

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/60/2009

Dated: 6th November 2009

Press Note

Subject--- Bye Election to Lok Sabha/State Legislative Assembly, 2009 – Deployment of CPFs – Regarding.

Reports have appeared in a section of the press in the state of Kerala about some statements of the Chief Minister and others that the Central police forces deputed by the ECI in that state for the conduct of bye-polls will be “confined to the barracks” and will not be deployed at the polling stations on the day of the poll. This is not correct. The Central Police Forces shall not be confined to the barracks. They shall stand guard at the polling stations on the day of the poll to ensure free and fair election in accordance with Commission’s instructions.

The Commission invariably decides to draft and depute central police forces wherever elections are conducted, on the basis of various inputs that it receives from multiple sources including its observers and the assessment of ground realities. Based on this assessment of requirements, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is asked to provide the requisite police forces. Once these forces are deputed to the Commission, then it is the Commission which decides as to where and the manner in which the forces shall be deployed for conduct of free and fair polls, which is a mandate of the Constitution to the Commission.

Once drafted by the Commission, all police forces whether state or central, stand deputed to the Election Commission of India.

This is a time-tested practice. For the conduct of bye-elections to the 32 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) on 7th November 2009 too, central police forces have been deployed in Assam (2 ACs), West Bengal (10 ACs), UP (11 ACs and 1 PC), Rajasthan (2 ACs) and Kerala (3 ACs). In Kerala, the central forces have been deployed in all the three ACs of Allepey, Ernakulum and Kannur.

Actual district deployment plan is finalized by the Commission’s Observer in-charge of the constituency in consultation with the District Election Officer (DM) and the SP. Once finalized by the Commission’s Observer, the plan cannot be modified or

deviated from, without prior written approval of the Observer. The Commission's instructions specify that unless the deployment of central police forces as are envisaged in the plan is implemented on the ground and the Central Police Forces station themselves at the assigned polling station, the poll shall not commence.

The Constituency deployment plan of central police force has been finalized by the Observers in the case of bye-elections to Alleppey, Ernakulum and Kannur. It shall be ensured by the DEOs, the SPs and the Observers that the central police forces have reached their assigned polling stations by the evening of 6th November for the polls to proceed smoothly from 7th morning. After the poll is over, the Central Police Forces will escort the EVMs back to the strong room and guard the strong room.

The Commission has made all arrangements for a free and fair poll. While an observer each has been deputed to Alleppey and Ernakulum, in Kannur there are two observers of the ECI. The additional enrolment of voters and deletions have been field verified by door to door visit and the list of registered voters who were found to be absent, shifted or dead during such verification have been identified polling station wise. The polling station wise list of such voters has been given to the presiding officers and they have been trained to undertake a rigorous identification of any voter turning up for casting of vote from this list. Arrangements are in place for the poll day, to apprehend and take necessary penal action against the offenders. All sensitive polling stations shall have a static observer (Micro-observer) observing the poll proceedings from inside the polling station and reporting against any vitiation of the poll process.

The Election Commission of India would like to make it abundantly clear that it would spare no efforts, as it always does, for ensuring a free and fair poll in all the 32 Assembly Constituencies and one Lok Sabha Constituency in the 7 states which are going to poll on 7th November 2009.

(R.K.SRIVASTAVA)
SECRETARY