

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

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

No. ECI/PN/13/2009

Dated: 2nd March, 2009

PRESS NOTE

SUBJECT: SCHEDULE FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS, 2009

The term of the 14th Lok Sabha will expire in the normal course on 1st June, 2009. In terms of the constitutional provisions, a new Lok Sabha is required to be constituted before the 2nd June, 2009.

2. In the course of assessment of the scheduling and phasing options available for the general elections, the Election Commission of India held a meeting with the representatives of all recognized National and State parties on 3rd February, 2009 to obtain their views on various issues connected with the general elections. The Commission also held a series of meetings with the Chief Secretaries, Directors General of Police and Chief Electoral Officers of all States with a view to assessing the law and order situation, the requirement of Central Police Forces (CPF) and to review the over all preparedness of the election machinery in the country.

3. The conduct of General Elections in the entire country requires considerable deployment of Central and State Police Forces. Mobilization, movement, deployment and disengagement of these forces involve a complex exercise and detailed home-work. Towards this, the officials of the Commission held detailed discussions with the representatives of the Home Ministry in several rounds. The full Commission had detailed discussions, on 6th February and 24th February, with the Union Home Secretary and other senior officers of the Ministry. The Commission also discussed with the Chairman, Railway Board and other senior officials about the inter-state movement plan for the transport of CPF and other police forces.

4. In the process of finalizing the election schedule the Commission has taken into account the schedules of school examinations, particularly the Central and State Board examinations, to avoid holding elections during examination period. Besides, polling stations are mostly located in school buildings. Hence, the Commission had to factor in the

examination schedules in various states before finalizing the poll dates. In addition, various holidays and festivals during the months of April and May, harvest season in certain parts of the country and the inputs taken from the India Meteorological Department in respect of coming monsoon have also been taken into account.

5. While deciding on the number of phases, number of poll days for each state and the composition of the states and constituencies that go to polls on a particular poll day, the Commission has taken various relevant aspects into consideration. The views expressed by various political parties as well as the State Governments have also been duly considered.

6. The Chief Secretaries and DGPs of various states have pointed out the need for the deployment of Central Police Forces to ensure peaceful, free and fair elections. The Commission has done a detailed exercise to assess the existing deployment of police forces in various states and the total availability of CPF for additional induction from outside the state and the time needed to move them from one state to another. While doing so, the Commission has also endeavored to minimize the crisscross movement of CPF and State Armed Police (SAP) as far as possible, so that their poll day utility is optimized.

7. The possible cross-border influences that could affect the peaceful conduct of elections in the constituencies located at either side of inter-state boundaries have been mapped and this aspect has also been factored in, to the extent possible, while deciding on the phasing and sequencing options.

DELIMITATION OF PARLIAMENTARY AND ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES

8. The extents of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies in all States (except Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Manipur and Nagaland) have recently been re-determined by the Delimitation Commission set up under the Delimitation Act, 2002. By a Presidential Notification issued on 19th February, 2008, the Delimitation Orders of the Delimitation Commission have been made effective from the same date in all the States, NCT of Delhi and Union Territory of Puducherry (except the six States indicated above and Meghalaya and Tripura). In respect of the States of Meghalaya and Tripura, the

Delimitation Commission's orders took effect from 20th March, 2008. Thus the present General Elections to the Lok Sabha for 499 out of 543 Parliamentary Constituencies in all the States, NCT of Delhi and Union Territory of Puducherry (except Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Manipur and Nagaland) and to the State Legislative Assemblies of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Sikkim will be held on the basis of the newly delimited constituencies.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

9. The electoral rolls of all States and Union Territories have been updated in terms of the aforesaid delimited constituencies, with reference to 1.1.2009 as the qualifying date and have been finally published in all States and Union Territories. However, the process of continuous updating will continue till the last date for filing nominations. **The total electorate in the country after this round of revision is approximately 714 million compared to 671 million in 2004. This marks an increase of 43 million in the electorate.**

PHOTO ELECTORAL ROLLS

10. This would be the first time when the entire country, except the three States of Assam, Nagaland and Jammu & Kashmir, would be using the Photo Electoral Rolls. Out of 543 Parliamentary Constituencies, photo electoral roll will be used in 522 Parliamentary Constituencies as well as in all the Legislative Assembly Constituencies in Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim and Orissa. Photographs of 82% electors are printed in the electoral rolls. This will prevent impersonation and facilitate easy identification.

