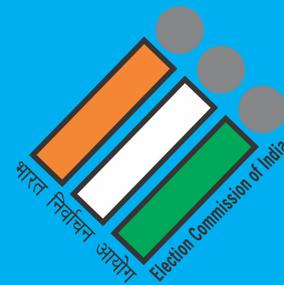




CHECKLIST FOR PRESIDING OFFICER

February 2019

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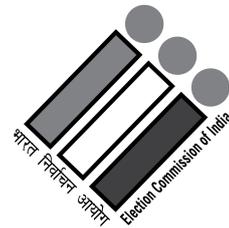
भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
Election Commission of India

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

“No voter to be left behind”

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1) ON APPOINTMENT AS PRESIDING OFFICER

1. On receipt of call letter for election duty, the Presiding Officer should ensure his presence in the training classes on the dates fixed by DEO/RO.
2. Read the following pamphlets & books very carefully.
 - a. Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018;
 - b. Manual of EVM and VVPAT;
 - c. Letter of the Returning Officer to Presiding Officers giving important instructions.
3. Become fully familiar with the operation of the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT). Hands on training is must.
4. On receiving the appointment letter issued by the DEO after formation of polling party, getting familiar with the other members of the polling parties and maintenance of close relation with them. Ensure replacement for absent polling party member from reserve.
5. Read carefully the different forms statutory and non-statutory as given in the Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018.
6. Attend the training attentively. There should be no confusion about the functions, forms and envelops. If there is any doubt, get the clarification from the RO/ARO.
7. Apply for postal ballot paper/EDC at appropriate time.
8. Deposition of postal ballot in the "drop box" at facilitating centres at the time of training.
9. Careful examination of the appointment order, check the name of assembly constituency, name and number of polling station and location of polling station.
10. Finding names of polling officers for that polling station as member of polling party. If any officer is absent, to ensure appointment of another officer out of the reserve polling personnel. Coordinate with members of polling party for that polling station. Attending training session to ensure last minute EVM and VVPAT hands on skill.
11. Contact the Zonal Magistrate for guidance and help in departing for polling station in designated vehicle through pre-decided route and check post.

2) POLLING PARTY TRAININGS

1. Presiding Officer should procure latest copy of 'Handbook for Presiding Officer' from RO/DEO and read thoroughly.
2. Presiding Officer is the leader of the Polling party. He should ensure that all the members of the Polling party are fully trained, including hands on training on EVM and VVPAT.

3) ON THE DAY BEFORE THE DAY OF POLL

On the day of commuting of polling party, the presiding officer should ensure to collect the polling materials for use at the polling station. Refer **Annexure 1 & Annexure 2** for list of polling materials required at Polling Station and check memo.

1. Presiding Officer should ensure that

- a. The Control Unit, Balloting Unit(s) and VVPAT given to polling party pertains to their polling station.
- b. The 'Candidate Set Section' of Control Unit is duly sealed and the address tag is firmly attached thereto.
- c. The battery in the Control Unit is fully operational. Remember to switch off the battery after checking the Control Unit. Polling party is instructed **NOT TO TEST VVPAT** at the time of dispersal and before Mock poll at Polling station under any circumstance.
- d. The Balloting unit(s) is duly sealed and address tags are firmly attached, both at the top and bottom right portion.
- e. The appropriate ballot paper is duly fixed on each Balloting Unit and is properly aligned under the ballot paper screen.
- f. The slide switch/thumb wheel switch is set to the appropriate position in each Balloting Unit by Returning Officer. Inform Sector Magistrate/Returning Officer, if there is any discrepancy.
- g. Unmasked buttons on Balloting Unit(s) are equal to the number of candidates (including **NOTA** option).
- h. All the items of polling materials mentioned in **Annexure 1** have been supplied in required quantity;
- i. Check the serial numbers of paper seals;
- j. Check the electoral roll to ensure that:
 - i. The copies of the supplements are given;
 - ii. The part number of the roll and the supplement is correctly given;
 - iii. Page numbers in the working copies of the roll are given serially;
 - iv. The printed serial numbers of voters are not corrected and no new numbers are substituted for them;
 - v. All deletions of names and corrections of clerical or other errors as per the supplements have been incorporated;
- k. Tendered ballot papers should be available for the same AC.
- l. Photo copies of specimen signatures of the contesting candidates and their election agents are also given to him. This will help in verifying genuineness of signature of the candidates/election agent in the appointment letter of the Polling Agent(s) at the polling station.
- m. Check other important polling material like dummy card board EVM, stamp pad, green paper seal, strip seal, statutory forms, register of voters (Form 17A), Form 17C, Mock poll Slips stamp, plastic box, black envelopes etc. are given to him.
- n. Check the copy of the list of contesting candidates given. The names, photographs and symbols of the candidates given in the list must tally and should be in the same serial order in which they appear in the ballot paper on the balloting unit(s).

