



OBSERVER HANDBOOK

VOLUME -I

September 2020
Document 13 - Edition 6



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

"No voter to be left behind"

All important instructions along with the soft copy of the handbook are available on the Commission's website. Links are given below:

https://observerseci.eci.nic.in/observerinstruction_new.aspx

&

<https://eci.gov.in/files/category/3-handbooks/>

NOTE:: Contents of the Observer Hand Book are set of instructions extracted from the directions/orders of the Commission, however, the Observer Hand Book is indicative and new/updated/modified instructions/orders/directions are issued by various divisions of the Commission from time to time. Recently, the Commission has also issued the Broad Guidelines for Conduct of General/Bye election during COVID-19. You are required to familiarize yourselves with these guidelines and in case of any specific query/doubt you are requested to consult the Commission/ Chief Electoral Officer concerned.

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1. BACKGROUND

1. Different democracies have different types of Election Observation. The Election Observation includes the observation by domestic Observers as well as Observers by external agencies such as United Nations, Commonwealth, and other external election watch groups and so on. However, in the Indian context, the election Observation has always been a domestic initiative. The concept of election observation by the domestic Observers itself has been evolved over a period of time, as the complaints during the election process were far and few in the initial years. There was no concept of deputing Election Observers from one State to another State. Initially, as and when complaints were received, some officials from the Election Commission’s headquarters were deputed. Over a period of time the number of complaints gradually increased, however, the deputation of Election Commission’s officials had a serious limitation.
2. Commission started deputing some senior officials from the same State to observe election process in a constituency or a group of constituencies. But the concept of deputing senior officers as the Election Commission’s Observers took a firm root only from the beginning of the year 1990s. Over a period of nearly last two decades, the deputation of Election Observers from one State to another State has become an integral part of the election management in the country. Currently, mostly the officers who belong to All India Services and Central Services like IRS, CBDT and CBEC, IDES are being deputed as the election observers.

2. STATUTORY BASIS OF APPOINTMENT

1. Observers of the Election Commission of India are appointed under the powers conferred on it by Section 20B of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and the plenary powers available to the Commission under the Constitution of India. They are the appointees of the Commission working under the superintendence, control and discipline of the Commission for the period from their appointment until the process of election is completed.
2. The Representation of the People Act, 1951 was amended in August, 1996 to add a new Section 20B. This provides statutory powers to the Observers to watch the conduct of elections and especially in respect of counting of votes.

3. Section 20B reads as follows: - “1[20B. Observers.-

(1) *The Election Commission may nominate an Observer who shall be an officer of Government to watch the conduct of election or elections in a constituency or a group of constituencies and to perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the Election Commission.*

(2) *The Observer nominated under sub-section (1) shall have the power to direct the returning officer for the constituency or for any of the constituencies for which he has been nominated, to stop the counting of votes at any time before the declaration of the result or not to declare the result if in the opinion of the Observer booth capturing has taken place at a large number of polling stations or at places fixed for the poll or counting of votes or any ballot papers used at a polling station or at a place fixed for the poll are unlawfully taken out of the custody of the returning officer or are accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or are damaged or tampered with to such an extent that the result of the poll at that polling station or place cannot be ascertained.*

(3) *Where an Observer has directed the Returning Officer under this section to stop counting of votes or not to declare the result, the Observer shall forthwith report the matter to the Election Commission and thereupon the Election Commission shall, after taking all material circumstances into account, issue appropriate directions under Section 58A or Section 64A or Section 66.*

Explanation.- For the purposes of sub-section (2) and sub-section (3), “Observer” shall include a Regional Commissioner or any such officer of the Election Commission as has been assigned under this section the duty of watching the conduct of election or elections in a constituency or group of constituencies by the Commission.

3. OVERVIEW OF OBSERVER’S DUTY

1. By dint of their seniority and long experience in the administrative services, General and Police Observers are expected to be in a position to assist the Commission in the conduct of free and fair polls.
2. They will also be able to oversee the efficient and effective management of the electoral process at the field level.

3. For all purposes, they will act as the eyes and ears of the Commission during the period of the election (and not the mouthpiece) and provide direct inputs to the Commission from the field as an interface with the election machinery the candidates, political parties, and electors to ensure that the Acts, rules, procedures, instructions and guidelines related to elections are strictly and impartially complied with by all concerned.
4. Their inputs/observations are confidential and solely for the use of the Commission and not for any other agency including media. They must not, therefore, interact with or respond to the queries of the Press even after the elections are over.
5. It is clarified that while the formal report/input/observation sent by the Observers are meant for the use of the Commission, it does not mean that the observers will not discuss with the CEO/RO/DEO about their observation on various aspects of election management in order to facilitate midcourse corrections.
6. However, the Observers shall not mark copies of their formal reports to the Commission, to any other person including CEO/RO/DEO.
7. It should be kept in mind that the objective of the deputation of the Observer is not to find fault but to facilitate field administration in ensuring a free and fair poll.

4. BRIEFING OF OBSERVERS

1. The appointment of an officer as an Observer and the intimation for the briefing meeting shall be communicated by the ECI through the nodal officer of the State and Central Government who shall coordinate with Election Commission for various issues including provision of list of officers for appointment as observers. No request for exemption shall be entertained for this meeting and any replacement should be done only with the permission of ECI. Replacement requests shall not be entertained without serious reasons.

5. TOURS AND ABSENCE FROM HEADQUARTERS

1. All Observers should seek prior permission from the Commission every time they want to leave the headquarters on personal work or on official work not connected with performance of their duties as Observers.

2. Any request in this regard for special permission shall be made to the Deputy Election Commissioner (in charge of the State/UT).
3. No Observer is allowed to go on a foreign trip during the period intervening between the briefing session and the completion of election process.
4. No requests in this regard should be made to the Commission. Only in case of receipt of late intimation about selection to attend a foreign training, which had been duly sponsored by the DOPT may recommend release of such officer by substituting an officer of equivalent or high rank.
5. All such requests shall be addressed by the respective Nodal Officers to the Commission.

6. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE

1. No officer appointed as Observer or kept in Reserve List shall proceed on any kind of leave without prior approval of the Commission till the completion of the election in Constituency (ies) in which officer has been appointed as Observer or for which Observer has been kept in reserve.
2. All correspondence in this regard shall be addressed to Deputy Election Commissioner (in charge of the State) by name.

7. OBSERVER PORTAL

1. A web portal has been made for observers. Link to the Observer Portal is given on the website of the Commission (<http://www.eci.nic.in>).
2. Observers have been communicated their user ID and Password in the briefing letter. They must change their password when they login for the first time.
3. Observer Portal is the best method of communication between Observers and the Commission.
4. All the latest instructions of the Commission are available on the portal. Message for Observers are also given on the message board of the portal.
5. Observers should, therefore, check the portal frequently. Similarly, observers should send their reports to the Commission by uploading on the Observers Portal.

6. Observers may give their mobile no. on portal so that notifications may be sent to the mobile for timely action by Observers.
7. In case of any issues regarding login in the portal/ change in mobile no. / change in email id Observer can directly call on the exclusive land line no. 011- 25806410.

8. ROLE OF OBSERVERS

1. Section 20B of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 has vested the Observers with some statutory powers. They are empowered to direct RO to stop counting or not to declare for the reasons specified in Section 20B.

Besides the above-mentioned statutory powers, they have got certain very important roles to play which include: -

- a) Observing the processes of scrutiny of nominations and withdrawal of candidature by the RO, and Report back to the Commission promptly in case of any irregularity;
- b) Examination of the video clipping of the nomination process as well as making proper investigation on the complaints received in connection with the process of nomination. Also to examine the unresolved grievances by the candidate/ political parties about the allotment of symbols;
- c) Effective monitoring of implementation of MCC and detecting cases of violation of the model code of conduct by watching the video clippings of various meetings and, if needed, even by visiting important rallies to get first hand input, enforcement of the defacement of property act, training of Micro-Observers and such other things;
- d) Though checking the account of expenditure of the candidates is entrusted to Expenditure Observers, however, General Observer are also required to do so, in case of exigencies, if directed by the Commission.
- e) Tracking dispatch of postal ballot papers to the service voters, ensuring the setting up of the facilitation counters for polling officials, police and security personnel etc., in accordance with the

recent guidelines of the Commission and sending specific report in this regard to the Commission.

- f) Checking randomization software, reviewing the process of randomization of the polling personnel, obtaining report from the DEO regarding first level randomization; and
 - g) Observing and regulating the counting process. Observer has to sign the round wise counting sheets as proof of his/her satisfaction. She/he can direct the Returning Officer to stop counting of votes or declaration of result, if she/he notices any irregularities and bring the matter to the notice of the Commission for further directions.
2. Apart from the direct executive role of the observer, as enlisted above, Observers are expected to observe and report on all the steps involved in election management. An illustrative list is as below:

A. Nominations, Scrutiny ,Withdrawal and Symbol allotment

- I. The General Observers, arrive on the last day of nomination and thus does not observe the process of nomination in person, however, during the first visit they should get the video recording of the nomination process from the RO and see the recordings to get an overview of compliance of ECI Instructions and report major violations, if any, with specific reference to Commission’s instructions regarding number of people allowed to be present during Nominations.
- II. Scrutiny is a quasi-judicial process and should be conducted by the RO without any outside influence. However, Observer can ensure that RO is aware of the latest instructions; he has the latest list of disqualified candidates and the latest symbol order.

The Observer should observe the scrutiny process and report glaring error to the Commission. The observer should send tabular information of all rejected cases with reasons thereof. Observers should, however, abstain from directing or advising the RO. Observer may remind RO that the scrutiny proceedings can be adjourned in case an opportunity is to be provided or if any legal provision needs to be examined that requires time.

- III. Allotment of symbol is a process that is very technical and requires due care. It should be ensured that RO is aware of the provision of issue of reserved symbols and free symbols. He should have the latest list of political parties and election symbols. Another important aspect to be kept in mind is the symbol concession orders issued by Commission. After allotment of symbols, the list of contesting candidates should be prepared in Form 7A.

B. Electoral Roll Related

- I. It should be ensured the EPICs prepared during the last days are properly distributed to the electors and are not left with some intermediary.
- II. Although no deletions can be made from the roll, absentee and dead and duplicate voters should still continue to be tracked and a separate list of such voters should be prepared Polling Station-wise that can be used on the day of Poll.
- III. The last supplement is prepared after the date of withdrawal by manually marking the mother roll and previous supplement based on the last supplement. This activity has to be closely observed and ensured that efforts have been made to avoid any mistakes at this stage.
- IV. It should be ensured that the copies given to the candidates are exactly the same as that which would be used on the poll day by the polling party. Observer should see the latest instructions of the Election Commission, dated 11.12.2013 on this matter.

C. Campaign Period

- I. During the campaign period, General Observers should monitor the implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and measures to prevent occurrence of electoral offenses. In this regard, the Observers should bring lapse to the notice of DEO, CEO and report to the Commission, if required but abstain from any executive action on their part.
- II. Meeting with candidates to explain the provisions of Model Code of Conduct and the instructions of Commission thereunder.
- III. Observe various events like political meets, visits of star campaigners etc.

- IV. Monitor the work done by teams constituted for enforcement of MCC.
- V. Monitor dummy candidates, surrogate advertisements and paid news.
- VI. Review video recordings of activities of those candidates for whom video trailing has been resorted to.

D. Pre-Poll Election Management

- I. Monitor preparation of dispatch of postal ballot papers to service voters immediately after the preparation of list of contesting candidates i.e. Form 7-A.
- II. The first randomization of the election staff is done before the Observers arrive. The second and third randomization is, however, done in the presence of Observers.
- III. First level of EVMs/VVPATs randomization is done before the arrival of the Observer but the second level randomization is done in the presence of Observers.
- IV. Training is an activity on which special emphasis should be provided. Observers should monitor that proper training is arranged for the election staff, especially with regard to recent instructions of EC and related to operation of EVMs/VVPATs.
- V. Monitor adherence to the instructions of the Commission regarding issue of postal ballot papers to the polling staff and voting through them.
- VI. Visit polling stations and monitor that all polling stations are visited by election official for verification from fitness angle. Verify whether the list of polling stations is approved by the Commission and the assured minimum basic facilities have been provided.
- VII. Go through the exercise of Vulnerability mapping and identification of critical booths and critical clusters done by the DEO/SP and finalize and list of critical polling stations and critical clusters.
- VIII. Discuss and approve the District Security Plan with the DEO and the SP and review the law and order issue in general. Review the availability of CPF, SAF

and District Police. Review the preventive measures taken by the law and order implementation machinery.

- IX. Review the Communication Plan and confirm dry runs.
- X. Review Control Room arrangement and complaint monitoring system.
- XI. Training and placement of Micro Observers
- XII. Ensure that proper arrangements for dispatch have been made. The dispatch should normally be on the day before the poll and any exception should have prior approval of the Commission.
- XIII. Review counting arrangements.

E. Poll Day Management

- I. Monitor placement of Sector Officers and Micro Observers.
- II. Monitor conduct of mock polls and receipt of mock poll certificate in prescribed format signed by PO. Review the polling stations with no or only one polling agent.
- III. Review the pace of poll and percentage of polling at regular intervals.
- IV. Keep track of occurrence of any special events during the poll day.
- V. Keep track of any delays or temporary suspension of poll.
- VI. Report anything exceptional to the CEO and the Commission.
- VII. Ensure that proper arrangements for receipt of polling staff and polling material are made. Every receiving team should be well equipped with a checklist of items to be received. Ensure that the non-statutory documents are not locked with the EVMs/VVPATs in that strong room.
- VIII. Ensure that a “special counter” is setup for receipt of polling parties from those polling stations where any special events has been reported and on receipt, proper documentation, along with the statement/report of the Presiding Officer, if required, is done.

F. Post Poll

- I. Scrutiny of documents relating to poll is an important analytical tool to analyze proper conduct of elections and taking re-poll decision. Scrutiny is done for those polling stations that fall within the criteria as per Commission's instructions in the presence of Observer on the next day of the poll.
- II. Report to the Commission about the conduct of poll and requirement of re-poll, if any.