11. The Commission introduced the concept of Photo Electoral Roll in 2005. This was tested as a pilot project during the 2005 revision in all the constituencies of Kerala and Puducherry, 2 constituencies of Haryana and 1 constituency each in Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. On the successful completion of the pilot project, the Commission took the decision to conduct the 2009 general election to Lok Sabha using Photo Electoral Roll. The intervening general elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Kerala, Puducherry (2006),

Himachal Pradesh (2007), Meghalaya, Tripura, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Rajasthan, NCT of Delhi (2008) were conducted using Photo Electoral Rolls.

ELECTORS' PHOTO IDENTITY CARDS (EPIC)

12. As stated earlier, Photo Electoral Roll facilitates easy identification of voters. However, in consonance with the past practice, the Commission has decided that compulsory identification of voters will be made in the General Elections to the Lok Sabha and three State Legislative Assemblies and in the bye-elections to other Legislative Assemblies. Electors who have been provided with EPIC shall be identified through EPIC only. Special drive for issuing EPIC to the left out electors has considerably increased the percentage of EPIC coverage throughout the country (except Assam where the scheme could not be implemented so far) which now stands at an average of 82%.

13. All the residual electors are advised to obtain their Electors' Photo Identity Cards from the respective Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) urgently. The CEOs have been asked to invigorate the EPIC preparation and distribution campaign and enhance the coverage within next one month.

POLLING STATIONS

14. Presently there are 8,28,804 polling stations in the country, as compared to 6,87,402 polling stations during 2004 Lok Sabha elections. This marks an increase of 1,41,402 polling stations. This increase is largely due to rationalization of polling stations, which the Commission undertook during 2008 and 2009. Of these, as many as, 12,901 new polling stations have been setup for villages having less than 300 electors with a view to address concerns of threat and intimidation to voters. Commission has undertaken an exercise of 'Vulnerability Mapping' in all Constituencies to identify areas and voter segments vulnerable to threat and intimidation and has endeavored to provide polling stations in the vulnerable localities. Other considerations for making new polling stations include the need to reduce the distance required to be traveled by voters, geographical barriers such as rivers and hills etc. This exercise has been done in all the districts in consultation with political parties.

SCHEDULE

15. The Commission, after taking into account all relevant factors, has now finalized the Schedule for General Elections to be held in **five** phases to constitute the 15th Lok Sabha. A summary of the Schedules is given at **Statement-A**. An abstract of the schedules for all the States and Union Territories is given in two different formats at **Statement-B1** and **B2**. List of Constituencies for each of the Phases is given at **Statement-C**.

16. The **Highlights of the Schedules** are indicated below:

PHASES – GENERAL ELECTIONS-2009			
PHASE	NUMBER OF STATES & UNION TERRITORIES	NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES	DATE OF POLL
1	17	124	16 th April, 2009 (Thursday)
2	13	141	23 rd April, 2009 (Thursday) (22 nd April-2009, Wednesday for 1-Inner Manipur PC only)
3	11	107	30 th April, 2009 (Thursday)
4	8	85	7 th May, 2009 (Thursday)
5	9	86	13 th May, 2009 (Wednesday)

NUMBER OF PHASES IN STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES	
NO. OF PHASES	STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES
FIVE	Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh
FOUR	Bihar
THREE	Maharashtra and West Bengal
TWO	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa and Punjab
ONE	Remaining 15 States and 7 Union Territories

17. Counting will take place on the **16th of May, 2009** and is expected to be completed on the same day.

18. The Commission has decided to forward its recommendations to the President, for issuing five notifications calling upon the Parliamentary Constituencies covered in each phase in the States and Union Territories concerned to elect members to the House of the People. With this, the campaign days for the Constituencies in each phase has been kept to the possible minimum.