- o. Voter Facilitation Posters are supplied for display on the outside wall, near the entrance of each polling station.
 - p. Check-up that the phial of indelible ink supplied contains sufficient quantity and that its cap is perfectly sealed.
 - q. Check up the arrow cross mark rubber stamp and the brass (metal) seal. Ensure that the arrow cross mark rubber stamp has seals affixed on both the sides and that the stamp pad is not dry. If the polling station is proposed to be located in a temporary structure, obtain iron box of sufficient dimensions to store the election papers. Though the election is conducted through EVMs and VVPATs, this is required for tendered ballot papers.
 - r. If he has any doubt about his movement program, he should get it cleared and make sure of the time, the route, the place of departure and mode of transport for reaching the polling station.
2. Please note that: -
- a. Reach polling station on the day prescribed by RO and ensure that
 - i. There is enough space for the voters to wait outside the polling station and for separate queues for male and female voters;
 - ii. There is separate waiting space for men and women as far as practicable;
 - iii. There are separate passages for entry and exit of voters; separate entrance and exit can be provided with the help of bamboos and ropes in the middle of the doorway;
 - iv. A notice showing the polling area and details of voters is prominently displayed;
 - v. The copy of the list of contesting candidates is prominently displayed.
 - b. In case, women voters are large in numbers, woman assistants can be appointed by RO and the DEO should be informed. Receive and verify the availability of woman assistants and take their services to identify women voters. If any polling officer appointed for the PS is absent, a substitute officer should be appointed and the DEO should be informed accordingly.
 - c. The Presiding Officer should decide the place where he, his Polling Officers and Polling Agents of the candidates will sit and the Control Unit of the voting machine will be placed.
 - d. Remove any photograph of any leader belonging to any political party hung in the polling station or cover them fully.
3. The EVM, VVPAT and the polling materials entrusted to the Presiding Officer should remain in his custody throughout, till the poll is completed and the EVM, VVPAT and the materials are handed back by him. Either he or one of the Polling Officers selected by him, should remain in the polling station as in-charge of the EVM, VVPAT and polling materials from the moment of their arrival. The EVM, VVPAT and polling materials should not be left in the custody of any Police Guard on duty at the polling station or any person other than the Presiding Officer or a Polling Officer selected by him.

4. If a Presiding Officer is appointed for a polling booth situated in a building having up to two polling booths, he will be provided an alphabetical list of electors of his part.
5. List of absentee/missing voters, communication plan & vulnerable polling station/hamlets will also be provided to Presiding Officer.

4) ON THE ARRIVAL AT THE POLLING STATION ON THE DAY OF POLL

1. On the arrival at the polling station, the Presiding Officer should take a round and know periphery of 200 meters and ensure safety of Polling Station within this periphery by checking of CPF/State Police Personnel/Home Guard.

In case any polling officer is absent, ensure to appoint another officer in his/her place.

