

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/ /2022

Dated: March, 2022.

PRESS NOTE

Subject: General Election to Legislative Assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, 2022 and Bye-election to 99-Majuli AC of Assam- Counting of Votes– reg.

Counting of Votes in respect of General Election to Legislative Assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh in 690 ACs and Bye-election to 99-Majuli AC of Assam is to take place on 10.03.2022(Thursday). Altogether, 671 counting observers, 130 police observers, and 10 Special Observers will be on ground to ensure the smooth counting process. Commission has also deputed two special officers- CEO Delhi to Meerut and CEO Bihar to Varanasi to supervise the counting arrangements.

(2) Elaborate and full proof arrangements have been made at all the counting centres. All strong rooms, where polled EVMs are kept, are under three-layered security with inner cordon manned by Central Armed Forces. Concerned candidates have been watching the strong room arrangements through CCTV coverage of 24x7.

(3) In poll going States, District Administration has imposed sec 144 CrPC around the counting Halls to ensure that peace and tranquility is not disturbed.

(4) Political parties/candidates are involved at each stage related to EVM deployment during elections which includes the following:

- ❖ Opening and Closing of EVM warehouse
- ❖ First Level Checking of EVMs and VVPATs
- ❖ Taking out of EVMs and VVPATs for Training and Awareness after FLC.
- ❖ Randomizations of EVMs and VVPATs
- ❖ Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs
- ❖ Dispersal of EVMs and VVPATs with Polling Parties
- ❖ Mock Poll and Actual Poll on Poll Day
- ❖ Transportation of polled EVMs and VVPATs from Polling Stations to Collection Centre.

❖ Storage of Polled EVMs and VVPATs

❖ Counting of Votes

(5) At each stage, serial number of each EVM (including polled) is shared with the political parties/candidates.

(6) Postal ballots received before 8AM on counting day shall be taken up for counting.

(7) The important points related to counting of votes are as follows:

- Counting of votes shall be taken up for postal ballots at 08:00 AM and shall continue till its completion. All existing instructions of counting of ETPBS and Postal Ballots shall be complied with.
- After a gap of 30 minutes from the commencement of counting of postal ballot papers, Counting of votes for EVM shall commence at 08:30 AM. EVM counting shall continue irrespective of the stage of postal ballot counting as per ECI instructions dated 18 May 2019.
- After each round of counting, tabulation of result in a prescribed format will be done. This will be signed by RO and Observer and a copy will be shared with the candidates. After announcement of round-wise result, counting of next round will be taken up as per extant instructions.
- Postal ballot result will also be shared in the prescribed format after obtaining signatures of candidates' agents.
- On 8th April, 2019, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, in the interest of greater satisfaction of stakeholders, increased the sample size of number of VVPAT slips to be matched with EVM count from the then existing 1 polling station per Assembly Constituency/Segment to 5 polling stations per Assembly Constituency/Segment. The review of this judgment was also dismissed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 7th May, 2019.

The above direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India is being strictly followed by the Election Commission of India in every election.

- RO shall make entry of round wise results in ENCORE, which will be displayed on result website of ECI (<https://results.eci.gov.in>)

- In case the margin of victory is less than the number of Postal Ballot papers rejected as invalid at the time of counting, all the rejected Postal Ballot papers shall be mandatorily re-verified by the RO before declaration of result as per ECI instruction dated 18 May 2019. Whenever, such re-verification is done, the entire proceedings should be videographed as per ECI instructions dated 21 January 2009.
- (8) The Commission from time to time has issued detailed instructions related to counting of votes which shall also be applicable during counting of votes in respect of General Election to Legislative Assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh and Bye-election to 99-Majuli AC of Assam.
- (9) Media centre has been set up at each counting location for round-wise dissemination of trends. Media passes have also been issued.
- (10) Only authorized persons shall be allowed entry inside the counting hall.
- (11) The trends and results will be available after 8.00 AM on 10.03.2022, on the following mediums apart from all the counting centres for dissemination of information:
1. The results are displayed on the website of the Election Commission of India (<https://results.eci.gov.in>) and are updated periodically to display the current round wise trends and result of each constituency.
 2. The trends and results are also accessible through the “VoterHelpline App” Mobile App available at Google Play Store and Apple App Store.
- “The website/ mobile app will display information as filled by the Returning Officers in the system from the respective Counting Centres. The EC will be displaying the information as being filled by the Returning Officers in the system from their respective Counting Centres. The final data for each AC will be shared in Form 20 only.”
- (12) There has been some rumours related to EVMs etc., which are totally unrelated to polled EVMs and in each case of slightest breach of protocol, swift action has been taken by the Commission against the concerned officers.
- (13) No person should indulge in any rumour mongering or spreading wrongful information. Commission has directed CEOs and District Administration to take strictest legal action against such mongers and mischief.

- (14) Commission expects fullest cooperation from all concerned including political parties and candidates for smooth and peaceful completion of counting process.