G. Counting

- I. Review the arrangements for counting made by the DEO.
- II. The randomization of counting staff is done in the presence of Observer.
- III. Monitor that the counting of postal ballot taken up before the EVMs but the EVM counting is not held up till the completion of postal ballot counting.
- IV. The Observer has to ensure that the results as tabulated by the counting staff and the additional counting staff, drawn from the central government establishment, tally.
- V. Conduct random test for two EVMs in every round and take corrective action as per the directions of ECI, in case any mistakes are found.
- VI. Ensure that during the counting, round-wise results are announced as and when they are finalized.
- VII. Certify proper completion of counting process and allow RO to declare results, if satisfied with the counting process.
- VIII. Report cases of recount to the Commission.

9. REPORTS BY OBSERVERS

1. Both General and Police Observers are required to submit arrival and departure report to the Commission immediately after reaching constituency(ies)/ District and also, just before leaving the constituency(ies) / District. (Format of the arrival/departure report is attached at Annexure-II).

2. Apart from the arrival and departure reports, the Commission, now, expects 5 mandatory reports from the General Observers and 4 mandatory reports from Police Observers against the previously required 6 and 5 reports respectively. However, in case of any serious deviations, the Observers should bring it to the notice of ECI through interim report(s) as and when necessary.
3. In case of General Observers –
 - I. 1st Report – To be submitted immediately after the withdrawal of candidature.
 - II. 2nd Report - To be submitted 2 days before the poll-day (P-2 days).
 - III. 3rd Report – To be submitted immediately after the completion of poll.
 - IV. 4th Report- To be submitted after scrutiny of form 17A on the day after the poll.
 - V. 5th Report- To be submitted after the counting of the votes.
4. In case of Police Observers-
 - I. 1st Report- To be submitted on the 2nd day of reaching the allocated district.
 - II. 2nd Report- To be submitted on the 5th day of reaching the allocated district.
 - III. 3rd Report- To be submitted 2 days before the poll day (P-2 days).
 - IV. 4th Report- To be submitted immediately after the completion of poll.
5. Oral communication with the Commission, on urgent matters which cannot be kept pending till the written report, through telephone or through any other fast and reliable means, during the field visit will be welcome. All telephonic communication should preferably be held with the Secretary concerned and must be followed by a written message in confirmation.

10. POSTAL BALLOT FOR OBSERVERS

1. Rules 17 to 20 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 provide that voters on election duty are entitled to vote by post. The term "Voters on Election Duty" includes a public servant, who is an elector in the constituency and is by reason of his/her being on election duty, is unable to vote at the polling station where he/she is entitled to vote. Observers are also covered in this category. As Commission does not appoint any officer as observer in the Home State/State of posting.
2. If an Observer is registered as an elector in any constituency, he/she can apply for a postal ballot paper to the Returning Officer of the Constituency concerned in Form 12. The Observers may write or contact the Returning Officer of the Constituency concerned and present his/her duly filled in Form 12, to obtain a Postal Ballot Paper.

11. ARRIVAL OF OBSERVERS IN THE CONSTITUENCIES

1. The Observer is mandated to report in the constituency on the last day of filing of nominations in forenoon.
2. The DEO may appoint an English knowing officer as the liaison officer for the Observer and the liaison officer receive the Observer at the point of his/her arrival in the State and escort him/her to the place of stay.
3. The DEO has to make arrangements for accommodation, vehicle and communication, like Internet, fax, office stationery etc.
4. The information/particulars as enumerated in the check list (Annexure-I) are to be provided to the Observer on his/her arrival along with the District Election Plan and a map, by the DEO/RO.

12. INTERFACE OF ROs/AROs AND DEO

1. The DEO will organize a structured meeting with the Observers as early as possible. All the ROs, AROs, SP, other election officials including the nodal officers for media cell, model code of conduct and the designated officers for Expenditure monitoring should be present in the meeting to apprise the Observers about the specific issues needing their special attention.

2. The Observer should proactively use this meeting to familiarize with the state of preparedness of the district administration in all aspects.
3. The Observer should monitor that:
 - (i) The posting of requisite officers for RO and ARO has been completed (including for counting)
 - (ii) The identification of all the venues, which will be used for dispatching, receiving and counting, has been done and reviewed.
 - (iii) The list of polling stations has been finalized.
 - (iv) The machinery to monitor and implement model code of conduct and for election expenditure monitoring is in place.
 - (v) The primary list of polling personnel has been prepared.
 - (vi) The arrangements for receiving information from public and political parties-control room arrangements and inter coordination of police and DEO, RO control rooms, has been made.
4. After reviewing the check list (Annexure-I) the Observer shall take up the matter with the ECI, if any deficiency is found in the election preparedness.

13. SCRUTINY OF NOMINATION PAPERS

1. The Observer is expected to observe the scrutiny process and finalization of the contesting candidates after withdrawal very closely. The role of Observer in scrutiny is to observe the events, rather than guide formally. However, in a situation where there is some confusion, the observer shall report to the Commission but under no circumstances shall give instructions to the RO.
2. The Observers are expected to be present during the Scrutiny of Nominations. However, before the scrutiny, it is important that the Observers verify from the Returning Officers the availability of latest instructions and orders of the Commission, which are specifically relevant for the Returning Officers in discharging their statutory functions for scrutinizing the nominations.

3. The following items are important:
 - (a) The latest list of “Political Parties and Election Symbols” published by the Commission.
 - (b) Commission’s instructions on criminalization of politics and the latest Form of Affidavits, which will accompany every nomination form (ECI Instruction No. 3/ER/2003/JS-II dated 27th March, 2003 read with Instruction No. 3/ ER/2011/SDR dated 25th February, 2011 , No. 3/4/ 2012/ SDR dated 24th August, 2012 and Order no. 509/11/2004-JS.I dated 3rd Feb 2016) as amended from time to time.
 - (c) The latest copy of the List of Disqualified Persons.
 - (d) Instructions and copies of latest versions of Forms A&B which are utilized by the political parties to indicate the names of their official candidates who are eligible for being allotted the symbol reserved for the party.
 - (e) An authentic copy of the Electoral Roll for the constituency.
4. It is important for the Observers to go through these instructions carefully in advance before they interact with the Returning Officers. They will confirm that Returning Officers have not only received the latest instructions but have understood the implications clearly.
5. As the nomination and scrutiny have been mandated to be done through ENCORE application, the observer must ensure that all nominations are 100% digitized, correctly entered and correctly scrutinized.

14. ALLOTMENT OF SYMBOLS

1. Immediately after the process of withdrawal of nominations is completed, the Returning Officers are to take up the process of Allotment of Symbols. The Observers will be available for overseeing this important activity. The RO should have the latest list of Political Parties and Election Symbols and any relevant symbol concession orders issued by the Commission with regard to political parties not recognized in the particular State but recognized in some other State and orders regarding allotment of Common Symbol to registered unrecognized parties.
2. As soon as the allotment of symbols is completed, a List of Contesting Candidates and Symbols allotted to them is prepared and published in Form

7A Special care should be taken regarding order in which the names of candidates appear in the list and Commission’s instructions in this regard should be strictly adhered to. This is a very important document and it is of utmost importance that copies of the same reach the Chief Electoral Officer at the earliest. The Returning Officers will make arrangements to send the original copy to the Chief Electoral Officer in the State /Union Territory through special messenger. The latter will consolidate these and send it through special messenger or camp bag to the Commission.

3. In case of Parliament election, the Commission publishes a Consolidated List of Contesting Candidates in English and Hindi. It is likely that some of the nominations may be filed in the local language. The Returning Officer will nevertheless prepare two sets of the copies of the Form 7A in English and Hindi and ensure that these are sent to the Commission through the process aforementioned. However, if the RO is unable to prepare the Hindi version, this can be left to the CEO who will get it done at his level. In any case, the English version and the version in the local language should invariably be sent by the ROs. In case of Assembly election, the CEO of the State publishes it in the official language of the State.

15. ELECTORAL ROLLS

1. Several complaints have been received in the Commission that during past elections the electoral rolls provided at the polling booths were different from the electoral rolls that were provided to the candidates. The Commission has viewed such complaints with concern and decided as follows:
 - (a) The electoral roll supplied to the polling booths shall be certified to be true copy of the one that has been provided to the candidates / political parties and the marked copy kept by the Returning Officer as per Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 by one officer and one subordinate to the specifically responsible for the purpose.
 - (b) These officers shall sign the electoral roll supplied to the polling booths, on all pages.
 - (c) A copy of the electoral roll, which will be used on the day of election at polling booths (copy of the one given to the candidates / political parties), shall also be given to the Observer. The Observer

shall check the authenticity of the roll provided at polling booths vis-à-vis the roll given to the candidates on the day of poll at the polling stations visited by him/her. The Observers will discuss this subject thoroughly with the RO and ensure that there is no room for any complaint on this score. This aspect should also be explained to the candidates and political parties during discussion.

2. The Observers should monitor the action plan prepared for covering the residual electors, issue of EPIC, identification of electors absent without family linkage, expired electors and duplicate entries and preparation of polling station wise list of such entries. Commission has mandated that if any elector figuring out in this list appears for voting, the strict identity checks should be applied.

16. MEETING WITH THE CANDIDATES

The RO should conduct a meeting in the presence of Observer with all the contesting candidates and party representatives on the last day of withdrawal or on the next day and brief them about –

- a) Important aspects of the model code of conduct,
- b) Expenditure reporting formats, rate list etc. and frequency of reporting required, time and place of reporting of expenditure,
- c) Issuance of permissions for vehicles, processions and public meetings
- d) Date and time of EVM/VVPAT preparation and candidates’ role in it. Candidates should also be briefed about the working of VVPAT system.
- e) Interaction of Observers with the candidates/political parties/electors (with specific details of time, contact numbers and place for meeting the Observers).
- f) Important aspects of conduct of elections (like appointment of polling agent, counting agent, election agent – their rights & duties).
- g) The Observers should explain the concept of worry list. Wherever a candidate has apprehension about any unfair practice, procedural lapse, he will bring them to the notice of the Observer through the worry list indicating details of polling centers and reasons for such apprehension.
- h) Latest instructions of the Commission or important changes from past practices should be brought to the knowledge & notice of candidates.

- i) The Observer should explain clearly about c-VIGIL app for the model code of conduct violation reporting, EMS app for randomization of EVM machines, suvidha app for applying for permissions and suvidha candidate app to monitor the status of permission and candidature.

17. VISIT OF AREAS IN THE CONSTITUENCY AND POLLING STATIONS

1. After finalization of contesting candidates by the RO, the Observer should visit as many polling stations (areas thereof) to understand the constituency in social, economic and political context. During their visits, the Observers shall definitely visit all new polling station, sensitive polling stations and distant polling stations.

18. REVIEW OF OVERALL PREPAREDNESS OF LAW & ORDER MACHINERY

1. The Observer should have a detailed discussion at a mutually convenient time not later than 4 days of his/her arrival about the following.
 - (a) Adequacy of police personnel,
 - (b) Requirement of Central Forces,
 - (c) Preventive actions taken (preventive detentions, bonds & arms deposition)
 - (d) Identification of critical clusters and polling stations through vulnerability mapping
 - (e) Sector plans for policing on the day of poll,
 - (f) Response strategy on the day of poll and transportation of EVMs/VVPATs, and
 - (g) Discussion about sensitivity of inter-district, national and international boundaries.

2. The vulnerability index mapping of the district should have been completed. The Observer should ensure whether this has been done and critical clusters and polling stations are identified. The sector plan for police patrolling and the requirement for additional force should be reviewed in this context.
3. The distilleries in the district should be monitored for the stock position of liquor and any abnormal increase in outflow during the election period should be checked. This should be compared to the average of the last six months.

19. OBSERVATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

1. It has been the most important and crucial task of Observers to ensure non-partisan and effective implementation of Model Code of Conduct.
2. The main areas for strict vigil are: -
 - (a) Use of vehicles for campaigning without required permission,
 - (b) Use of muscle power to mobilize or restrain people from voting,
 - (c) Flow of liquor and money and 'gifts' to ensure voting in favor of a particular candidate,
 - (d) Divisive tactics through inflammatory and condemnable speeches/acts, and
 - (e) Dealing with defacement of property as per prevailing law, if any, of the state, in case of absence of any such law as per the latest instruction of the ECI.
3. To ensure effective enforcement, the Observer should check whether the enforcement squads are formed with clear territorial jurisdiction to have accountability. The teams of enforcement should consist of civil and police personnel.
4. A detailed instruction in this regard is available in Commission's Website in the link given below:
<https://eci.gov.in/files/file/1229-immediate-action-to-be-taken-for-enforcement-of-model-code-of-conduct-after-announcement-of-general-elections-to-the-legislative-assemblies-of-go-manipur-punjab-uttarakhand-and-uttar-pradesh-regarding/>

5. All teams should have c-VIGIL investigation app installed and running and that the disposal of each violation reported through the c-VIGIL application is addressed by the enforcement team. The c-VIGIL observer should install the c-VIGIL observer app and continuously monitor c-VIGIL case in his jurisdiction

20. APPROACH OF THE OBSERVER IN IMPLEMENTATION OF MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The approach of observer should be to get the complaint inquired by DEO/RO through the inquiry officer and tracking how the inquiry is conducted and how the concurrent corrective measure is affected. The Observer should advise the RO/DEO about the violations and appropriate action to be taken. However, in case of lapses on part of the authorities even after advice of the Observers, the Observers should immediately communicate lapses to the ECI. Observer should use videography as an effective tool to implement Model Code of Conduct.
2. Observers are eyes and ears of the ECI and not the executives in the field. There are several instances where implementation of Model Code of Conduct has been handled for the same issue in different manner in different constituencies. Some instances are given as case studies to sensitize you to this aspect-

Situation A

An Observer found a vehicle with a party flag and lot of workers with a microphone campaigning for a candidate without a permit.

- a. He detains the vehicle with the help of his PSO and calls for the police and orders them to take a particular action, issues a specific instruction in writing.
- b. He reports the matter on phone to the concerned SP and subsequently writes a letter and warrants an ATR from the SP and RO. In case of non- action, the lapse is reported to ECI.
- c. He gives an instruction to immediately arrest the people in the vehicle to the police in writing.

The ECI would appreciate the option ‘b’ in this case. However, to ensure ripple effect, the incident and the action taken should be publicized in the media to create further deterrence through the RO. In any case the Observer is not expected to interact and brief the media personally.