There should be separate entrance and exit for voters. Even if there is only one door to the room, housing the polling station, a separate entrance and exit can be provided with the help of bamboos and ropes dividing the doorway.

2. Make sure that that no High voltage incandescent bulbs/tube-light is placed over or in front of voting compartment, as VVPAT may go into error mode in excess light and also no window should be opened behind EVM and VVPAT.
3. Before mock poll, Balloting Unit(s) and VVPAT should be kept on the table in the voting compartment. The voting compartment should be located at sufficient distance from the table where the Control Unit and VSDU (present in M2 VVPAT) are kept.
4. The cable connecting the Balloting Unit, VVPAT and Control Unit has a reasonable length so that its routing does not obstruct the movement of voter inside the polling station.
5. The connecting cable should come out from the back of voting compartment through an aperture cut out at the bottom of the voting compartment. However, the size of this aperture in the voting compartment should be restricted to ensure the secrecy of voting.
6. While placing the Balloting Unit(s) and VVPAT in voting compartment, it should be ensured that no one can disturb the interconnecting cable, also the cable should be fully visible. To ensure secrecy of voting, the voting compartment should not be near the window or door of the polling station.
7. Polling officers and agents should be seated in such a way that the Balloting Unit, VVPAT and the voter actually recording his vote by pressing particular button on BU, is not be visible to them at all.
8. The waiting area should be spacious enough to accommodate the voters outside the polling station.
9. There should be separate waiting areas for men and women as far as practicable.
10. Polling Agents should be seated in such a way that they can see the face of the elector as and when he/she enters the polling station, and the identification of the elector can be done by the first polling officer and also they can challenge the identity of the elector. They should also be able to see the entire operation at the Presiding Officer's table or table of third polling officer where the Control Unit is kept and also see the movement of elector from entry to exit.
11. If there are sufficiently large numbers of women electors in a polling station, there should

be special arrangements for their identification and application of indelible ink in a separate enclosure having due regards to privacy, dignity and decency. For ensuring this, Presiding Officer can appoint locally available women to help their identification.

12. If more than one polling stations is located in the same building, then the Presiding Officer should satisfy himself that necessary arrangements have been made for segregating the voters and making them wait in different parts of the space in front of each polling station without any confusion.

Presiding Officer must know that polling station and the area around it and take under his control area up to a radius of 200 meters.

13. Ensure the removal of campaign posters of political parties and candidates.

14. No photos of leaders, symbols of any political parties or slogans having a bearing on elections should be exhibited, if already there, they should immediately be removed till the poll is over.

15. No cooking or lighting of fire for any purpose should be allowed inside the polling station.

16. A notice specifying the polling area and particulars of electors to be served by polling station and a copy of list of the contesting candidates in Form 7A, should be displayed outside each polling station prominently. Voter Facilitation Posters should be displayed on the outside wall, near the entrance of each polling station.

17. The seating order, at the polling station, for the polling agents of candidates should be guided by the following categories of priorities, namely:

- a. Candidates of recognized National Parties.
- b. Candidates of recognized State Parties.
- c. Candidates of recognized State Parties of other States who have been permitted to use their reserved symbols in the constituency.
- d. Candidates of registered unrecognized parties.
- e. Independent candidates.

18. Presiding Officer should not allow any representative of political parties to sit in the periphery of 200 meters of the polling stations for helping the voters. Presiding Officer should get all the tents and chairs removed in that boundary.

19. No arms should be carried inside the Polling Stations.

20. Presiding Officer along with his members of polling party should ensure that they reach the polling station at least 75 minutes before the polling starts.

21. Check the appointment letters of polling agents and explain them the provisions of section 128 of the R.P. Act, 1951. Assign them seats and issue them entry passes for their movements.

22. Ensure that Polling Agents appointed at the polling station are enrolled in the voter list of that polling station or of the neighbouring polling station and have EPIC. Follow the ECI instructions regarding appointment of Polling Agents.

