

PRESS- NOTE

FACILITIES FOR ELECTORS WITH DISABILITIES

Panaji , March 30, 2009

Electors with disabilities will be provided with facilities such as permanent ramps in the public buildings in which polling stations for electors are located during the Lok Sabha elections 2009 as per direction of the Supreme Court.

As per the instructions from Election Commission of India, the personnel at the polling stations should ensure that physically challenged electors are to be given equal opportunity for entering the polling station, without having to wait in the queue for other electors and all necessary assistance as may be required should be provided to them at the polling station. Full facility is to be provided for such electors to take their wheel-chair inside the polling station. In the polling stations where permanent ramps have not been provided, temporary ramps are being provided as per the order of the Supreme Court.

The polling personnel are being specifically briefed about the provisions of Rule 49N of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which provides for permitting a companion to accompany a blind/infirm elector to assist him/her to cast the vote. Dummy ballot in Braille and Braille signage on the EVMs will ensure that blind voters can firstly understand the candidate details of ballot and then cast their votes independently without assistance.

During training polling personnel have been sensitized about the special needs of the disabled, for courteous behavior towards them and for providing necessary support to them at the polling station. Electors with speech and hearing impairment shall also be given special care as in the case of other disabled persons.