Situation B

There is a complaint from a particular political party that there is possession of illegal arms in a particular location by another contesting party. The complaining party does not disclose the location and requests for a police party to raid in a location to be specified later.

- a. The Observer agrees to the demand and orders the SP to send a police party.
- b. The Observer takes the complaint and location confidentially, asks the SP to act on it and report back. He also sends a videography team with the police party
- c. The Observer takes the police party and goes to the specified location and raids it.

The ECI would recommend the option ‘b’ in this case as observers have to think and act independently after receiving a complaint and not physically move with one party or other as that is also seen as partisan.

Situation C

Every party has a list of star campaigners designated who shall be funded centrally from the party level for their travel and campaigning. One of the star campaigners deliver inflammatory speeches hurting the sentiments of a particular section of society and this is widely covered by media at national and local levels.

- a. This episode and the contents of speech is recorded and reported to ECI and at the same time appropriate action by the Election machinery has been initiated. The Action Taken is proportionate to the gravity of the lapse.

- b. This episode is not reported to ECI and action has been initiated at the local level which is covered by local media.
- c. It was not acted against at all.

The ECI would recommend option ‘a’ as the lapse is being covered by national media and the damage is no more localized and therefore the non-reporting of this even to ECI shall have negative effect on the general scenario of elections at the national level.

Situation D

An observer witnesses that a public property has been defaced by posters, which is a serious violation of model code of conduct. He had to deal with this.

- a. The Observer gets out of the vehicle and tears the posters himself.
- b. He informs the RO and asks the RO to send the enforcement squad responsible for territorial jurisdiction. He documents the violation through videography. After a day or two checks whether that violation has been dealt with and also ensures booking of that expenditure in the accounts.

The option ‘b’ is the desired response. ECI encourages effective observation rather than self-implementation of the Model Code of Conduct.

- 3. ECI envisages appropriate and timely action against lapses and at the same time proportionate flow of this information of action taken to the appropriate levels like local, district, State and national level to have a deterrence effect.
- 4. Every move of campaigning has an implication of election expenditure. The Observers are expected to correlate all the permissions taken and the expenditure statements submitted. In case of some expenditure not being reported, the standard rates prevailing in the district should be adopted.

21. WATCH ON EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON ELECTION CAMPAIGN BY THE CANDIDATES/POLITICAL PARTIES

1. The Commission appoints separate Expenditure Observers to monitor election expenses. For the purpose a separate manual/ guidelines has been prepared by ECI. The observers should familiarize themselves with the expenditure monitoring guidelines.
2. Past experiences indicate that use of money power starts right from the distribution of tickets by the political parties. Subsequently, it takes various forms, which are enlisted herein below. However, it must be kept in mind that the enlisted ways of spending money are only indicative. There can be many other ways of spending money which should engage the attention of the Observers.
 - a) Booth-wise agents are appointed to purchase floating votes;
 - b) Large donations to clubs and organizations to influence its members;
 - c) Largesse to petty party workers to dole out the same to electors;
 - d) Rented crowds for party meetings;
 - e) Rallies and campaigns with purchasable crowd;
 - f) Presence of candidates at social occasions like mass weddings, feasts, puja's, jagrans, inaugurals, etc. where gifts are given on behalf of candidates;
 - g) Acceptance of felicitations by the contesting candidates at any educational or charitable organizations;
 - h) Distribution of free liquor/liquor passes to the electors;
 - i) Use of dummy candidates at election to utilize his quota of electioneering vehicles, etc.

- j) Surrogate advertisements in print and electronic media whereby candidature is canvassed by unconnected persons/organizations so as to avoid the expenditure on the same being accounted for in the expenditure of the contesting candidates;
 - k) Bringing cinema celebrities and sports persons to campaign;
 - l) Providing voters with caps, vests, umbrellas, bi-cycles, etc.
3. It shall be the duty of the Observers to ensure that all the instructions of the Commission are followed meticulously and there are no aberrations in their application. It is, therefore, imperative that the Observers should familiarize themselves with the extant instructions issued by the Commission, a compendium of which is given in the in observer kit.
4. The gist and highlights of various instructions on the issue of election expenditure is given hereunder for the benefit of the Observers:
- a) Section 77 of the Representation of the People Act 1951 stipulates that every candidate at an election shall, either by himself or by his election agent, keep a separate and correct account of all expenditure in connection with the election between the date on which he has been nominated and the date of the declaration of the result thereof, both the dates inclusive.
 - b) Section 78 of the said Act further stipulates that every contesting candidate at an election shall within thirty days from the date of the election of the returned candidate, lodge with the District Election Officer, an account of the election expenses which shall be a true copy of all the account kept by him or by his election agent u/s 77.
 - c) In order to facilitate monitoring of election expenditure, each candidate is required to open a separate bank account exclusively for the purpose of election expenditure. This account shall be opened at least one day before the date on which the candidate files his nomination papers. All money to be spent on electioneering shall be deposited in this bank account irrespective of its funding from any source including candidate's own fund.

- d) Even if a contesting candidate does not seriously contest the election for any reason whatsoever and incurs only a nominal expenditure on his security deposit, etc., he is required by law to lodge his account of election expenses.
- e) Contesting candidates, who fail to comply with the requirement of law regarding the lodging of account of election expenses, are liable to be disqualified by the Election Commission u/s 10A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 for a period of three years.
- f) The Election Commission of India has prescribed a format of the register which is required to be maintained by the contesting candidates along with supporting vouchers, bills, etc. arranged in a proper chronological order.
- g) Along with the Register, the Election Commission of India has prescribed a format of “Abstract of Election Expenses” which has also to be filled up by the contesting candidates
- h) The contesting candidates are further required to furnish an affidavit along with the “Register of day to day expenses” and “Abstract of Expenses”
- i) The prescribed register/forms/extracts of rules relating to lodging of returns of accounts of election expenses should be printed and made available to the contesting candidates in Hindi, English or the approved local language in which the electoral rolls are printed.
- j) The supporting vouchers of the day to day expenses should necessarily bear the signature in full of the contesting candidate or his election agent.
- k) The register along with the Abstract of expenses and the prescribed affidavit has to be made available by the contesting candidates for inspection by the Returning Officer/Designated Officer thrice before the date of poll. However, it has to be ensured that there is a gap of about four days in between each inspection and the first inspection may be on or after the 3rd day from the last date of withdrawal of nominations.

- l) If a candidate is contesting election for more than one constituency, he is required to maintain and lodge a separate account of his election expenditure in respect of each such constituency.
- m) The accounts of the candidate will be scrutinized by the Returning Officer/ Designated Officers and he shall keep two photocopies of the relevant pages of the register. One copy of the relevant pages of the register shall be displayed on the notice board of the Returning Officer and the other copy will be retained in a separate file for each constituency as proof of record with the Returning Officer and furnish to the DEO on conclusion of the whole electoral process.
- n) Where a candidate does not produce the register containing his daily account of election expenses before the designated officer/observer, despite notice, the DEO shall cause a complaint to be lodged u/s 171-I of the IPC against the errant candidates.
- o) Any person desiring a copy of these day-to-day accounts, should be provided the same by the Returning Officer, subject to the payment of usual copying charges
- p) The candidate, while maintaining their register of accounts of election expenditure, should also account for all expenditure including those incurred prior to the date of nomination for preparation of campaign material, etc. which are actually used during the post nomination period in connection with the election.
- q) The expenditure incurred by the leaders of the political parties on account of their travel for propagating the programs of the party shall NOT be considered as expenditure in connection with election incurred or authorized by the candidate or his agent, provided the names of the leaders for this purpose are communicated to the Commission and the CEO of the State within a period of seven days from the date of notification of the election
- r) In the event of failure of the political party to provide such names within the stipulated time, the aforesaid expenditure on travel of all leaders in the case of such parties will necessarily be included in the account of the election expenses of the candidate concerns.

- s) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in Kanwar Lal Gupta Vs. Amarnath Chawla (A.I.R. 1975 SC 308) has held that the expenditure incurred by the political party, as distinguished from expenditure on general party propaganda, which can be identified with the election of the given candidate would be liable to be added to the expenditure of that candidate as being impliedly authorized by the candidate. The Apex Court has further held that a party candidate does not stand apart from the political party and if the political party does not want the candidate to incur the disqualification, it must exercise control over the expenditure which may be incurred by it directly to promote the electoral prospects of the candidate.
- t) The expenditure on bullet proof cars and all others cars used by all the Ministers of Union and States and all other leaders of political parties shall be borne by the candidates.
- u) All vehicles (including two-wheelers, motor-bikes, scooters and mopeds, etc.) being used by the candidates for the election campaign are required to be lodged with the DEO.
- v) Whenever political parties or candidates use aircraft/helicopter for election campaign, prior information should be given to the CEO of the state. While giving such information, the following information also need to be furnished: -
 - (a) Number of aircrafts/helicopters used;
 - (b) Name of the hiring companies;
 - (c) Hire charges paid/payable;
 - (d) Areas covered;
 - (e) Number of sorties involved;
 - (f) Passenger manifest;
- w) The expenditure incurred by a political party on advertisements in connection with the election of a particular candidate or a group of

candidates shall be treated as expenditure authorized by the candidates concerned and shall be accounted for in the election expenses of the candidates concerned. In case where the political party for the benefit of group of candidates incurs the expenditure then the expenditure is to be apportioned equally amongst the candidates.

- x) The expenses on construction of barricades/rostrums etc. when done initially by the government agencies on account of security considerations on behalf of the party organizers are to be booked as expenditure of a candidate in whose constituency the said meeting takes place or to a group of candidates who are present at the time when the leader of a political party addresses such a meeting. In cases where there are more than one candidate of the political party present at the time of the said meeting of the ‘leader’, the expenditure will be apportioned equally amongst all, and the District Election Officer of the district where such a meeting takes place shall obtain the final costs from the concerned government agencies within three days of the event and intimate to the candidates their private share of expenditure. This information will also be intimated to the Returning Officer/District Election Officer of the Constituency/District to which the other candidates belong.
- y) Where the aforesaid expenditure are incurred from the organizer’s own funds, the same will be reflected in the accounts of the concerned candidates or a group of candidates present in the meeting of the leader.
- z) It has been decided by the Commission that the candidates’ booths set up outside the polling stations should hereinafter be deemed to have been set up by the candidates as part of their individual campaign and not by way of general party propaganda and as such all expenditure incurred on such candidate’s booths (kiosks) shall be deemed to have been incurred/ authorized by the candidate/his election agent so as to be included in his account of election expenses (not falling under exempted category). The DEOs have to notify the rates of the candidates’ booths set up outside the polling stations taking into consideration the cost of infrastructure used and also the notional expenses on daily allowances and refreshment etc. to the party workers manning those kiosks.

5. The Observers are advised to familiarize themselves completely with the aforesaid instructions of the Commission and prevail upon the Designated Officer to abide by the same. Wherever aberrations are noticed, the Designated Officers should be encouraged to issue notices through the Returning Officers to the erring candidates and make a note of the same in the register whenever they are produced for inspection.

22. MEDIA CERTIFICATION AND MONITORING COMMITTEE (MCMC):

1. There shall be a Media Certification and Monitoring Committee in each district. This Committee will have the additional members- (i) DEO/ Deputy DEO, (ii) DPRO, (ii) Central Govt. I&B Ministry official and (iv) Independent citizen/journalist as may be recommended by the PCI. Besides carrying out the already assigned work of certification of advertisements, this Committee will also monitor both print and electronic media including cable networks, and record either in CD or DVD, keep a photocopy of all advertisement / paid news / election related news of the contesting candidates/ political parties.
2. The DEO will ensure that this Committee is provided with all the national and local newspapers, having wide circulation in the constituency, three to four TV sets with connections of all the local and national News channels and one recording device and separate rooms so that they can watch and record all the advertisements/discussions related to the election. The Committee will also look into MCC violations in the Media sphere and send a report to the DEO with copy to the General Observer. The MCMC shall see all the newspapers, print media, electronic media, cable network, mobile network and other modes of mass communication like bulk SMSs etc., and keep record of the advertisements, advertorials, messages, discussions and interviews relating to the candidates and parties. This committee will submit a Daily Report with respect to each candidate to the accounting team with copy to RO and Expenditure Observer with respect to expenditure incurred by the candidate on election advertising including the assessed cases of Paid News, along with supportive paper cuttings/clippings, recordings of relevant TV and Radio advertisements, which will also be included in the Shadow Observation Register. The RO will issue notice to the candidate with regard to the incidents of Paid News in consultation with the Expenditure Observer for not showing the expenditure on such publication.

23. EXPENDITURE MONITORING CONTROL ROOM AND CALL CENTRE

1. A 24x7 Call Centre will be established in the Control Room at the district level to operate from the date of notification of election. The call center will be given toll free telephone number with 3 or 4 hunting lines which will be widely publicized for the public to inform corrupt practices related to election. A senior officer will be put in-charge of the control room and call center who will be responsible for receiving and recording the complaints and passing them on to the respective officer for action without any delay. The call center will be provided with sufficient staff to man the telephone lines round the clock.

24. DISTRICT MEDIA CELL

1. The DEO shall create a cell for dealing with media headed by Public Relation Officer and the main functions shall be-
 - a. The cell shall collect various clippings about the elections and also the advertisements from all the newspapers including the vernacular languages and provide this with translation if required to the Observer through the liaison officer. This should be done on a day- to-day basis by the media cell. Liaison officer may do this exercise depending on the location of the Observer and an allowance shall be provided for this to the liaison officer.
 - b. Prepare and circulate the note on various steps initiated during the day against violations of MCC to the Media. These notes shall not include any direct quotes to the media by the Observer, and
 - c. They should also ensure that videography of all the public meetings are done and passed on to the Observers. They should aid the Observers in viewing and bringing forth any violations of MCC to the notice of the Observers.

25. PREPARATION OF POLLING PARTIES AND TRAINING

1. To ensure transparency, the Commission has formulated a comprehensive three-stage randomization plan for selection and deployment of polling staff. In the first stage of randomization, polling staff is randomly selected from a

complete database of all Government employees working in the district. This process would have been completed before arrival of the Observer. However, the Observer should examine the outcome of the process and ensure that the selection has been random.