23. Ensure that no one smokes inside the polling station.

5) DURING THE HOURS OF POLL

Ensure that the polling starts sharp at the fixed time. Even if all formalities have not been completed, admit voters in the polling station at the fixed time.

6) DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER BEFORE COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLL

- a) The Presiding Officer is required to read out a declaration, prescribed by the Commission, before the commencement of the poll. He should read out the declaration aloud to the hearing of all people present in the polling station and sign the declaration. He should also obtain thereon the signatures of every contesting candidates/polling agents as are present and are willing to affix the same. If any polling agent declines to affix his signature on the declaration, he should record the name of such polling agent in that declaration.
- b) Before commencing the poll, Presiding Officer should also explain to all present, the provisions of section 128 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 regarding maintenance of secrecy of voting and warn them of the penalty for any breach thereof.
- c) Visit sheet should be maintained as prescribed by the Commission.

7) IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF POLL

The Presiding Officer is over all in-charge of the Polling Station. His duties are, in brief, to

1. Before Mock Poll, place the Balloting Units and VVPATs in their respective Voting Compartments; In no case the Balloting Unit or the Control Unit, be placed on the floor. It must be kept on a table.
2. Connect VVPAT with Control Unit and Balloting Unit(s) and VSDU (in case of M2 VVPAT);
3. Switch on the power of Control Unit;
4. The paper roll lock in the backside of VVPAT is used to lock paper roll during transit. The paper roll should be unlocked before the use of VVPAT. The paper roll knob can be set in unlock position by turning knob in anti-clockwise direction from lock position to unlock position.
5. See that Voting Compartments have been properly arranged with appropriate posters pasted outside to indicate clearly the Election pertaining to which the Balloting Unit(s) and VVPAT are kept inside:
6. Ensure that the Cables to connect the Balloting Units and VVPAT with their respective Control Units are placed in such a way that voters are not required to cross over them during their movements inside the polling station. At the same time the entire length of the cable should be visible to the polling agents present.

7. Conduct of Mock Poll on Poll Day

- a. **Mock poll before commencement of actual poll:** Mock poll should be conducted normally one hour before the scheduled hour of commencement of poll. All contesting candidates should be informed in writing, well in advance that Mock Poll would start one hour before the commencement of poll and they should be advised to instruct

their polling agents to be present in time for the Mock Poll. Polling agents of at least two candidates should be present at the time of Mock Poll. However, if polling agents of at least two candidates are not present, the Presiding Officer may wait for 15 more minutes before conducting the mock poll and if the agents still do not come, then the Presiding Officer may go ahead and start the mock poll. It is further clarified that after waiting for 15 minutes, there is a possibility that only one polling agent may be present, in that situation also, the Presiding Officer should go ahead and start mock poll. In such case, there should be specific mention in the mock poll certificate on this aspect.

