	Indian National Congress
6.	Nationalist Congress Party
7.	Rashtriya Janata Dal

STATE PARTIES

S. No.	Name of the party
1.	All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
2.	All India Forward Bloc
3.	All India Trinamool Congress
4.	Assam United Democratic Front
5.	Asom Gana Parishad
6.	Biju Janata Dal
7.	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
8.	Indian National Lok Dal
9.	Jammu & Kashmir National Conference
10.	Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party
11.	Janata Dal (Secular)
12.	Janata Dal (United)
13.	Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
14.	Mizo National Front
15.	Nagaland Peoples Front
16.	National People's Party
17.	Pattali Makkal Katchi
18.	Pudhucherry Munnetra Congress
19.	Revolutionary Socialist Party
20.	Samajwadi Party
21.	Save Goa Front

22.	Shiromani Akali Dal
23.	Shiv Sena
24.	Sikkim Democratic Front
25.	Telangana Rashtra Samithi
26.	Telugu Desam