2. The second stage of randomization is for polling teams and assignment of the Assembly Constituency to which they shall be deployed. The polling station to which these teams will be going would be known only after the third stage of randomization, which is usually done on the day just before dispatch. For election to Lok Sabha, the Commission has directed that the polling staff may be randomized within their Parliamentary Constituency, as far as possible, so that they can vote through EDC.
3. Success of the poll process depends a lot on the quality of training imparted to the polling staff. Observer should monitor the training process and take care that:
 - a) All the staff appointed for poll duty is trained.
 - b) The trainers are well versed with the election process. It is a good practice to use the Sector Officers as trainers.
 - c) Training is imparted in small groups and not very large groups to ensure that proper focus is maintained.
 - d) Training covers all aspects of poll management, including EVM(CU, BU and VVPAT) and Non EVM aspects, Forms and certificates to be filled by the staff.
 - e) Special focus should be given to the latest instructions issued by the Commission since most of the polling staff would be unaware of them.

26. ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINE

1. The Observers will check on the stock of EVMs available in the district and whether they have been serviced by the engineers of the manufacturing firms (either ECIL or BEL depending on the make of the machine used in that

State). The Commission issues detailed guidelines to the Chief Electoral Officers and the District Election Officers for training and awareness generation on the use of EVMs. It has to be seen whether these training programs have been taken up properly and the people are aware of the method of casting vote on the EVM. The training of Presiding Officers and polling personnel, especially the second polling officer who controls the “Ballot” button, on the use of EVMs is critical.

2. Observers should familiarize themselves with the latest instructions on EVM/VVPAT.

27. VOTER VERIFIABLE PAPER AUDIT TRAIL SYSTEM (VVPAT)

1. VVPAT was introduced in 2013 to provide even greater transparency to the poll process. The VVPAT is an additional unit attached to the EVM, which prints a small slip of paper that carries the symbol, name and serial number of the candidate voted by Voter, which is visible for 7 (seven) seconds in the viewing window.
2. The voter after pressing the button on BU can view the printed slip on VVPAT through the viewing window and thus can verify that the vote is recorded for the Candidate of his/her choice.
3. These paper slips are automatically cut and stored in a sealed compartment of VVPAT and can be used later to crosscheck the votes in CU as per the prescribed procedure by ECI. The printing of slip in VVPAT is an additional verification to the voter, besides glowing of LED near candidate button and the beep in EVM system.

27a. Randomization of EVMs/VVPATs

The Commission has also mandated randomization of EVMs/VVPATs to avoid apprehension of any attempt of manipulation of EVMs/VVPATs. This randomization is done in two stages. In the first stage, which is done before the arrival of the Observers, EVMs/VVPATs are allotted to a particular Constituency and in the second stage, which is done in the presence of the Observer, an EVM/VVPAT is allotted to a particular polling station.

28. PREPARATIONS FOR DATE OF POLL

1. Effective checks to curb electoral malpractice or vitiation of the poll process by way of booth capturing, rigging, creating a scare of fear and panic among electorate and effectively preventing them from casting their votes are major concerns.
2. The methods adopted by unscrupulous elements vary from State to State and from constituency to constituency. The Observers are expected to familiarize themselves about the tricks of the trade prevalent in the area as well as identify the specific areas prone to such mischief.
3. The Observers between or amongst them should carefully plan out, in confidence, the areas, which they would focus on, during the actual period of poll. This will be kept confidential and is not to be shared with anyone including the District Election Officers, ROs, Escort and Liaison Officers and PSOs.

29. VISIT TO DISPATCH CENTERS

The Observers will visit the dispersal centres for dispatching the polling parties to different location and make a brief report on the manner in which the operations are being conducted. They will particularly see that the random formation of polling parties is being truly and correctly implemented.

30. MICRO OBSERVERS

1. The employees of the Central Government/ PSUs are appointed as Micro Observers. The Micro Observers are expected to observe the polling process on the day of poll. They are assigned duty in the polling station. They shall be part of the polling team and be seated in the polling station. They are to be present in the polling station before the mock poll starts. They shall report about the poll day in the given format, Report of Micro observers.
2. Micro Observers are to be trained by the Observers two days before the poll with the help of RO and posted in the polling stations, which are critical. Therefore, an arrangement is required wherein Micro Observers are stationed at a central location on the day of polls and they are moved to specific polling stations as per requirement (like absence of polling agents, critical polling stations etc.)

3. Micro Observers need not cover all the critical polling stations. They should be used effectively and not on an extensive basis unless required. The Micro Observers may be sent with the polling parties in case they are required to perform duty at remote locations.

31. SPECIAL OBSERVERS

In case of some districts where special circumstances prevail, the ECI may send Special Observers who shall be working on specific agenda delineated by ECI and they are on par with the other Observers working in the constituencies. They report to the ECI directly and have no supervisory role over other Observers. However, to enable them to get a clear picture of the happenings going on in the constituency, they are required to discuss and get information from other Observers of the district/constituency.

32. POLL DAY ACTIVITIES

1. One of the most important responsibilities of the Observers is to oversee the actual poll. On the date of poll, Observers available in the constituency should tour the maximum number of booths as is physically possible during the hours of polling. For this purpose, they will mutually decide as to which polling stations they will visit on the poll day. Also to save time they may consider carrying some packed food and start field visits well before the poll begins. The presence of the Observers in the field on the date of poll and their visits to polling stations should be an effective deterrent against electoral malpractice and vitiation of the poll process. The Observers will ensure prompt and effective action on this score by interacting with the District Administration constantly through telephone, wireless, VHF Radio sets etc.
2. Commission has mandated conduct of mock poll before the actual poll begins to demonstrate proper functioning of the EVM/VVPAT to the polling agents. To this effect, the Presiding Officer has to sign a certificate in the format prescribed by the Commission. Observers should monitor that the mock-polls have been conducted and the POs have issued the certificate to that effect. Importantly, it should be ensured that result of mock poll is cleared and Paper Slips of mock poll in VVPAT Box are removed before commencing poll.

3. They should look for any unusual activity or lack of activity around a polling station to sense whether any electoral malpractice has vitiated or is likely to vitiate free and fair polls. Absence of women in the queues may be an indicator of something unusual. The Observers should in advance study and acquaint themselves with the pattern of electoral malpractices in the past elections in different areas. On this basis, they can look for tell tale signs, of any irregularities. They should constantly remain in touch with the RO, ARO, Sector Magistrates and other officers on duty to get feedback as well as to convey anything specific for corrective action to be taken by the concerned authorities on the basis of what the Observers have actually seen in the field.
4. They should also go inside Polling stations and check for the progress of polling, the compliance of prescribed procedures by the polling officials in conducting the poll, the presence of polling agents, the updating of entries in the Presiding Officer’s diary and such other matters that need verification. Register of Voters (Form 17A) must be checked with display of total votes polled on EVM and Observer must sign the visit sheet along with his observation and record the time of his/her visit. Special attention should be paid in the case of polling stations where polling agent of only one candidate is present.
5. The Observers will also take stock of the collection of the EVMs/VVPATs and the transport of polling parties and polling materials under appropriate security arrangement. The convoys once started should only stop at the destination, that is, the strong room where these are to be stored.
6. An important point to be noted is that Form 17C has been completely and correctly filled in by the Presiding Officer and these are deposited along with the Presiding Officer’s diary at the collection centres and strong room.

33. RECEPTION OF POLLING PARTIES

1. There is need to focus on polling stations wherein
 - a. Polling was disrupted temporarily due to EVM failure or any other reason.
 - b. Serious complaints were received and

- c. Confirmation regarding mock poll certificate not received.

The Returning Officer has to prepare a report of such polling stations with their names and numbers and send it to DEO and Observer by 4 P.M. and the polled EVMs/VVPATs and other documents pertaining to these polling stations are to be received in a special counter and not in the regular counters as a rule. The Presiding Officer’s diaries have to be checked thoroughly for these polling stations.

2. At the reception centre, it should be ensured that a copy of Form 17-C is kept with the respective EVM in strong room. Other documents should not be kept in the EVM/VVPAT strong room. Other document should be kept separately in a separate strong room to facilitate access when required.

34. SCRUTINY OF REGISTER OF VOTERS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

1. In order to deter electoral malpractices, the Commission has directed that scrutiny of various documents like Presiding Officers diaries, Register of Voter (Form 17A), Micro Observers reports, Visit Sheets, report of Zonal Magistrates etc. shall be taken up after completion of poll for polling station selected on the basis of detailed criteria laid down by the Commission. This scrutiny shall be taken up at 11:00 AM on the day next to the day of poll.
2. The scrutiny of the Register of Voters and other documents shall be taken up as laid down by the Commission and the Observer should ensure that his/her travel plan is so laid out that his/her departure from the constituency is not before 36 hours after completion of poll.

35. RE-POLL AND ADJOURNED POLL CASES

1. The report of the Observer is the most important input for the Commission for taking a decision on ordering re-polls. The Observers should therefore be vigilant and alert about any incident or activity, which might or might have vitiated the poll process so that they can send a specific report to the Commission on this matter. Sometimes, information received from other sources are referred back to the Observers on telephone by the concerned Secretary or Deputy Election Commissioner and the Observers are expected to make such enquiries and verification as are possible within the constraints

of the time available. After this and after taking into consideration other inputs made available to the Commission, re-poll is ordered in such of the polling stations as is considered necessary and appropriate by the Commission.

2. It is of utmost importance that the re-poll itself is not vitiated in any manner. The Observers will give specific and comprehensive report on the actual conduct of re-poll. The re-poll, if any, is normally held on the second day following the date of poll unless specified otherwise.

36. END OF POLL REPORT

The Observers will send a report in the prescribed form at the end of poll showing the role of polling agents and the number and nature of complaints received in regard to each polling station. In addition to this, the Observer has to send a comprehensive report highlighting all-important factors, in case any re-poll is recommended by him/her for a particular polling station or a group of polling stations.

37. COUNTING OF VOTES

1. The Commission has prescribed a format for approval of counting centres and the Returning Officers have been directed to personally inspect each counting centre and send their proposals to the Commission for its approval. During the initial stage of their visit, i.e. before the scrutiny of nomination papers, the Observers will check if the data in the format has been sent to the Commission for approval by that time.
2. During this very stage of the visit itself, the Observers between them will also inspect each counting centre for a preliminary assessment of the facilities in the counting centre and to verify that these are as per specification prescribed by the Commission. In addition to what is given in the ‘handbook for Returning Officer’, the recent instructions given by the Commission should be read by the Observers thoroughly and, on this basis, they will interact with the Returning Officers to effect any further improvement as may be necessary for making the arrangements in the counting centres, up to the standard prescribed by the Commission.
3. One of the most important features relates to provision of specific facilities for the Observers and media in the counting centres. It is now mandatory for the Returning Officer to provide a separate room or a cubicle for the

Observer or Observer in each counting centre with one STD telephone and a fax machine.

4. The Observers will ensure that RO/DEO and the technical staff assisting them have tested the ENCORE software and are ready for fast transmission of final result to ECI using this software. They will have to use the password given to them and transmit the data to ECI. As this data gets loaded to the website automatically, it is essential that wrong data is not transmitted on the counting day. Hence doing the “dummy run” on designated date is also essential.
5. The statutory provisions regarding Observers specifically focus on their role during the counting process and empower them to stop counting and to direct the RO/ARO not to declare the result in circumstances mentioned in Section 20B of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The statute thus enjoins a special responsibility on the part of the Observers to oversee and supervise the counting process and also to provide a direct immediate communication to the Commission. The Commission accordingly expects that Observers will have a key role in the superintendence of the counting process.
6. The staff selected for counting has to be randomized on the day of the counting early morning before the counting begins. The Commission is particularly concerned that the entire counting arrangement should be orderly and well structured. The Commission attaches great importance to the fact that the actual counting is done in such a manner that it is not only smooth and efficient but more importantly transparent and correct. Reasonable opportunity is to be afforded, as per existing instructions of the Commission, to let the counting agents of the candidates get a clear view of the counting process as it goes on each counting table. There should be no room for any doubt.
7. The Commission has issued detailed orders regarding the arrangements for counting. These include the specifications for selections of counting centres and for managing the counting process.
8. For ensuring accuracy of the result of counting, a round wise statement shall be prepared by the Returning Officer. Both the Returning Officer and Observer shall personally verify that number of votes posted against the

name of each candidate in respect of every counting table tally with the figures as shown in part II of Form 17'C' (result of counting) pertaining to that table. They shall append their initial below the total of each counting table. A copy of the detailed table/wise, polling station-wise, round-wise break up of the votes will be kept by the Observer in his/her folder.

9. As a measure to cross check the correctness of counting, observers are required to randomly select two EVMs counted in a round and with the help of additional counting staff provided to them to assist in this regard ascertain once again count of votes polled by each candidate and after getting satisfied, then only countersign the relevant column of proforma for recording of votes. The Additional Counting staff shall prepare the result of two randomly selected EVMs in the prescribed proforma for recording of votes.
10. The tallying process at the end of each round of counting should be completed in a systematic manner and the round-wise progress announced within the halls by the concerned ARO-in-charge and also written on black/white board, which should be clearly visible to all. Immediately thereafter, this should be announced over the public address system. These public announcements could be centralized, in a counting centre with multiple halls.
11. The Observers will also ensure that as soon as the final results and the winning candidate are announced and all the relevant papers are signed by the RO, the final detailed result is transmitted to ECI website. For this Genesys software shall be used.
12. The Observers should ensure after the declaration of result that the RO sends to CEO the duly filled and corrected copies of
 - a) Final Result Sheet in Form 20,
 - b) Declaration of Result in Form 21C,
 - c) Return of Election in Form 21E.
13. It may be noted that only the name, which is given in the Nomination Form, is normally valid for all future references and use in the other related documents. The list of contesting candidates in Form 7A should reflect this

name exactly and correctly with same spellings as given in the Nomination Form, unless the RO allows any deviation under Rule 8 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961. Eventually the name of the candidate who is returned from the constituency is given in the declaration of the result in Form 21C. It is absolutely imperative that this Form 21C, as also the return of the election in Form 21E and the certificate of the election in Form 22 contain exactly the same name as given in the list of contesting candidates in Form 7A. Consistency of the names in the Forms 7A, Ballot Paper and Forms 21C, 21E, 22 has to be maintained without fail. The Observers will impress upon the Returning Officers about this aspect and ensure that full compliance is made.