- b. For mock poll, the Balloting Unit and VVPAT should be placed in the voting compartment, where a Polling Officer should be present along with polling agents to observe operations on BU and paper slips printed on VVPAT. The CU and VSDU (in case of M2 VVPAT) should be placed on the table of the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer who will operate the CU after being properly connected. This Polling Officer will keep a record of the votes casted.
- c. The mock poll should be conducted with the polling agents voting at random for each of the contesting candidates. A total of at least 50 votes should be polled in the mock poll. In the case of absence of polling agents of any of the candidates, one of the polling officers or other polling agents may record the votes for such candidates. The Polling Officers present in the voting compartment should ensure that votes are recorded for each of the contesting candidates.
- d. At the end of the mock poll, press the **‘Close’** button in the result section.
- e. Now, press the button marked **‘Result’** in the Result Section. On pressing that button, the Display Panel will start showing the Result.
- f. After the mock poll, ascertain the result in the CU, count the VVPAT paper slips in the presence of the polling agents and confirm that the results tally for each candidate.
- g. Next, press the ‘Clear’ button of Control Unit to clear the account of votes recorded during the mock voting. On pressing the ‘Clear’ button, all counts in the Display Panel will show ZERO.**
- h. Prepare the Certificate of mock poll.
- i. All mock poll data in CU and VVPAT paper slips from VVPAT must be removed by the Presiding Officer and the empty drop box verified by the polling agents.
- j. The mock poll VVPAT paper slips, should be stamped on their back side with the rubber stamp having inscription “MOCK POLL SLIP”, thereafter these mock poll VVPAT paper slips shall be kept in an envelope made of thick black paper and sealed with the seal of the Presiding Officer. The dimension of the stamp to be used for the purpose should be 3 cm X 1.5 cm.
- k. The Presiding Officer and polling agents must put their signatures on the envelope. The number and name of the polling station, number and name of the assembly constituency, date of poll and the words “VVPAT paper slips of Mock Poll” should be written on the envelope.

- l. This envelope must be kept in the special plastic box for mock poll and sealed with a pink paper seal placed all around in such a manner that opening of the box will require breaking of the seal.
 - m. The number and name of the polling station, number and name of the assembly constituency and the date of poll shall be written on the plastic box.
 - n. The Presiding Officer and polling agents must put their signatures on the pink paper slip and keep the box along with other documents relating to elections. Thereafter, Presiding Officer will sign the Mock Poll Certificate (Annexure 14 of Handbook for Presiding Officer, 2018) and seal the CU as per prescribed procedure using green paper seal, Special Address Tag and Strip Seal. SWITCH OFF the Control Unit, before sealing of the Control Unit of EVM and Drop Box of VVPAT.
 - o. The drop box of VVPAT should be sealed with the thread and an address tag using Presiding Officer's seal before the actual poll starts.
 - p. The Presiding Officers shall ensure that the data of the mock poll is deleted, without fail, before the official poll starts. This is a very critical step.**
 - q. The Presiding Officer shall mention the names of the polling agents and the candidates (and their party affiliations), whom they represent and obtain their signatures on the completion of mock poll on the certificate.
 - r. The Presiding Officer, at the end of Mock Poll at the polling station, shall invariably check and note the date and time shown in the display of the Control Unit and also the actual date and time at that point of time as well as any discrepancy between the two, if any, in the Mock Poll certificate and also in Presiding Officer's Diary.
 - s. Where a micro-observer has been appointed at any polling stations, he should also participate in all the proceeding of the mock poll and his signature should also be obtained on the mock poll certificate. Further, these proceedings should be video graphed wherever videography arrangement has been made at the polling station.
 - t. The Returning Officer through the Sector Officers and using the communication link with the polling station/mobile teams, shall track the conduct or otherwise of mock poll, and ascertain the mock poll status. Non-confirmation of mock poll could be indicative of non-commencement of poll and in that case the Returning Officer shall make immediate intervention to sort out the problem.
8. The polling stations not having the presence of agents of the candidates of recognized parties and where the mock poll had to be conducted in the absence of agents or with the polling agent of only one candidate shall merit focused attention of the election machinery. Interventions such as deployment of micro-observers, deployment of video cameras (if not already done), frequent visits by Sector Officers and other senior officers should be ensured in such cases.
 9. In case of simultaneous election, ensure that on the green paper seal fixed in the Control Unit for Lok Sabha election, only the candidates for the Lok Sabha election or their polling agents as are present affix their signatures and similarly, on the green paper seal fixed in the Control Unit for Legislative Assembly election, the candidates for Assembly election or their polling agents alone affix their signatures.