GENERAL ELECTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

19. The Commission has taken into account the fact that the tenure of the Legislative Assemblies of the states of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Sikkim will expire on 30.05.09, 29.06.09 and 23.05.09 respectively. It is also conscious of the fact that a new Assembly in Sikkim has to be constituted by 23rd May, 2009.

20. After taking into account all relevant factors, the Commission has decided to hold elections for new Legislative Assemblies for these states, simultaneously with the General Elections to the 15th Lok Sabha. Elections to the different Assembly Constituencies in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa will follow the **same Schedule** as for the corresponding Parliamentary Constituencies of which these are the relevant assembly segments. For elections to the Legislative Assembly of Sikkim, the **same schedule** as far the corresponding Parliamentary Constituency will be followed up to the date of counting and the date before which the election shall be completed is 23-May-09. The Commission has decided to forward its recommendations to the Governors of these three States, for issuing Notifications (under Section 15 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951), calling upon the State Legislative Assembly Constituencies to elect members to the concerned State Legislative Assemblies, as per Schedule appended hereto at **Statement-D**.

BYE ELECTIONS TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

21. There are a few casual vacancies in some Legislative Assemblies. The Commission has decided to hold by-elections to the following seven Assembly Constituencies which are listed below. Bye elections in these constituencies will be conducted following the **same schedule** as for the relevant Parliamentary Constituency.

STATE	NAME OF AC
Jharkhand	9-Jamtara
Karnataka	50-Bidar
Mizoram	29-South Tuipai
Nagaland	3-Dimapur-III(ST) 17-Chizami(ST) 41-Tizit(ST) 54-Tuensang Sadar-II(ST)

ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES

22. The Commission has decided to use Electronic Voting Machines in all the polling stations of the country as was done during the last Lok Sabha Election in 2004. There are 13, 68,430 EVMs available in the country. First Level Checking of these EVMs has already been taken up in all the states/UTs and has been completed in many places.

23. As a measure to enhance transparency in allotment of EVMs to different constituencies and polling stations, the Commission has introduced a two stage randomization procedure– one by the District Election Officer involving representatives of the recognized political parties, immediately after the first level checking is over, for allotment of EVMs to different constituencies in the district, and then again at the level of Returning Officer involving the candidates or their election agents to randomly decide the specific polling stations in which each of the EVM bearing unique identification number will be used.

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

24. Consequent on the announcement of the Schedule for the General Elections through this Press Note, the **Model Code of Conduct** for the Guidance of Political Parties and Candidates comes into operation with immediate effect from **today itself** in the entire country. This will be applicable to all political parties and to the Union and State and Union Territory Governments. The Commission calls upon all the political parties, candidates and the Union and State and Union Territory governments to strictly adhere to the Model Code of Conduct, which is a unique document, evolved with the consensus of political parties in the country.

REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

25. In terms of the existing policy of the Commission regarding **Registration of New Political Parties**, processing of any fresh applications filed hereafter for their registration would remain suspended with immediate effect till completion of the election process on 28th May, 2009.

AFFIDAVITS BY CANDIDATES

26. All the candidates will be required to file **two** affidavits along with their nomination papers. The affidavits will include information on the criminal antecedents of the candidate, assets (including the moveable and immovable properties of the candidate, spouse and dependents), liabilities of the candidate and his/her educational qualifications. The filing of the affidavits is mandatory and its non-filing will result in the rejection of the nomination paper by the Returning Officer.