13. The Observer should ensure ROs/AROs are trained in generating round declaration form RDF form 21C and 21E from the ENCORE portal.

Counting Arrangements Report

Sl. No.	Necessary Actions for Preparedness for Counting of votes	Y/N	Remarks
1.	Whether proper management for reception of Postal Ballots has been arranged?		
2.	Whether counting staff has gone under proper training?		
3.	Whether necessary entry passes have been issued to media persons concerned and counting agents?		
4.	Whether proper security arrangements have been made at the strong room as per Commission's instructions?		
5.	Whether proper security arrangement have been made at the Counting centers as per Commission's Instruction?		
6.	Whether CCTVs/ Videography arrangements have been made as per extant instructions of the Commission?		
7.	Whether proper arrangements have been planned for depositing of Electronic Gadgets at the Counting centers?		
8.	Whether Political parties has been advised to properly train their counting agents?		
9.	Whether proper arrangements have been made for deployment of micro-observers at each table in counting centers?		
10.	Whether all arrangements for the Counting Centres have been made properly as per Commission's Instruction?		
11.	Whether minimum 8mbps of lease line internet connectivity, backup lease line of 8mbps, computer system, printer, Cyber security, online ups and minimum 8 hours of power backup generator have been put into place.		
12.	Whether ENCORE app has been set up correctly and training and report generation has been provided?		
13.	<i>Whether thermal Scanning equipments have been made available in the Counting Centres for thermal screening?</i>		
14.	<i>Whether proper arrangements have been made for providing sanitizer, soap and water?</i>		
15.	<i>Whether a maximum of 7 counting tables allowed in the counting hall?</i>		

Observer Code:

Assembly Constituency/ District/ State :

Signature:

38. GENERAL OBSERVERS REPORTS

The First Report (immediately after the withdrawal of candidature).

OBSERVER REPORT - 1

Observer's Name with Code:		
Constituency:		
District:		
State:		
Local address with telephone/mobile no. of the Observer, after arrival in the constituency.		
Whether Observer's name, Contact No. and the meeting hours with venue were advertised? (Attach a copy of Advertisement)		
Sl No.	Subject	Observer's Report
Scrutiny of Nominations		
1.	Whether Scrutiny had been done by the R.O. himself, if no, whether ARO has been authorized by the R.O. in writing. Provide details	
2.	Whether the Commission's instruction regarding number of persons allowed to be present during nomination process was observed/complied (this may be confirmed by viewing the video coverage of nomination process).	
3.	Whether Scrutiny of nomination papers was done properly in accordance with Sections 33, 34 and 36 of the R.P. Act 1951 read with rule 4 of the C.E. Rules 1961	
4.	Names of Candidates whose nominations were rejected with brief but clear reasons. (Attach copy of summary orders passed by the R.O. in each case)	
5.	Whether a complete data base of the poll personnel — State and Central Government employees — is available for deployment?	
6.	<i>Whether sufficient number of Polling/Counting /Poll related staffs have been kept in reserve by DEO/RO, to replace in case any polling personnel displays COVID-19 symptoms?</i>	
Polling Personnel, Logistics and Training		
7.	<i>Whether all PPTs, training materials, relevant documents, topic wise video clips, question papers for self-assessment have been uploaded in app/ portal so that any election official can access it as per</i>	
8.	<i>Whether proper arrangements have been made for organizing the training for election officials through online mode?</i>	
9.	<i>Whether a detailed COVID-19 related comprehensive multi-level plan has been prepared at the Assembly Constituency and District Level , taking local conditions into account in consultation with the concerned Nodal Health Officers.</i>	

10.	Whether election related officers who are in their home district or those who have completed 3 years of service in the Constituency had been identified?	
11.	Whether training centers, counting centers, strong rooms finalized?	
12.	Whether certain orders like suspension of arms license, order pertaining to defacement, use of loud speakers, declaring poll day as local holiday, appointment of sectoral magistrates, vesting powers under CrPC for executive magistrates, requisition orders for polling stations, counting centers, requisition order for vehicles, etc. have been issued	
13.	Whether the required election materials had been procured?	
14.	<i>Whether Election Material Kits have been prepared in a spacious and sufficiently large hall following all safety, sanitation and social distancing measures?</i>	
15.	Whether the postal ballot requirement has been worked out for persons under preventive detention, drivers cleaners of requisitioned vehicles, police personnel on election duty, Electors who are marked as Persons with Disabilities (PwD), Electors above the age of 80 years, Electors employed in notified Essential services, Electors who are COVID- 19 positive/suspect and in quarantine (home/ Institutional) and service electors.	
16.	Whether the route maps for every polling station, sector maps, route chart, and transport plans for Observers, poll personnel, Micro observers etc. made?	
17.	Whether the vehicle requirement for transport plan assessed?	
Security Measures/MCC Related/EVM		
18.	Whether security force deployment plans have been finalized for the districts and all assembly constituencies?	
19.	Whether detailed planning for CPF patrolling and route marches in sensitive areas(with dates and routes) and other Confidence Building Measures have been done ?	

20.	Whether security arrangement has been prepared for polling personal moving to remote/Sensitive polling station	
21.	Whether Vulnerability mapping has been done effectively	
22.	Whether important aspects of Model Code of Conduct were briefed to the political parties/ Candidates. (Describe the main issues).	
23.	What was the time, date & venue of the meeting with the political parties and contesting candidates? The names of the candidates or their representatives along with their party affiliation who attended.	
24.	<i>Whether first & second randomization and preparation of EVMs/VVPATs have been arranged in large halls?</i>	
25.	Whether prior intimation regarding date and time of 2nd randomization of EVM/VVPAT followed by EVM/VVPAT preparation and second level check of EVM/VVPAT has been given to candidates with proper acknowledgement receipt.	
26.	Whether the concept of worry list was explained to the Candidates, and they advised to submit their worry list.	
27.	Whether political parties were advised to properly train their polling and counting agents (Describe the main aspects).	
28.	Whether adequate publicity on MCC is done	
29.	Whether Control room, media center and complaint monitoring mechanism has been set up properly	
30.	Whether the sector officers, flying squads, check posts, video viewing teams, complaint monitoring system, control room etc. in force?	
31.	What arrangements made to review the live feed from CCTVs/Webcasting at Nakas etc. and SOP for action on any illegal activity noticed in live feed.	
32.	Whether Videography teams have been appointed and are available at officer's disposal	
33.	Whether Single window for granting permissions / passes at RO level	

34.	Whether Mechanism to control defacement of property has been setup	
35.	Whether Mechanism to collect and compile information about search, seizures of cash, liquor, and filing of cases for MCC violations and monitoring the same	
36.	Remarks if any.	

Signature of the Observer

The Second Report (To be Submitted on P-2 days)

OBSERVER REPORT - 2

Observer's Name with Code:	
Constituency:	
District:	
State:	

Sl. No.	Subject	Observer's Report
Electoral Roll/EVM/VVPAT Related		
1.	Whether a copy of the electoral roll handed over to Candidates of recognized Political parties. Whether a copy of written receipts obtained from each of them. Report the exceptions.	
2.	Whether list of EVMs/VVPATs used in the assembly constituency including the training EVMs/VVPATs and reserved EVMs/VVPATs for replacement has been given to political parties/candidates.	
3.	Whether mock poll of 1000 votes in 5% randomly selected EVMs as well as VVPATs was done by the R.O. in presence of political parties / candidates. Whether candidate verified the EVMs/ VVPATs (2nd level check) to their satisfaction. Please describe.	
4.	Whether candidates were allowed to take help from the engineers/master trainers in order to eliminate doubt about the malfunctioning of EVM/VVPATs.	
5.	Whether all stages of Randomization of EVM/VVPAT mentioned in the Commission letter 51/8/16/4/2017-EMS dated 05-12-2017 and 51/8/VVPAT/2017-EMS dated 30/08/2017 have been fully covered with videography and record kept properly.	
6.	What is the arrangement to escort the polled EVM back?	
7.	What is transportation and receipt arrangement for polled EVM/VVPAT?	
8.	What is strong room guarding plan? Is the general atmosphere conducive for holding of free and fair poll? If no, state detailed reasons.	

9	Whether FLC completed? And the Zero level randomization (separating training machines from the poll machines) and First randomization completed?	
10.	Whether political parties were involved during the process of First level randomization? Randomized list provided to political parties and ROs and proper log books maintained?	
11.	What is the number of VVPATs used	
12.	Whether VVPATs have been tested and whether full load test performed?	
13.	<i>Whether Commission’s revised instruction of allowing maximum number of electors in a polling Station has been implemented?</i>	
14	Whether Count of 17 types of errors before final publication has been carried out and rectified	
15	Whether count of duplicates names in the electoral roll has been identified and deleted	
16	Whether exercise has been done to delete dead/shifted and absentee	
17	Whether proper checking of the names of VIPs — Ministers, MLA, etc. has been carried out	
Polling Personnel		
18.	Whether arrangement has been made for creating a data base for deployment of polling/police personnel?	
19.	How and when 2nd randomization of polling personnel accomplished? Describe. Any drawbacks?	
20.	<i>Whether Commission’s instruction for increasing timing for 3rd randomization of polling staff be from 24 hrs to 72 hrs in order to avoid large gathering of polling staff at dispatch centres has been implemented?</i>	
21.	Similarly, for micro observers what are the training and deployment arrangements?	
22.	Whether all vacancies of EROs/AEROs are filled up.	
Polling Stations — Poll Day Preparations		
23.	Poll Day Arrangements - Control room, Voter assistance booths, regular reporting to ECI about incidents and violence, for monitoring Law and Order, receipt arrangements, strong rooms, Training OROs about 17 A scrutiny formats etc.	
24.	Whether arrangements for regular media briefings have been made?	

25.	Whether all IT Applications are working properly and training imparted.	
26.	Whether ECI approval has been obtained on the list of Polling (including the auxiliary) stations. Are there any changes in the already approved list?	
27.	Whether the list of polling stations has been prepared, published and provided to political parties, RO, ARO, Observers, Police authorities etc. And whether three copies of the same is provided to the contesting candidates.	
28.	Whether assured minimum facilities like electricity, drinking water, shade, toilet etc. and ramps the physically challenged voters and a standard voting compartment has been arranged at all polling stations. Details.	
29.	<i>Whether Commission's detailed instructions for assured minimum facilities in view of COVID-19 situation have been implemented in letter and spirit at polling stations?</i>	
30.	<i>Whether mandatory sanitization of Polling Station has been done before the poll day?</i>	
31.	<i>Whether, thermal Scanner have been installed at the entry point of every polling station location?</i>	
32.	<i>Whether necessary arrangements for thermal Checking of voters either by polling staff or Para Medical staff or Asha workers at entry point of polling station location/ Polling station have been done?</i>	
33.	<i>Whether one shaded waiting areas with chairs, dari etc. has been provided, for male and female separately, within the polling station premises for the voters?</i>	
34.	<i>Whether soap, water, sanitizer have been provided at the entry/ exit point of every polling Station?</i>	
35.	<i>Whether help desks have been set up at all polling stations for distribution of token to the voters on first come first serve basis?</i>	
36.	Whether the RO / ARO conducted inspections of all polling stations and a report prepared in the format A (in page 9 of the DEO Checklist).	
37.	Whether any model polling stations planned?	
38.	Whether proper arrangements have been made to facilitate the differently abled electors at polling stations?	
39.	Whether Live web casting / CCTV arrangements made to monitor election process at distant polling stations?	
40.	Whether references / photographs / posters of Ministers / MLAs depicting the achievements of the Government in power removed in polling stations	

Vulnerability Mapping		
41.	Whether vulnerability mapping have been done and critical polling stations and clusters have been identified?	
42.	Whether comprehensive District Election Management Plan has been prepared as per the Commission's instructions. Comment on quality.	
43.	Details of measures taken for confidence building in vulnerability/hamlets.	
44.	Are there any vulnerable polling stations? Any PS where violence, booth capturing, intimidation, political rivalry etc. incidents reported in past elections?	
45.	Whether list of vulnerable pockets/hamlets have been identified by the DM/SP and RO. (i) PSs of high % of Non-EPIC voters. (ii) PSs of high % of missing voters without family links. (iii) PSs having vulnerable pockets -SO's, Police's and candidate's "worry list". (iv) PSs where polling was more than 75% and where more than 75% of votes have been polled in favour of one candidate in last election. (v) Re-poll reported due to malpractices, and where electoral violence has taken place during last election. (vi) Anti-social elements and their areas of influence.	
Security Measures		
46.	Whether adequate preventive steps have been taken for maintenance of Law and Order?	
47.	What is the security arrangement for polling stations and poll personnel (briefly describe the force deployment parameter)?	
48.	How many polling stations with static outside force, how many with video coverage and how many through micro observers?	
49.	Whether sector officer has prepared Zonal Magistrate Plan with the sketch map for Polling Stations, List of telephone No. of Polling Stations and election related officers, police stations, list of responsible persons, list of Anti-Social elements etc.	
50.	What is the date of arrival of the CPF	
51.	Whether daily action plan of the CPF was prepared in consultation with DEO/RO. Comment on effective CPF usage so far and shortcoming if any.	

