

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001.

SUMIT MUKHERJEE

Tel No. 23717590

UNDER SECRETARY

Fax No. 23717590

No. 464/INST/2008/EPS

Dated: 21st January, 2009

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States/Uts.

Subject: General Election to the Lok Sabha, 2009 – Training of polling parties on EVMs and procedure to be followed at the polling station - regarding

Sir/Madam,

During previous elections, it has come to the notice of the Commission that there were some difficulties in the operation of Electronic Voting Machines at few polling stations due to the fact that they were not prepared correctly as per the operational manual at the time of initial preparation at the Returning Officers' level. While in some 'slide switch' on the balloting unit was found to be in wrong position, in others, certain other preparatory defects were noticed.

It has further come to the notice of the Commission that some of the Presiding Officers/Sector Magistrates do not take EVM training seriously with the result that they fail to operate the machine at the time of poll.

It has also been noted that some Polling Officers do not apply indelible ink on the elector's left finger properly in the manner prescribed by the Commission and apply it in a very casual manner leaving ample scope for electors to wipe off the ink mark.

Furthermore, it has been observed that in many cases, impression of various fingers of illiterate electors have been obtained on the Register of Electors (Form 17A) instead of their thumb impression as required under the rules.

The Commission has noted these irregularities seriously and issues following instructions to ensure that the same are not repeated in future:-

- (i) Proper intensive and hands-on training should be given to all the concerned polling and counting personnel for preparation and operation of EVMs as well as their sealing after poll and counting.
- (ii) Officers preparing the machines, after preparing them, should give a certificate that they have prepared the machines as per the instructions given and checked them, and that they understand fully that in case of any error found, they would be held responsible for lapse.
- (iii) During training, proper instructions should be given to polling personnel regarding the correct manner of application of indelible ink.
- (iv) All Presiding Officers and Polling Officers should be instructed to ensure that the electors at the time of casting their vote put on the Register of Electors Form (17A) either their full signature or their thumb impression. Under no circumstance, an elector having a left thumb be allowed to put any other finger mark on the Register of Electors (Form 17A).

Kindly bring these instructions to the notice of all District Election Officers, Returning Officers and Observers for strict compliance.

Yours faithfully

(SUMIT MUKHERJEE)