27. As part of the efforts of the Commission to disseminate the information contained in the affidavits to the citizens at the earliest, instructions have been issued to the Returning Officers to display the copies of these affidavits on notice-board and to make available, on demand, the copies of the affidavits freely to other candidates, general public, media, etc. on the very day of filing of affidavits by a candidate. The copies of these affidavits

will also be available in a compiled form with the District Election Officer concerned. Any individual or any civil society organization desirous of obtaining this compiled information can apply to the District Election Officer with a nominal payment towards copying charges.

28. The Commission appeals to the citizens, the media and all the interested parties to cooperate with the election authorities for the widest dissemination of this information as contemplated in the directions of the Courts and the Commission.

ACCOUNTS OF CANDIDATES

29. It is mandatory under the election law for every contesting candidate to maintain and furnish accounts of his election expenditure. Under Section 77 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 only the expenses on account of **travel** of 'leaders' of political party concerned (whose names are communicated to the Commission and the CEO of the state within the prescribed period of 7 days from the date of notification) will be exempted from being included in the account of expenses of a candidate. All other expenses – incurred/authorized by the political parties, other associations, body of persons, individuals – are required to be included in the account of the candidate.

30. The Commission has already issued detailed guidelines on the manner in which accounts are to be maintained and submitted by the candidates and it is incumbent upon them to maintain a daily account of expenditure and to submit it to the Designated Officer/Election Observer three times during campaign period. To strengthen the monitoring, the Commission will be taking special steps. A cell comprising of experts drawn from Income Tax Department will also be set up in the Commission to deal with information on poll expenses of the candidates.

31. The Commission has taken a serious note of the illegal use of money power in elections and violation of expenditure norms in various manners and has decided to track such incidents closely for follow-up action.

VOTER PARTICIPATION

32. The Election Commission of India in recent years has initiated various measures to streamline the process of voter registration. The Booth Level Officer system has helped in enrolling the eligible voters and in detecting and removing the names of the dead and shifted voters. The Commission hereby calls upon all the registered voters of the country to participate in the voting process and exercise their constitutional right to vote. Wider voter-participation will make the democracy in India more vibrant and deepen its roots more strongly. The Commission has directed the CEOs to take certain voter-friendly initiatives, like voter help-line, voter assistance booths near polling stations, web-based search facilities to locate the names in the voter list and so on. The Commission has also issued guidelines to the CEOs to take special measures to facilitate voting by the physically challenged voters.