Paid News Cases		
52.	Whether strict monitoring of all 'Paid News' cases was undertaken and cases referred to DEO/RO/Media Certification & Monitoring Committee (MCMC).	
53.	Any Other Comment:	

Signature of the Observer

The Third Report (Immediately after completion of Poll)

OBSERVER REPORT - 3

Observer's Name with Code:	
Constituency:	
District:	
State:	

Sl. No.	Subject	Observer's Report
1.	Total number of Polling Station.	
2.	Whether mock poll done and certificate issued in all Polling Stations. If no, indicate the specific number of Polling Station.	
3.	Number of Polling Stations where there was only one election agent / polling agent was present (indicate the specific Polling Stations).	
4.	No. of polling stations with video cameras	
5.	No of polling stations with micro observers	
6.	Number of EVMs replaced after the start of poll (indicate the specific polling Stations.) and describe the defect in the EVM - EVM No. and make to be clearly mentioned.	
7.	No. and name of polling stations where complaints of violation of polls were received during the course of poll. Describe the nature of complaints and action taken.	
8.	Number of Polling Stations where poll was interrupted for more than two hours or start of poll delayed by two hours or more in starting (indicate the specific Polling stations)	
9.	Number of Polling Stations, where the interrupted poll could not continue (indicate the specific polling stations)	
10.	No. of polling station where there is, in the opinion of observer, a need for re-poll (based on point no. 7, 8 & 9 above).	
11.	Whether there was malfunctioning of any VVPATs machine	
12.	<i>Whether strong room was sanitized after completion of poll day and whether social distancing and other safety norms were followed for each activity?</i>	
13.	<i>How many relievers were allowed by the Presiding officer(s) in place of polling agents having temperature more than set limit?</i>	

"No voter to be left behind"

14.	<i>How many token/certificates were issued to electors having temperature more than the set norm by MoHFW?</i>	
15.	Remarks if any.	

Signature of the Observer

The Fourth Report (immediately after the Scrutiny of 17 A (Register of Voters) and other documents on the day after the poll)

OBSERVER REPORT - 4

Observer's Name with Code:	
Constituency:	
District:	
State:	

Sl. No.	Subject	Observer's Report
1.	Whether proper intimation was given in advance, in writing (under proper acknowledgment).	
2.	Whether Scrutiny of Form 17 A (Register of Voters) and other documents such as Form 17 C, Presiding Officer's diary, Micro observer's reports, Sector Officer's visit Sheets (in the presence of candidates / election agents or their authorized representatives) done. Who were present? For how many polling stations?	
3.	Whether proper log-books has been maintained for recording the time and purpose of opening and closing storage room where election records are kept.	
4.	Whether the room was opened in the presence of observer and candidates/their election agents/ representatives	
5.	Whether after the scrutiny of Form 17A, 17C, marked copies of electoral rolls etc., have been resealed by the Retuning Officer.	
6.	Whether the election agents/ representatives present have put their seal or signature thereon — who/which of the candidates?	
7.	<i>Whether social distancing norms were followed by all election agents/ representatives?</i>	
8.	<i>Whether thermal Scanning of all personnel entering the premises was done?</i>	
9.	<i>Whether proper arrangements were made for providing sanitizer, soap and water?</i>	
10.	Whether after scrutiny of Form 17 A, 17C and other documents and materials the R.O. and Observer makes any recommendations to the Commission for re-poll. If yes describe the reasons for each recommended polling station separately.	
11.	Remarks if any.	

Signature of Observer

The Fifth Report (immediately after the Counting of Votes).

OBSERVER REPORT - 5

Observer's Name with Code:	
Constituency:	
District:	
State:	

Sl. No.	Subject	Observer's Report
1	Whether arrangements for counting has been done as per the instruction of the Commission's letters No. 470/2007/PLN-I dated. 11.1.2007, 29.08.2007 and 470/INST/2009/EPS dated 08.09.2009? If No, what are the discrepancies?	
2	Whether randomization of counting staff was done as per the instruction of the Commission in the morning?	
3	Whether political parties were advised to properly train their counting agents.	
4	<i>Whether the seating arrangements of the counting agents were done as per the Commission's recent instructions for the conduct of General/ Bye elections amid COVID-19 ?</i>	
5	Whether pairing of counting supervisor and counting assistant was done as per the instruction of the Commission?	
6	How many tables were arranged?	
7	How many rounds were planned?	
8	How many Micro-Observer were deployed for each table?	
9	How many postal ballot papers were counted?	
10	How many ETPBS were received?	
11	How many ETPBS were valid and counted.	
12	Whether after each round or counting, random checking of 2(two) EVMs was done by the observer?	
13	Whether the counting agents of the candidates were present at the time of counting?	
14	Whether the signature of the counting agents taken in part —II of form 17 C?	
15	Whether the total votes shown in part-II of form 17 C tally with the votes counted in EVM?	
16	Whether continuous Videography of counting was done?	

17.	Whether the EVM no. was tallied with the EVM list supplied to the polling stations?	
18.	Whether Green paper seal no for each counted EVM checked and verified?	
19.	Whether the round wise result was immediately put on the blackboard/display in counting hall at the close of each round and before the beginning of next round?	
20.	Whether there was any demand for re-totalling with what result? Describe.	
21.	Whether any significant incident occurred during counting of votes? If yes, give details	
22.	Whether there was any case of counting of VVPAT slips under Rule 56D of Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961.	
23.	Name and number of Polling Stations where VVPAT slips were counted	
24.	Whether the number of VVPAT slips matched with the number of votes cast in Control Unit.	
25.	Whether candidates/ counting agents were present at the time of declaration of result <i>following social distancing norms?</i>	
26.	Time when counting started and ended. When was the result announced? If there was any time lag, please describe the reasons.	
27.	<i>Whether the counting centers were disinfected before, during and after the counting?</i>	
28.	Is the observer satisfied about the counting & declarations of results? (Observer should enclose round wise tabulation sheets with post copy)	
29.	Remarks if any.	

Signature of the Observer

39. POLICE OBSERVERS REPORTS

OBSERVER (POLICE)

FIRST REPORT

(To be submitted on 2nd day of reaching the allocated district)

Code No. & Name of Observer (Police)	
State:	
District:	
Date:	

Sl. No	Item	Report	
1.	Date & Time of Arrival at allocated District		
2.	Particulars of Stay in the District with Telephone and Fax number		
3.	Camp Office Address with Telephone and Fax number		
4.	Mobile Phone Number		
5.	Have you gone through the booklets/CDs given in the Observer Kit?		
6.	Whether you had a meeting with -		
	a) District Magistrate (Collector)	Date of meeting & Brief of the discussion held	
	b) Superintendent of Police	Date of meeting & Brief of the discussion held	
	c) General Observers of the District	Date of meeting & Brief of the discussion held	
	d) Expenditure Observers of the District	Date of meeting & Brief of the discussion held	
7.	Any significant information regarding the pattern of law and order situation in the district	Remarks:	
8.	Comments on Seizure of unlicensed Arms / Weapons / Cartridges / Explosives	Weapons <input type="text"/> Cartridges <input type="text"/> Explosives <input type="text"/>	Itemized details of the Seizure:
9.	Comments on illicit arms manufacturing Centers raided and seizures made and Cancelled	Number of Raids <input type="text"/>	Itemized details of the Seizure:
10.	No. of persons bound down u/s 107 / 116 Cr.P.C. etc. & other preventive sections	Number <input type="text"/>	

11.	Comments on – a) Incidents of violence related to poll campaign, political rivalry etc.	Number <input type="text"/>	
	b) Total Killed (Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Number <input type="text"/>	
	c) Total injured (Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Number <input type="text"/>	
	d) Damage to Property (in Lacs Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Number <input type="text"/>	
12.	Comments on any Liquor/ Cash seized (Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Liquor (in Ltrs.) <input type="text"/>	
		Cash (in Rs.) <input type="text"/>	
13.	Status of Execution of NBW	Number of Execution	
14.	Comments and level of satisfaction regarding a) Deployment & performance of flying squads	Remarks:	
	b) Night Patrols	Remarks:	
	c) Area Domination by CPF/State Police	Remarks with dates and places of such activities:	
	d) Training of Police Personnel at all levels	Remarks:	
	e) Working of check-posts	Remarks:	
15.	Any other specific activity or finding, which you may like to bring to the notice of the Commission	Remarks:	
16.	Any major incident which may have impact on forth coming polls.	Remarks:	
17.	Any information regarding intimidation of voters	Remarks:	
18.	Level of satisfaction regarding whether sufficient	Remarks:	

	action taken to stop such intimidation		
19.	Suggestion, if any		

Signature of the Observer

OBSERVER (POLICE)

SECOND REPORT

(To be submitted on the 5th day of reaching the allocated district)

Code No. & Name of Observer (Police)	
State:	
District:	
Date:	

Sl. No.	Item	Report
1.	Training of all Police Personnel on pre-poll and poll duties conducted. Please furnish your comments thereon.	Comments:
2.	Whether check-posts have been set up and shift duty is in place thereof to see whether illegal rms/Ammunitions, liquor etc. are not moving into the district.	Comments:
3.	Whether flying squads have been formed. Please furnish your comments thereon.	Comments:
4.	Whether Night Patrols have been mobilized in the district. Please furnish your comments thereon	Comments:
5.	Whether area domination through route plan is sufficient and each route plan is being covered or not. Please furnish your comments.	Comments:
6.	Whether Security forces have been briefed on:	
	a) pre-poll duties (Area domination)	
	b) security/sensitivity aspects of the area of their deployment.	
	c) Comments on (a) & (b) above	
7.	Status of Execution of NBW	Number of Execution :
8.	Whether NBWs have been executed at thana level. Details thereof	

Signature of the Observer

OBSERVER (POLICE)

THIRD REPORT

(To be submitted 2 days before poll)

Code No. & Name of Observer (Police)	
State:	
District:	
Date:	

Sl. No.	Subject	Input	
1.	Observation about Seizure of unlicensed Arms / Weapons / Cartridges / Explosives	Weapons <input type="text"/> Cartridges <input type="text"/> Explosives <input type="text"/>	Itemized details of Seizure with dates:
2.	Observation about illicit arms manufacturing Centres raided and seizures made	Number of Raids <input type="text"/>	Itemized details of Seizure with dates
3.	Observation about Licensed Arms deposited / impounded and Cancelled	Deposited <input type="text"/> Impounded <input type="text"/> Cancelled <input type="text"/>	Remarks:
4.	No. of persons bound down u/s 107 / 116 Cr.P.C. etc. & other preventive sections	Number <input type="text"/>	Remarks:
5.	Observation about - a) Incidents of violence related to poll campaign, political rivalry etc.	Number <input type="text"/>	Details with dates of the major incidents:
6.	b) Total Killed (Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Number <input type="text"/>	No. of Male/ Females died and details of action taken:
7.	c) Total injured (Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Number <input type="text"/>	No. of Male/ Females injured and details of action taken:
8.	d) Damage to Property (in Lacs Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Rupee <input type="text"/>	Cause of damage and action taken
9.	Comments on any Liquor/Cash seized (Since date of announcement of Election schedule)	Liquor (in Ltrs.) <input type="text"/> Cash (in Rs.) <input type="text"/>	Remarks:
10.	Observation about – a) Deployment & performance of flying squads	Satisfied <input type="text"/> YES	Remarks:

		<input type="checkbox"/> NO If no, give comments.	
11.	b) Night Patrols	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If no, give comments.	Remarks:
12.	c) Area Domination by CPF/State Police	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If no, give comments.	Remarks:
13.	d) Training of Police Personnel at all levels	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If no, give comments.	Remarks:
14.	e) Working of check-posts	Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If no, give comments.	Remarks:
15.	Status of Execution of NBW	Number of Execution	
16.	Any other specific activity or finding, which you may like to bring to the notice of the Commission		Remarks:
17.	Any major incident which may have impact on forthcoming polls		Remarks:
18.	Suggestion, if any		Remarks:

Signature of the Observer

**FOURTH REPORT - POLL DAY REPORT
(TO BE SENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER POLLS ARE OVER IN THE DISTRICT)**

Code No. & Name of Observer (Police)	
State:	
District:	
Date:	

Sl. No.	Item		Report
1.	a) No. of incidents of violence on poll day. b) Total Killed c) Total injured d) Damage to Property (in Lacs)		
2.	Details of any Liquor/Arms/Cash seized	Liquor <input type="text"/> Arms <input type="text"/> Cash <input type="text"/>	Remarks:
3.	Reports on Security at Polling Stations.	Satisfied <input type="text"/> YES <input type="text"/> NO If no, give comments.	Remarks:
4.	<i>How many cases were registered for violating instructions on COVID-19 measures under the provisions of Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 during the election?</i>		
5.	<i>How many legal actions under Section 188 of the IPC, and other legal provisions as applicable, as specified in Order No.40- 3/2020-DM-I(A) dated 29th July, 2020 of Ministry of Home Affairs were initiated during the election?</i>		

INCIDENT REPORT

Sl. No.	District	Constituency	Polling Station	Description
1.				
2.				
3.				

Signature of the Observer

40. DOS AND DON'TS FOR OBSERVERS

DOs

1. Attend the briefing and debriefing session fixed by the Commission.
2. Draw up your tour programs sufficiently in advance and intimate to the Chief Electoral Officer, District Election Officer and the Returning Officer of the constituency concerned.
3. Note carefully the numbers of visits, duration of visits and the period of visits given by the Commission and strictly act according to this.
4. Ensure that your tour Programme is duly publicized within the constituencies allotted to you.
5. Identification of areas / polling stations which might require closer attention:
 - I. Visiting polling stations/areas, especially those for which vulnerability mapping is done.
 - II. Visiting polling stations/areas, which have previous history of malpractices, irregularities and other such incidents.
 - III. Visiting newly created polling stations is necessary.
 - IV. Visiting polling stations/areas which might become sensitive during course of election due to any other reasons.
6. Monitor that adequate stock of all election materials are actually available as per the inventory of these items.
7. Strictly follow the guidelines from the EVM-VVPAT Manual-2018 Edition 3 and Status Paper on EVM Edition 3.
8. Familiarize yourself with the use of EVMs/VVPATs, and attend some training rehearsals.
9. Ensure that sufficient publicity regarding EVM/VVPATs has been given so that media and general public have no misgivings about EVMs/VVPATs.
10. Make an independent assessment of the Law and Order situation in general.

11. The observers are expected to guide advice and facilitate the efforts and initiatives of the DEO/RO in making necessary poll arrangements and conducting the elections in a free, fair, transparent, peaceful and participatory manner.
12. Make a random check of as many polling stations as possible and verify them.
13. Monitor instances of violation of Model Code, ban on transfer etc.
14. Monitor the deployment of central forces to have maximum impact.
15. Send a report to the Commission within 24 hours of your return to the headquarters after the visit. In addition, also please send spot report(s) from time to time as considered necessary.
16. Bring any development that merits immediate remedial action or attention of the Commission, to Returning Officer's / Commission's notice without any loss of time. Such information should not be deferred till the regular reports are submitted.
17. Upload on Observer Portal or send your report in a closed envelope addressed to the Secretary concerned looking after the particular State / Union Territory.
18. Attend meetings of the political parties called by the District Election Officers / Returning Officers.
19. Make independent assessment of the expenditure incurred by a candidate, political party or any other person.
20. Speak to the local people and check posters, pamphlets etc. to arrive at an independent assessment.
21. Inspect the register of Election Expenditure prescribed by the Commission.
22. Obtain prior permission of the Commission before leaving the headquarters.
23. Maintain proper conduct in the Constituency as ECI Observers are keenly observed.
24. The Observers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in consonance with the highest standards of professional, ethical and personal conduct, as is expected of a responsible and mature officer of the Commission.
25. The Observers shall discharge their observation duties with due diligence, honesty and responsibility.