10. Ensure, that all the members of the polling party are in position well before the commencement of the poll and all materials and records are kept handy and ready to commence poll at the appointed hour:
11. Prevent any member of the polling party or any polling agent from wandering inside the polling station and to keep them seated in their allocated seats:
12. During the progress of poll, keep a close watch on the movements of the voters and to be alert and watchful so that no voter goes away without voting for both or either of the elections.
13. Ensure that during the first hour of the poll when polling is generally brisk, no member of the polling party shows any slackness in the duties allocated to him.
14. Check periodically the ‘TOTAL’ for each Control Unit by pressing TOTAL button on CU to ensure that the voting is going as per the serial order of electors.
15. Ensure that, in simultaneous election, copies of Form 17C for parliamentary election are supplied to polling agents of the candidates in parliamentary constituency only and copies of Form 17C for the assembly election are given only to the agents of candidates of assembly constituency.
16. At regular intervals, check the Balloting Unit(s) and VVPAT to ensure that the voter has not tampered with it in any manner.
17. During the courses of poll there may be some compelling circumstances under which, if it becomes essential to use new EVM and VVPAT. In such circumstance, Presiding Officer shall again require reading out declaration of secrecy for ensuring free and fair election.
- 18. Mock Poll in case of replacement of EVM:** In case the CU or the BU does not work properly during actual poll, replacement of the whole EVM including CU, BU and VVPAT is required. However, in such case, only one vote to each contesting candidate including NOTA should be polled in the mock poll. All the process mentioned above on the Mock Poll shall be followed strictly.
19. In case of replacement of only VVPAT during actual poll, no mock poll will be conducted.
20. Ensure proper application of indelible ink after the elector has been identified by the first polling officer (in charge of marked copy of electoral roll).
21. Ensure the performance of duties of polling officers as under - Identification of elector and locating his or her name in roll with the help of EPIC or the documents prescribed by ECI.
22. Proper marking in roll for the purpose of statistics Form PS05.
23. Proper entries in voter register i.e. Form 17A and then issue of voter slips.
24. Ensure that sufficient time has elapsed, after the indelible ink mark was put, so that the mark dries up by the time voter leaves the polling station.
25. While poll is in progress, unusual complex cases are likely to crop up. Presiding Officer should deal with them, leaving the Polling Officers' to carry on their normal duties. Such cases will be
 - a. Challenge to a voter (Chapter 18),
 - b. Voting by minors (Chapter 18),

- c. Voting by blind or infirm voters (Chapter 22),
 - d. Voters deciding not to vote (Chapter 23),
 - e. Tendered votes (Chapter 26),
 - f. Breach of secrecy of voting (Chapter 21),
 - g. Disorderly conduct at the booth and removal of disorderly persons (Chapter 17),
 - h. Adjournment of poll because of riot or any other cause (Chapter 27).
26. Presiding Officer should ensure that no unaccounted person other than voter and those authorities allowed by ECI, enter the polling booth.
27. Presiding Officer should ensure that no voter brings mobile phone inside the booth. Even the cell phones of polling personnel should remain switched off inside the polling booths.
28. Instruct Polling Officer to ensure about the proper identification of such voter whose name is included in the ASD List.
29. Instruct Video Camera Supervisor to take the photos of electors in the same serial as entered in register 17A.
30. Don't go inside the voting compartment. If in unavoidable circumstances, you have to go, accompany with Polling Agents.
31. Collect statistical information for compilation of item 19 of Presiding Officer's diary regarding polling every two hours.
32. Close the poll at the appointed hour even if it has started late. Give slips with Presiding Officer's signature to those persons who are in the queue at this hour. Ensure that no additional person joins the queue after the appointed hour.
33. Priority to be given physically challenged voters.
34. If any voter wants to know how to vote on EVM, explain him at dummy Balloting Unit.