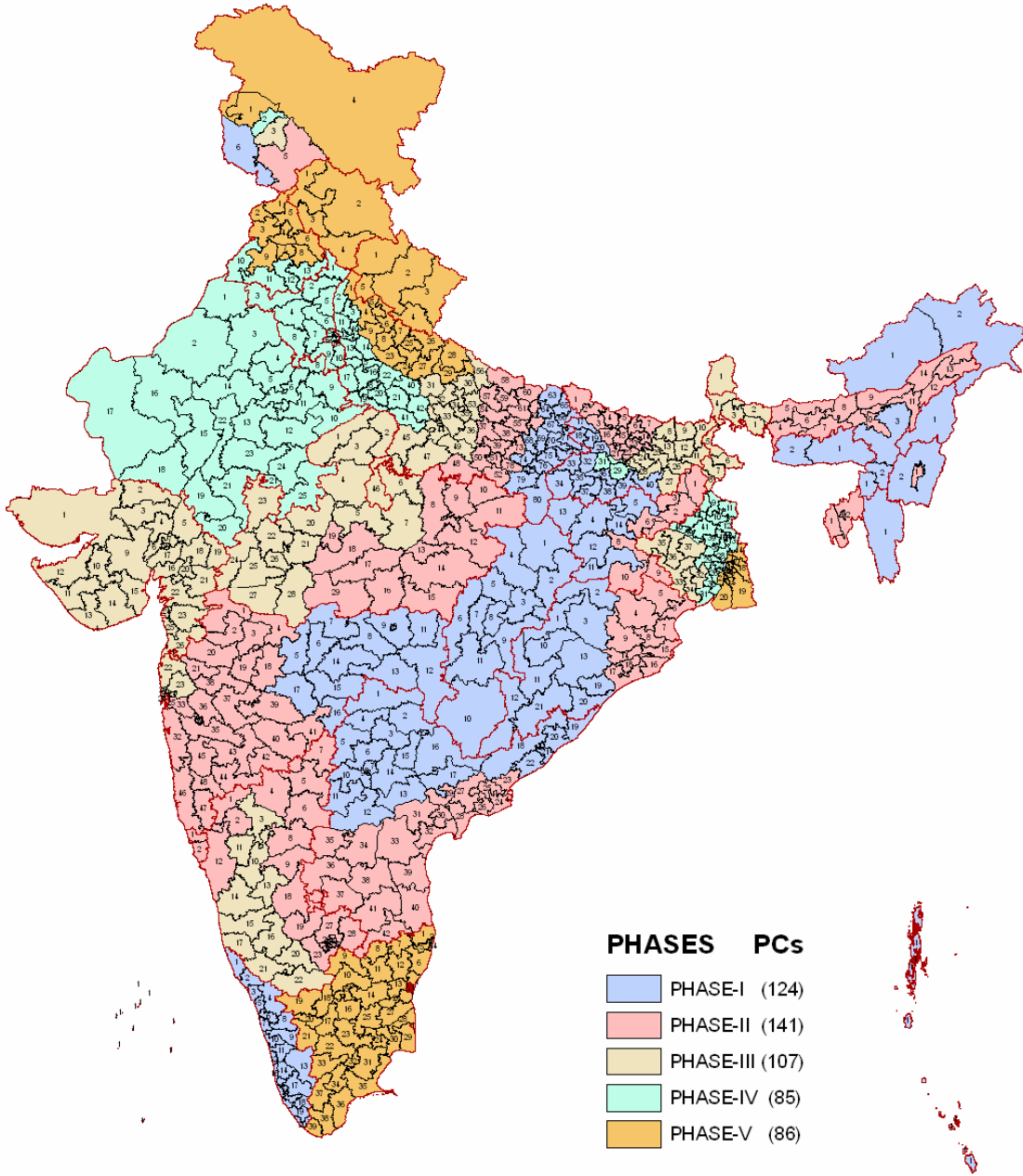
33. The Commission recognizes and acknowledges the role of media and civil society organizations in aiding the election machinery in the successful conduct of elections. The Commission looks forwards to their total support and feedback that could help mid-course interventions.

34. Elections in India in terms of its scale, magnitude and complexities are the largest and most vigorous democratic exercise in the world. The Commission is confident that all the stake-holders – the political parties, the candidates, the voting public and the entire election machinery, will fully appreciate the need for restraint and discipline to ensure free, fair and peaceful elections. The time tested credibility of electoral system is our nation's pride. The Commission is fully committed and will strive hard to uphold and add strength to the deeply-rooted democratic traditions of our nation.



(R.BALAKRISHNAN)
Deputy Election Commissioner

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA GENERAL ELECTIONS - 2009 POLL SCHEDULE



ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

GENERAL ELECTIONS - 2009

SUMMARY OF SCHEDULES

Sl. No.	Poll Event	Schedule Numbers & Dates									
		1	2A	2B	3A	3B	3C	4	5A	5B	
1	Announcement & Issue of Press Note	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	02-Mar-2009 (Monday)	
2	Issue of Notification	23-Mar-2009 (Monday)	28-Mar-2009 (Saturday)	28-Mar-2009 (Saturday)	02-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	02-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	02-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	11-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	17-Apr-2009 (Friday)	17-Apr-2009 (Friday)	
3	Last Date for filing Nominations	30-Mar-2009 (Monday)	04-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	04-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	09-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	09-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	09-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	18-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	24-Apr-2009 (Friday)	24-Apr-2009 (Friday)	
4	Scrutiny of Nominations	31-Mar-2009 (Tuesday)	06-Apr-2009 (Monday)	06-Apr-2009 (Monday)	11-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	10-Apr-2009 (Friday)	10-Apr-2009 (Friday)	20-Apr-2009 (Monday)	25-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	25-Apr-2009 (Saturday)	
5	Last date for withdrawal of Candidature	2-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	08-Apr-2009 (Wednesday)	08-Apr-2009 (Wednesday)	13-Apr-2009 (Monday)	15-Apr-2009 (Wednesday)	13-Apr-2009 (Monday)	22-Apr-2009 (Wednesday)	27-Apr-2009 (Monday)	28-Apr-2009 (Tuesday)	
6	Date of Poll	16-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	22-Apr-2009 (Wednesday)	23-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	30-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	30-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	30-Apr-2009 (Thursday)	07-May-2009 (Thursday)	13-May-2009 (Wednesday)	13-May-2009 (Wednesday)	
7	Counting of Votes on	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	16-May-2009 (Saturday)	
8	Date before which the election shall be Completed	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	28-May-2009 (Thursday)	
	Number of States/UTs	17	1	12	6	1	4	8	8	1	
	Number of Parliamentary Constituencies	124	1	140	77	1	29	85	72	14	

NOTE:

- Schedule 2A in only for Manipur (separate schedule was required due to holiday on 23-Apr-2009)
- Schedule 3B is only for Jammu & Kashmir (separate schedule was required due to holidays on 13 and 14-Apr, 2009)
- Schedule 3C is only for Gujarat, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Sikkim (separate schedule was required since 10-Apr, 2009 is not a holiday in these States but is a holiday in other States in this phase)
- Schedule 5B is only for Uttar Pradesh (separate schedule was required due to holiday on 27-Apr, 2009)

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
General Elections -2009
NUMBER OF STATES/UTs
VOTING IN DIFFERENT PHASES

STATES AND UTs	PCs	Phases	16-Apr-09	23-Apr-09	30-Apr-09	7-May-09	13-May-09
			PHASE1	PHASE2	PHASE3	PHASE4	PHASE5
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	1	1				
Arunachal Pradesh	2	1	2				
Chandigarh	1	1					1
Chhattisgarh	11	1	11				
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1			1		
Daman & Diu	1	1			1		
NCT of Delhi	7	1				7	
Goa	2	1		2			
Gujarat	26	1			26		
Haryana	10	1				10	
Himachal Pradesh	4	1					4
Kerala	20	1	20				
Lakshadweep	1	1	1				
Meghalaya	2	1	2				
Mizoram	1	1	1				
Nagaland	1	1	1				
Puducherry	1	1					1
Rajasthan	25	1				25	
Sikkim	1	1			1		
Tamil Nadu	39	1					39
Tripura	2	1		2			
Uttarakhand	5	1					5
Andhra Pradesh	42	2	22	20			
Assam	14	2	3	11			
Jharkhand	14	2	6	8			
Karnataka	28	2		17	11		
Madhya Pradesh	29	2		13	16		
Manipur	2	2	1	1			
Orissa	21	2	10	11			
Punjab	13	2				4	9
Maharashtra	48	3	13	25	10		
West Bengal	42	3			14	17	11
Bihar	40	4	13	13	11	3	
Jammu & Kashmir	6	5	1	1	1	1	2
Uttar Pradesh	80	5	16	17	15	18	14
Total	543		124	141	107	85	86
Total States/UTs Polling on this Day			17	13	11	8	9
			No. of States and UTs polling in single phase				22
			No. of States and UTs polling in two phases				8
			No. of States and UTs polling in three phases				2
			No. of States and UTs polling in four phases				1
			No. of States and UTs polling in five phases				2
			Total				35

* The Phase-2 polling in Manipur will take place on 22-Apr-09