26. Observers must be respectful of the local customs, traditions and cultures and refrain from expressing their personal opinions, perspectives and political preferences.
27. The observers must appreciate and respect the democratic processes and fundamental values of constitutional democracy enshrined in our Constitution.
28. The observers should follow the virtues of simplicity and avoid any lavish lifestyle or extravagance.
29. The observers must display the highest level of due diligence and professional acumen in conveying their opinions and reports to the commission about any election-related incident.
30. Any out-of-box suggestion regarding the improvement in election process should be given only in the final report.
31. Any instruction to the election machinery for a new experiment/measure should NOT be given without prior approval of the Commission.
32. All reports to the Commission should be prepared solely on the basis of accurate, reliable and verifiable information and not on hearsays, half-truths, rumors or unfounded anecdotal references.
33. The Observers must maintain strict confidentiality in submission of their reports and assessments to the Commission.

DON'TS

1. Do not ask for any exemption from the briefing session.
2. Do not travel to the Constituency with your families.
3. Do not go to the State capital to meet the Chief Electoral Officer if the route to the constituency from your headquarters does not pass through the State capital.
4. Do not call meetings of the political parties on your own.
5. Do not make any unreasonable demands to the Chief Electoral Officer / District Election Officer / Returning Officer regarding accommodation, vehicles, security etc.
6. Do not leave your headquarters once you have been allotted specific constituencies without the prior written permission of the Commission.
7. Do not plan for arrival to the Constituency on the day of scrutiny.
8. Do not plan for departure from the Constituency on the day next to the day of poll or on the day of counting.
9. Do not defer submitting reports of any development, which requires immediate remedial action; bring it to the Commission's notice by fastest means.
10. Observer has no executive role and role clarity is a must. For example, Observers should not pull the posters off the walls to clean up defacement.
11. The Observers shall not be a party to any illegal, unauthorized or illegitimate activity or engage in acts, which can bring discredit and disrepute to the Commission and invite criticism from media, political parties, candidates or any other quarter.

12. The Observers must not make any unauthorized public statements and exercise due caution before taking any definitive position in any election-related matter.
13. Discretion is much more preferable to any grand-standing or over-confident utterance.
14. The observers must not accept any offers of hospitality, avoid shopping at special discounts or attendance at private clubs/gymnasiums and avoid recreational/scenic tours/trips etc. during their stay in the assigned Districts/ACs.
15. The observers should not appear to be partial and exhibit political neutrality through their conduct and behavior.
16. The Observers are the eyes and ears of the Commission and not the mouthpiece.
17. The observers shall NOT interact with any media persons (except to receive any inputs or information offered by them), or give any form of press briefings or press releases regarding their assessment or actions, without the express authorization from the Commission.
18. The observers must abstain from expressing any views or opinions which may be directly or indirectly construed as support or preference for, or prejudice against any particular political party, coalition or candidate even in their private discourse with their colleagues or the election officials. This also applies to their interaction through electronic medium like WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook or other social media platforms.
19. Observers must ensure that no part of the report or election related information is shared with any unauthorized person or agency.
20. The over-arching spirit guiding the observers is cooperation and collaboration and not inquisition and enquiry.

21. The Observers are not deployed on a fault-finding mission, but to objectively assess the poll preparedness, identify the critical gaps and guide the DEO/RO to address them.

22. If any shortcoming or lacunae in the actions or performance of any election official in the state is not being addressed despite reminding the field machinery, it should be communicated to the CEO and the Commission, instead of direct confrontation or over-zealous criticism.

41. Review Points for Central Observers

1. **Polling Station:**
 - Commission’s instructions for assured minimum facilities at each polling station in view of COVID-19 situation.
 - Voter Assistance Booth for ease of voters.
 - All Women Managed Polling Station.
 - Special Facilitation for differently abled, visually challenged, women, elderly and leprosy affected etc.
 - Voter Facilitation Posters.
 - Awareness posters on COVID-19.
2. **Postal Ballot:**
 - Beneficiaries identified for postal ballot facility as per Commission’s latest instructions for postal ballot facility in view of COVID-19 situation.
3. **Electoral Roll:**
 - Modified Photo Voter Slip (with larger photo of the voter and location of the polling booth) distribution arrangements & monitoring.
 - Voter guide distribution.
4. **Model Code of Conduct:**
 - Mechanism of strict enforcement of MCC- flying squads, excise teams, border check posts etc.
 - Arrangements for “SOPs for last 72 hrs. till counting” and strict compliance.
5. **Vulnerability Mapping:**
 - Whether list of vulnerable pockets/hamlets have been identified by the DM/SP and RO and have they visited them.
 - Whether proper arrangement has been made for monitoring liquor production units and liquor outlets. Details of action taken on this front so far.
6. Quality and Fidelity of the Transportation Plan and Communication Plan and arrangements for communication-shadow areas.
7. Training and deployment of Micro-observers.
8. Training of polling staff with special focus on electoral process, EVMs & VVPATs.
9. **Deployment of Forces:**
 - Whether deployment of CPFs and SAPs has been prepared as per the directions of the Commission.

- Whether vulnerable and critical polling stations have been identified and proper security measures have been adopted.
- Whether CPF has been used for route-marches/ area domination in the vulnerable pocketes/hamlets. Details of dates/time of such visits by CPF.
- Whether daily action plan of the CPF has been prepared in consultation with DEO/RO. Comment of effective CPF usage so far and shortcoming if any.

10. Complaint Redressal Mechanism:

- Whether complaint redressal mechanism based on website and Call Centers has been constituted.
- Whether the Call Center number has been given wide publicity.
- Whether the district contact center with 1950 toll-free no. has been set up, sufficient no. of agents have been placed, are able to register all information, feedback and suggestion sand complaints into National Grievances services portal NGSP.
- Whether all complaints are disposed of in 24 hours.

11. IT Application:

c-VIGIL:

- Whether the district control room has been set up for handling new c-VIGIL cases.
- Whether flying squads/static surveillance teams have been registered with the c-VIGIL investigator and whether the investigation team adapt in handling c-VIGIL cases and reporting from the mobile app.
- Whether c-VIGIL cases are disposed in a prescribed timeline. Whether the Observer himself has c-VIGIL Observer app and is monitoring and reviewing the c-VIGIL cases.

Voter Helpline App:

- Whether the voter helpline application has been popularized electoral search, submission of form, submission of complaints, candidate affidavit and results.

PWD App :

- Whether PWD app has been popularized amongst PWD voters and whether the request of marking "as PWD", request for a wheelchair is downloadable at the DEO/ RO level and whether the arrangements have been made.

•

ENCORE App:

- Whether appropriate ICT helpdesk to digitize candidate nomination in the suvidha has been done. Whether all the nominations are 100% digitized on the ENCORE application. Ensure all the returning officers are scrutinizing all the applications for nominations only at ENCORE and are correctly marking as accepted, rejected/withdrawn/contesting.

Suvidha Permission App :

- Whether all the permissions are been handled only at suvidha or not.
Whether all the permissions are given on stipulated time

Suvidha Candidate App :

- Whether candidates have been told about the app for following up on the permission status and nomination status.

12. Arrangements for Poll Day Monitoring.

13. Arrangements at the EVM Strong Room:

- Whether proper arrangements have been made for video recording of the EVM/VVPAT strong room.
- Whether proper arrangements have been made for temporary stay/shelter for the representatives of the political parties outside the EVM/VVPAT strong room.
- Whether gloves and sanitizers were made available to each official handling EVM/VVPAT
- Whether proper lighting arrangements have been made.
- Whether plans for using the forces for securing the strong rooms where the EVMs and VVPATs are stored and for securing the counting centers and for other purposes, as required, have been formulated.
- Arrangement done for sanitization of Strong Room after completion of poll day.

14. EVM Arrangements:

- Whether mock poll conducted during candidate setting on 5% randomly selected EVMs/VVPATs.
- Whether all polling officials adequately trained on handling of EVMs & VVPATs in batch sizes of less than 50? How many batches conducted?
- Whether arrangements are being made to conduct hands on training and doubt clearing on EVMs during dispersal of polling parties.
- How many EVMs/VVPATs found faulty during Candidate Setting? Are these entered in ETS?
- Whether Commission's instructions regarding fitting of Sector Officer's vehicles with GPS tracking for real time monitoring of

movement of reserve EVMs and VVPATs have been implemented in letter and spirit?

- Whether adequate staff has been deployed for monitoring of round the clock monitoring of EVM control rooms?

15. Polling turnout Arrangement ICT app:

- Whether all accounts of RO/ARO have been set up for entering every 2 hourly report.
- Whether all PRO/RO/ARO about the entry of estimated voter turnout, end of the poll turnout and the accuracy of entering male, female and other data.

16. Counting Day Arrangements:

- Whether proper management for reception of postal ballots has been arranged.
- Whether proper security arrangement have been made at the strong room as per Commission's instructions.
- Whether CCTVs/Videography arrangements have been as per extant instructions of the Commission.
- Whether proper arrangements have been made for deployment of micro-observers at each table in counting centers.
- Whether proper arrangements have been made for the Counting Halls as per the Commission's instructions.
- Whether proper barricading has been done inside and outside the Counting Centers.
- Whether the paths for carrying EVMs to the Counting Centers have been properly sanitized with adequate security measures
- Whether proper arrangements have been made for the verification of VVPAT paper slips as per Commission's instruction vide letter no. 51/8/VVPAT/2017-EMS dated 13.10.2017 and 05.12.2017.
- Whether minimum 8mbps of lease line internet connectivity, backup lease line of 8 Mbps, computer system, printer, cyber security, online UPS and minimum 8 hours of power backup generator have been put into place.
- Whether the ROs/AROs are trained in generating round declaration form RDF form 21C and 21 E from the ENCORE portal.

17. In view of the COVID-19 situation all Social Distancing and other safety norms as per guidelines issued by MoHFW and by the Commission were followed during each activity by all.

18. Any other important issue.

42. Observer Mobile App

Observer mobile app is specifically designed for all the Observers i.e. General Observer, Expenditure Observer, Police Observer, and Awareness Observer, and it starts from the date of allocation.

Mobile App is available in Android and iOS operating systems and can be downloaded from Google Play store and Apple store. Observers need to download and install the required App and login with Observer code and password.

The observer mobile app helps Observers to get the details of their deployment, Observers receives notification through App, provides facilities for observers to submit their arrival and other mandatory reports and overall helps the Observer in managing their profile.

Observers may also get below details from the mobile App

- Deployment status and Observer ID card
- View deployed flying squad teams for the selected Assembly Constituency
- View the details of the flying squad team details, and clicking on team id will provide the facility to make a call directly
- All report formats for submission
- Submit report directly from App
- View noticeboard information about the polling and counting
- View the number of live cases with tracking history about the citizen and action taken by the Flying squad team
- View the field unit report and returning officer report submitted for the case.
- Highlight the cVIGIL case if need action on urgent basis

43. New IT Applications To Be Used For Forthcoming General Elections:

By the dedicated use of the Information and Communications Technology, ECI has ushered in the era of greater participation and involvement of citizens in the election process. Following are the brief outlines of the Information and Communications Technologies to be used:

For Citizens, Candidate and Political Parties:

1. cVIGIL Application

cVIGIL provides time-stamped evidentiary proof of the Model Code of Conduct / Expenditure Violation by empowering every citizen to click a photo or video using his or her smart phone. The application is based on GIS technology and this unique feature of auto location provides fairly correct information which can be relied upon by flying squads to navigate to the right spot of incidence and take prompt action. cVIGIL acts not only as a potent decision support system tool for election machinery but also ensures the participation of common man in conducting free and fair elections.

This app prioritizes the speedy and effective actions by authorities and promised users status report within 100 minutes. The “100-minute” rule makes the app a reliable way to report violations. Realtime status tracking and monitoring also help to fill in all the existing gaps and creates a fast-track complaint reception and redressal system.

The inbuilt features of the app prevent its misuse. The app can only be used to register complaints about MCC violations. The user will only get 5 minutes to report an incident after having clicked a picture/ video. To prevent being put on the false scent, the app does not allow uploading of the pre-recorded videos/ photos, neither would it allow users to save photos/ videos clicked from this app into the phone gallery. To prevent Further, the app can only be active in the States where elections have been announced. The moment a citizen exits such a State; the app will become inactive.

GIS-based tagging is one of the most important features of the application. The app automatically enables a geo-tagging feature when users switched on their camera in the cVIGIL to report a violation. The Commission also incorporated a feature i.e. “Cornerstone/ Leader board” into the app, to identify and reward the most proactive citizens. In a way, this will create an incentive for others also to actively use the platform; besides creating reputational benefits for civic-minded users.

2. Samadhan/ National Grievance Services Portal:

A unified toll-free number 1950 has been established. Any citizen can call on this toll-free number to get Information, Feedback, Suggestions, and Complaints. District contact Voter Helpline canter to address all the grievances had also been placed, where this system ensures that a caller can receive all voter facilitation services in his local language. Any citizen can reach now to all electoral services by simply calling 1950 from a landline or mobile.

3. Model Code of Conduct Violation Portal:

This unified portal deals with the various Model Code of Conduct (MCC) violations cases like those complaints received from political parties/non-political parties or the general public. The Portal will reflect all cases on model code violations of all the important cases which are published and displayed in the portal, as authorized by the competent authority to be displayed in the portal, for the public information immediately after ECIs’ decisions are taken into the matter on a case to case basis.