8) RULE 49MA – PROCEDURE IN CASE OF COMPLAINT ABOUT THE PARTICULARS PRINTED ON VVPAT PAPER SLIP

- a) If an elector after having recorded his vote under Rule 49MA alleges that the paper slip generated by the VVPAT has shown the name or symbol of a candidate other than the one he voted for, the Presiding Officer shall obtain a written declaration (Annexure 15 of Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018) from the elector as to the allegation, after warning the elector about the consequence of making false declaration. If the elector gives the written declaration referred to in sub –rule (1), the Presiding Officer shall make a second entry related to that elector in Form 17A, and permit the elector to record a test vote in the voting machine in his presence and in the presence of the candidates or polling agents who may be present in the polling station and observe the paper slip generated by the VVPAT. If the allegation found true, the Presiding Officer shall report the facts immediately to the Returning Officer, stop further recording of votes in that voting machine and act as per the direction that may be given by the Returning Officer.
- b) If, however, the allegation is found to be false and the paper slip so generated under sub rule

(1) matches with the test vote recorded by the elector under sub rule(2), then, the Presiding Officer shall make a remark to that effect against the second entry relating to that elector in Form 17A mentioning the serial number and name of the candidate for whom such test vote has been recorded; and obtain the signature or thumb impression of that elector against such remarks; and make necessary entries regarding such test vote in item 5 in part I of Form 17C.

9) VOTING BY BLIND & INFIRM VOTERS

1. If the Presiding Officer is satisfied that owing to blindness or other physical infirmity, an elector is unable to recognize the symbol on the Balloting Unit or unable to record his vote by pressing the appropriate button thereon without assistance, the Presiding Officer shall permit that elector under Rule 49N to take with him a companion of not less than 18 years of age to the voting compartment for recording the vote on his behalf and in accordance to his wishes.
2. Infirm voters who are capable of voting by himself by pressing the button of the candidate of his choice on the Balloting Unit of EVM shall be permitted authorized companion only up to Voting Compartment in the polling station, not inside the Voting Compartment. Cases where a companion only comes to assist the elector in his movement and does not go into the Voting Compartment shall not be included in Form 14A.
3. No person shall be permitted to act as the companion of more than one elector at any polling station on the same day. Indelible ink shall be applied on the right index finger of the companion.
4. Before any person is permitted to act as the companion of an elector, he shall be required to declare that he will keep secret the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector at any other polling station on that day. The Presiding Officer shall obtain the declaration from the companion in the form prescribed by the Commission for the purposes vide Annexure 7 of Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018.
5. The Presiding Officer shall also keep a record of all such cases in Form 14A.

10) VOTING BY PROXY VOTERS

1. The Proxy will record the vote on behalf of the Classified Service Voters (CSVs) at the polling station to which the CSV is assigned, in the same manner as any other elector assigned to that polling station.
2. It may be noted that in the case of proxy, marking of the indelible ink under rule 37 will be done on the middle finger of the left hand of the proxy.
3. The proxy will be entitled to vote on behalf of the CSV in addition to the vote that he may cast in his own name if he is a registered elector in the constituency, at the polling station to which he has been normally assigned.
4. In the case of proxy voters, the serial number of an elector to be entered in the second column of the Register of Electors (Form 17A) will be the serial number relating to the proxy voter as given in the sub-list of CSVs for your polling station. However, for distinguishing the serial number from the serial numbers of electors in the main marked copy of the electoral roll, the

letters 'PV' (for 'Proxy Voter') should be suffixed in bracket.

11) ELECTORS DECIDING NOT TO VOTE

1. If an elector, after his electoral roll number has been entered in the Register of Voters (Form 17A) and he has put his signature/thumb impression on that register, decides not to record his vote, he shall not be forced or compelled to record his vote.
2. A remark to the effect that he has decided not to record his vote shall be made in the remarks column against the entry relating to him in the Register of Voters by the Presiding Officer and the Signature or thumb impression of the elector shall be obtained against such remark under rule 490. It shall, however, not be necessary to make any change in the serial number of the elector or of any succeeding electors in column (1) of the Register of Voters.

