

To

Mr. Satya Dosapati

Sub: - Investigation by Maharashtra Police in the matter of a missing EVM.

Ref: - Your email dated 21st August 2010 addressed to the Chief Election Commissioner, and your telephone call to Deputy Election Commissioner, Dr. Alok Shukla and Director General, Mr. Akshay Rout.

Dear Mr. Dosapati,

Please refer to your email and telephonic conversation as cited above.

I am surprised at the allegation made in your letter that Shri Hariprasad has been got arrested by the Election Commission. This allegation is patently false. The arrest made by the police is in the course of an investigation conducted by them on an FIR lodged by DEO Mumbai as early as 12th May 2010 about an EVM stolen from her custody. The Commission cannot interfere in criminal investigation of the police in any manner and the law of the land takes its own course. You would recall that when the issue of the possible arrest of Shri Hariprasad on the FIR of the DEO, Mumbai was raised in the EVT-WOTE Conference at Washington DC on 9th August, 2010, I had made it clear even at that time that once an FIR has been registered, the Commission has no role in the investigation. You would also recall that I had reiterated this position during the telephonic conversation with you on 21st August 2010, referred to above. Mr. Rout, Director General, had also done the same.

As far as improvements in the voting system are concerned, the Commission has always had an open mind, and has had discussions with several persons on these matters including Mr. Hariprasad. Mr. Hariprasad has met the Commission on

several occasions. He came with Mr. V.V.Rao, on 17th August 2009 and again on 3rd September, 2009. The Commission has given Mr. Hariprasad a patient hearing, and has assured him that the Commission will consider his suggestions. At his request, EVMs were allowed to be examined by him, in the Commission Headquarters. Mr. Hariprasad met the Commission once again on 10th August 2010, with his other colleagues. This meeting was held in a very cordial atmosphere where the Commission categorically stated that it has an open mind in the matter and looks forward in receiving any suggestions for improving the electoral system. Reciprocating to this Mr.Hariprasad and his colleagues said that that they will come up with some positive suggestions. It was mutually agreed that this dialogue will continue in future, and that Mr. Hariprasad and his colleagues will meet the Commission again with more suggestions on a mutually convenient date.

In your mail, you have made several other baseless and irresponsible allegations and also cast aspersions on the working of the Election Commission and its officials. These do not merit any response other than dismissal considering the fact that Indian elections are totally free, fair and credible and acknowledged as such worldwide. Your allegations only betray your lack of knowledge of the Indian Constitution under which the Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional body completely insulated from any pressures.

(Alok Shukla)
Deputy Election Commissioner