For Election Officials:

1. ENCORE:

This application provides online filling of candidate nomination, permissions, the publication of candidate affidavits and most importantly result management system. ENCORE provides easy processing of candidate applications in a multilingual format. As and when the applications will be digitized by Returning Officers, the information about the status of the application is reflected on the website and mobile applications. Once the candidature is final the citizen can download the list of

contesting candidates. The complete profile of the candidates along with the affidavit is also available on <https://affidavit.eci.gov.in> and in the Voter helpline mobile app available on android and apple store. Users can download affidavits of all candidates at the convenience of their mobile phones. The candidate, Political parties or any representative of the candidate can apply directly on <https://encore.eci.gov.in> and thereafter receive the permission approval status on the specially designed “ENCORE Candidate App”. All the permissions for meetings, Rallies, loudspeakers, temporary office can also be handled through the online portal. It obviates manual intervention in granting permissions and it will be processed on a first come first serve basis. The online application once received, required various departmental nodal officers to give no objection before the permission could be granted by the Returning Officer. Each nodal officer of Police, Revenue, Transport, PWD and others will be given an exclusive mobile app to process the permissions on the fly. The result portal <https://results.eci.gov.in> would contain the information in a compiled manner such that citizens get to know the authentic and real-time results even before it is available in any media house. The result will not only be available through the website but also be available through the Mobile App i.e. Voter Helpline App and the Result Panel <https://results.eci.gov.in>.

2. EVM Management System (EMS):

EVM Management System is designed to manage inventory of EVM units. One of the important modes to ensure a fair and transparent process in EVM management is the administrative protocol of the randomization of the machines before they are deployed in the Polling stations. This whole process will be done in the presence of Political Parties’ representatives. The EVM Management System add to the transparency and ensure that there is no manual intervention at any level from the manufacturer to the polling stations. The new mobile app for scanning and tracking of machine units ensures each machine is tracked in real-time. The App will be used for scanning at the warehouse level while unit movement from one location to another in AC after the first randomization. Once FLC is successfully completed then EVMs and VVPATs will be randomized twice, once for allocation of machines to assembly constituencies and second to polling stations in the presence of candidates or their representatives before they are distributed for use in individual polling stations.

The randomizations were carried out through EVM Management System(EMS) by the DEO in the presence of the representatives of political parties/candidates for complete transparency. The lists of EVMs and VVPATs containing serial number of EVM and VVPAT allocated to particular polling station were provided to the political parties/candidates.

3. Webcasting

To ensure that the critical and vulnerable polling booths are monitored in real-time, ECI will ensure the IP based webcasting, which is viewable by DEOs, CEOs, and ECI in real-time.

4. One-way Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot for Service Voters:

All registered Service Voters will be delivered e-postal ballot of their respective constituency through electronically transmitted postal ballot (ETPBS), which will be printed and after casting the vote will be sent back to Returning Officer by post.

5. Voter Facilitation Services on NVSP:

- I. In NVSP & ERO Net, provision has been made for elector to mark him as PWD with disability category such as sight, hearing, locomotive or any other such marking visible to ERO & RO, so that they can interact with concerned elector for providing support appropriately to them helping & enabling them to cast vote at ease.
- II. On NVSP such electors can also submit requests for wheel chair or any other assistance required.

44. Mobile Applications for the conduct of Elections

1.Voter Helpline App: Android and iPhone based mobile application is a Comprehensive application for the Voter centric services. Mobile Application has features like Electoral search, Results dissemination of live election, view Contesting Candidate profiles, view Candidate Nomination Status, Voter Selfie, Digital Vault, Candidate affidavit, Download photo voter slip and View real-time Polling Station Queue on Poll Day. Users can apply for new registration, request for migration, request for correction in EPIC details, request for deletion of Epic. The Voters can search their name & find the polling station located in the electoral roll by simply scanning their Voter ID card.The application is available on both the Google Play Store and App Store

2.Pwd App: PwD app is meant for Persons with Disabilities. App is available in multiple regional languages. The PwD elector can make requests for marking them as PWD, request for new registration, request for migration, request for correction in EPIC details, request for a wheelchair. App also has new features like registration for the Absentee voter, Search your name in Electoral roll, Result dissemination, Know your BLO, register complaint, search your booth level polling officer, booth locator, track your complaint status, track your form status, details of current elections, navigate to the polling station and see the list of contesting candidates for their election. It utilizes the Accessibility features of mobile phones for voters with blindness and hearing disabilities. The Application is available on the Google Play Store.

3.EMS App: The EVM machine inventory is managed in the central application called EMS. All the machines are barcoded and they are only moved from one place to another by the use of EMS apps only. Every machine is tracked and recorded from the mobile app only. Each field user is given the app for scanning and it is registered into the system. The Application is available on the Google Play Store.

4.cVIGIL App: The citizens can report the Model Code of Conduct Violations during the election period for prompt action by the enforcement agencies. The app provides clicking of live Photos/ video/audio from the app along with the Geo-tagging & time stamping. This provides evidentiary proof for taking prompt action. The Application is available on both the Google Play Store and the App Store. URL for Android and IOS (App Store)

5.Monitor App: cVIGIL Monitor App (Android and iPhone) has been made for ECI/CEO/DEO. Complaints would be visible based on permission granted for CEO/DEO. Officers can view MCC/Expenditure complaints registered by citizens. Officers can also mark any complaint for urgency or high priority resolution. Officers can also view details of complaints like reports submitted by the FST Team, action taken by Returning officers.

6.Decider App: Android-based cVIGIL Decider App has been made for Returning officer/Assistant Returning officer. RO/ARO can view complaints assigned to them for their respective AC. Ro/ARO can view reports submitted by FST for all assigned cases. Ro/ARO can Drop (Not found correct) , Disposed (investigated and found correct) and Escalate (Found correct and escalated for further investigation). Ro/ARO can also bypass the investigation in case of delay.

7. Investigator App: cVIGIL Investigator app has been made for the Field units like Flying Squads & Static Surveillance Team to investigate the cVIGIL Citizen cases and conduct Suo-Moto case reporting. This application is a potent tool in the hands of the field units deployed for the enforcement of violations and law and order situations. Upon receipt of the complaint, the magistrate/ police inspector reaches the point of incidence and after investigation files the pictorial evidence and his report through the app. The events are recorded with the GIS location to track the event and its disposal.

8. Voter Turnout App: During the poll day, it captures the live voter turnout data as recorded by polling stations and displays in the mobile app. This is a very popular app for contesting candidates and Media to know the real-time voter turnout in the polling stations Assembly constituency-wise. The Application is available on the Google Play Store.

9. Booth App: This app provides the facility of identifying the voter in the electoral roll by simply scanning the QR code in the voter slips which are distributed before the elections. This helps in faster identification, faster polling, real-time automated turnout information, and advanced queue information in their polling station to voters. The Presiding Officers are now able to fill in their statutory diary online including turnout, events and incidences. For information related to Booth App the website of the booth app is available i.e. <https://boothapp.eci.gov.in>

10. Suvidha: Candidate app: The political parties and candidates can track their application from the mobile app. During the elections, Candidate/ Political parties need to take permission from the authority to hold the rally and organize the event. All permissions once applied can be tracked from the mobile app. The Application is available on the Google Play Store.

11. ENCORE Nodal App: During the elections, various departments need to give the clearance before the permission asked by the candidate / political party is accorded. Each nodal officer is given the mobile app for him/her to give no objection from his department. These departments include fire, police, environment e.t.c. The Application is available on the Google Play Store.

12. Encore App: This app is meant for decision-makers who can monitor the poll turnout, deployment of manpower and also track the deficiencies. Each event is sent as a notification in the mobile app. The officer is presented with real-time information about the events and incidents reported by the field officers. They can also monitor all the cVIGIL cases reported for the model code of conduct violation through the mobile app. The Application is available on the Google Play Store.

45. ANNEXURE-I

CHECK LIST

INFORMATION/PARTICULARS TO BE PREPARED BY DEO AND RO TO BE PROVIDED TO THE OBSERVER ON ARRIVAL.

a) Constituency

- i. No. & Name of the Constituency
- ii. No. of vulnerable villages/hamlets
- iii. Map of the district and map of the constituency highlighting vulnerable villages/hamlets

b) DEO

- i. Name
- ii. Batch of service
- iii. Date of posting

c) SP/Commissioner for a city

(Please indicate the names as per jurisdiction. If the constituency involves more than two districts – both the officers should be mentioned)

- i. Name
- ii. Batch of service
- iii. Date of posting

d) RO and ARO

- i. Name
- ii. Designation
- iii. Date of joining the designated cadre
- iv. Experience in conduct of elections
- v. Date of posting

e) Population

- i. Male
- ii. Female
- iii. Total

f) Electorate details

Number of Electors

ELECTORS							EPIC holders	Photos in Rolls
Male	Female	Others	Service	Proxy	Overseas	Total		

g) Electoral roll details

- i. Date of publication of revised electoral roll (revised w.r.t. 01-01 ---)

Date	Month	Year					

- ii. Whether copies of electoral roll have been supplied to the recognized political parties

Yes	No	If yes, date thereof	If no, reason therefor

- iii List of polling station wise changes made (a separate sheet to attached)
- iv. Addition and deletion since the last publication date

Polling Stations		Male Electors	Female Electors	Total
	Original			
	Additions			
	Deletions			
	Change			
Final Number				

- v. Date of printing of supplementary electoral roll (on a/c of continuous updation)

Date		Month		Year			

- vi. Preparation of authenticated copies completed and supplied to political parties on

Date		Month		Year			

h) Polling Stations

- a No of polling stations

i) Whether the list has been approved by the ECI Yes No

ii. Whether all the polling stations have been visited by the RO and ARO Yes No

- iii. Polling Station Details

Total No of Polling Stations	Single Polling Station Locations	Two PS location	Three PS location	Four PS location	Five PS location	Six PS location	More than Six PS location

iv. Electors details of Polling Stations in the constituency

Total No of Polling Stations	No of electors attached to the Polling Station					
	Less than 300	300-800	801-1000	1001-1200	1201-1500	More than 1500

i. Identification of critical villages, urban clusters and polling stations

- i. Vulnerability mapping done or not
- ii. Critical polling stations identified or not (Detailed list with reasons)

j. EVMs/VVPATs

Name of constituency	No. of EVMs/VVPATs required for polling booths	No. of EVMs/VVPATs in reserve	No. of EVMs/VVPATs marked for training	Total number required	Available number

k. Have EVMs been allocated AC-wise by the DEO after 1st randomization?

Yes	No
-----	----

Date and location planned for sealing and randomization of EVMs by RO

- (i) Date:
- (ii) Location:

l. Identification of centres for dispatch, receiving and counting and any special arrangements

Name of Location	Activity	Facilities		Space		Lighting		Water/ & toilets		Layout Plan	
		Adeq	Inad	Adeq	Inad	Adeq	Inad	Adeq	Inad	Done	Not done

m. Availability of staff

Polling Personnel

Total No of polling personnel required for the Constituency	No of State Govt. Official available	No of State PSUs officials available	No of Central Govt. Official available	No of Central PSUs officials available

Police personnel

i. The total number of police personnel by designation

SP	Dy SP	Pls	PSIs	Constables

ii. Requirement of CPF

iii. Operation of police control room(police and RO, DEO) and the contact numbers

n. Preventive actions taken

i. Arms deposited

ii. Security bonds

iii. Preventive detentions

iv. NSA

v. Externment

vi. Prohibition cases, if applicable

vii. List of persons provided with security cover

viii. Copy of law & order report 1 and 2 sent to State HQ should be endorsed to Observer daily.

o. Arrangements for implementation of model code of conduct

i. Arrangements for prevention and removal of defacement of property

- a. Territorial jurisdiction wise enforcement squads formed Yes No
- b. District media cell constituted or not Yes No
- ii. Instructions to all the officers, candidate, political parties actions envisaged for the lapses DONE NOT DONE
- iii. Nodal officer for communicating about the venues, and rallies of political party/candidates meetings
 - a. Name and contact details
- iv. Arrangements for expenditure observation at the constituency level.
 - a. Designated officers at constituency level appointed Yes No
- v. Preparation of list of prevailing market rates for regular campaign material required done Yes No

p. Arrangements for procurement of election material and printing of forms etc.

No of indelible ink phials obtained	No of green paper seal obtained	No of paper strips seals obtained	Whether secret seals of commission received	Whether sufficient No of handbook for the Presiding Officers etc. available	Whether Statutory/ Non- Statutory forms etc available

q. Randomization of polling personnel

- i. Whether data base of polling personnel prepared? Yes No
- ii. Date for formation of polling parties

Date		Month		Year			

iii. Date for allocation of polling stations to polling parties

Date		Month		Year			

r. Training of Polling Personnel

- i. Whether training schedule for the polling personnel prepared? Yes No
- ii. Whether schedule for EVM/VVPAT training for the polling personnel prepared? Yes No
- iii. Whether schedule for training of the sector Magistrate / officers prepared? Yes No

s. Dispatch arrangements

- i. Whether from HQ or any other location,
- ii. Name of the location,
- iii. Any need for early dispatch to specific polling stations,
- iv. If yes, reasons.

t. Receiving arrangements

- i. Location,
- ii. No of tables for receiving,
- iii. Plan for special counters.

u. Strong room location and security arrangement

- i. Location
- ii. Security arrangement

v. Counting arrangement

- i. Appointment of additional AROs, if any,

Yes	No
-----	----
- ii. Location of counting – whether approval from the ECI,

Yes	No
-----	----
- iii. Testing of Genesis and operational feasibility,

DONE	NOT DONE
------	----------
- iv. Arrangement for receiving and counting of Postal Ballot Papers.

Yes	No
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46. Annexure -II

Arrival/Departure Report of Observers (To be Submitted Immediately after Arrival / Departure)

Date of Reporting	
Name of Observer and code	
Email Id	
Number and Name of Constituency	
Name of the District and State	
Mobile No.	
Fax No.	
Constituency Mobile No.	
Constituency Telephone No.	
Constituency Fax No.	

1.	Date of arrival / Departure of Observer (please strike out the portion which is not applicable)	
2.	Was there any break taken by the Observer from the duty	
3.	If Yes, give details.	
4.	Was there late reporting to duty	
5.	If Yes, by how much time?	

Place:

Date:

Signature of Observer

Note

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.





“No voter to be left behind”



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India
Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001