

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110 001.

No. 51/8/7/2011-EMS

Dated: 14th February, 2012

To,

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States and Union Territories.

Sub:

Security measures for polled Electronic Voting Machines stored in Strong Rooms for counting of votes - regarding.

Sir,

I am directed to state that the following instructions shall be strictly followed for the security and safety of strong rooms where the polled EVMs are kept for counting of votes -

1. The strong rooms should have double lock system. One key should be kept with District Election Officer and the other with Returning Officer of concerned assembly constituency.
2. Two cordoned security arrangements should be made round the clock for the strong rooms having polled EVMs kept for counting of votes. The CPF should man the innermost perimeter security immediately outside the strong room and the State Armed Police should man the outermost perimeter security.
3. All contesting candidates should be intimated in writing to depute their representatives to keep a close watch on security arrangement of strong room. They should be allowed to stay outside the inner perimeter at a location, which enables them to view the entry points of the strong room. As far as possible, facilities such as proper shade, drinking water, etc. may be provided to them. If there is no direct view to the strong room, CCTV may be arranged at the location, so that they can see the strong room door on CCTV. In such a case, they may be taken periodically to the inner perimeter in batches to see for themselves and verify the strong room security.
4. A control room adjacent to the strong room SHOULD BE operative round the clock.

5. A Gazetted officer along with a police officer should be put on duty round the clock for monitoring the security arrangements of strong room.
6. There should be sufficient arrangement of fire extinguishers near and inside the strong room.
7. There should be an arrangement round the clock for the security of unused EVMs also.
8. No one should be allowed to enter the inner perimeter without following the protocol, as under:-
 - a) The log book shall be maintained by the CPF in which entry should be made about date, time, duration and name(s) of any one crossing the second security ring i.e. the middle perimeter. This includes visits by the Observers or DEOs or SPs or candidates or their agents or any other person.
 - b) Video cameras should be provided to the CPF contingent to record all visits made by such visitors.
9. It should be ensured that there is uninterrupted power supply at the strong room locations during the entire period wherein EVMs are stored. CEO may address the Chairman of Electricity Board concerned separately regarding this. Local Electricity Board officials should be asked to ensure the same. Contingency arrangement of stand by generators should be made to ensure uninterrupted power supply.
10. The phone nos. of CEO, Addl. CEOs, DEC in-charge in the ECI and the DEO/SP/COP/ROs concerned should be given to the candidates, who may provide the same to their people keeping vigil at the strong room location. They may be advised by the candidate to contact the officials in case of any need.
11. All the entry points (doors etc.) of strong rooms should be under constant videography using the web-cams and laptops available. If there are other doors of the strong room, they should also be covered by the web-cams/videography. Persons coming to take back-up from the laptops should have identity cards given to them and their names should be recorded in advance with the CPF contingent stationed there. Their visits should be videographed by the CPF contingent with the video camera provided for the entire duration.

12. Returning Officers should visit the storage campus (upto the inner perimeter only) every day in the morning and evening and check the log book and videography and send a report to the DEO on the status every day. In case of strong rooms located in the district headquarters, the DEO should do the same. Where the strong rooms are situated outside the District Headquarters, DEO should visit the same as frequently as possible and at least once in 3 to 4 days.
13. No vehicle, including that of any official or ministers or any other political functionary should be allowed inside the secured campus where the EVMs are stored. Alighting point for the vehicles should be marked clearly ahead of the outer security perimeter itself; beyond it should be a pedestrian zone only.
14. DCs and SPs shall be personally responsible for security of strong room within the district and meticulous implementation of the protocol. The copy of this letter should be made available to all candidates, DEOs, ROs and CPF commandant.

Yours faithfully,

(DILIP K VARMA)
UNDER SECRETARY

STANDARD DISTRIBUTION