12) NOTA (NONE OF THE ABOVE)

If any elector who wishes to exercise the option of not voting for any of the contesting candidates in the fray, he/she can opt for "NOTA -None of the Above". This button will be as last button of Balloting Unit below the panel for the contesting candidates. If any elector asks about NOTA, the P.O. shall explain the elector and allow franchising his/her option.

13) TENDERED VOTES

1. If a person presents himself at the polling station and seeks to vote representing himself to be a particular elector and the Presiding Officer find that another person has already voted as such elector, in such case Presiding Officer should satisfy himself about the identity of that person to be the elector concerned.
2. If the Presiding Officer is satisfied about the identity of the elector on his satisfactorily answering such questions relating to his identity, he should allow the elector concerned to vote by means of a tendered ballot paper, but not through the voting machine.
3. Before handing over the tendered ballot paper to the elector, who has presented himself as the genuine elector at the polling station, the Presiding Officer should write the words "Tendered Ballot Paper" on the back of these ballot papers, if these words are not already stamped there, and issue them, if necessary, as tendered ballot paper.
4. The Presiding Officer shall keep a correct account of all ballot papers (i) received for use as tendered ballot papers, (ii) issued as such to electors, and (iii) not used and returned, in item 9 of Part I of Form 17C.
5. The Presiding Officer shall also maintain complete record of the electors who have been issued with tendered ballot papers, in Form 17B. He shall also obtain the signature or thumb impression of the elector in Column (5) of that Form before delivering a tendered ballot paper to him.
6. While delivering a tendered ballot paper to the elector, he shall also supply an inked arrow cross mark rubber stamp to elector.
7. On receiving the tendered ballot paper, the elector concerned will go into the Voting Compartment and will mark his vote on the ballot paper by putting the cross mark on or near the symbol of the contesting candidate of his choice by means of the arrow cross mark rubber stamp.

8. The elector will then fold the tendered ballot paper and after coming out of the Voting Compartment hand it over to the Presiding Officer.
9. The Presiding Officer shall keep all the tendered ballot papers and the list of such tendered ballot papers (prepared in Form 17B) in a cover specially provided for the purpose and seal the cover at the close of the poll.
10. If a blind or an infirm elector is unable to record his vote without assistance, the Presiding Officer shall permit him to take with him a companion in accordance with the procedure mentioned in Chapter 22 of Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018.

14) BRAILLE SIGNAGE

1. EVMs have a Braille signage on the extreme right side of the Balloting Unit indicating the serial number of the candidate.
2. A dummy ballot paper showing the name of the candidates, their political affiliations and the serial numbers will be supplied to the polling stations depending on the requirement of the same felt by the Commission.
3. The Presiding Officer shall, on the request of the visually handicapped voter, handover to him the dummy ballot sheet to enable him to note down the serial number of the candidate of his choice so that he can cast the vote on his own with the help of Braille signage without depending on the companion.
4. Ensure that the dummy ballot paper shall be returned to the Presiding Officer for subsequent use by similar visually handicapped voters. At the end of the poll the dummy ballot paper will be deposited with the collection centre along with other polling materials.

15) PRESIDING OFFICER'S ENTRY IN THE VOTING COMPARTMENT DURING POLL

1. The Presiding Officer may have a suspicion or reason to suspect that the Balloting Unit(s) or VVPAT kept in the voting compartment is not functioning properly or that an elector who has entered the voting compartment is tampering or otherwise interfering with the Balloting Unit(s) or VVPAT or has committed any mischief by pasting any paper, tapes etc., on the symbol/names/photograph/ballot button or has remained inside the voting compartment for unduly long period, he has a right under rule 49Q to enter the voting compartment for inspecting BU(s) in such cases and to take such steps as may be considered necessary by him to ensure that the Balloting Unit(s) and VVPAT are not tampered or interfered with in any way and that the poll progresses smoothly and orderly.
2. Whenever the Presiding Officer enters the voting compartment, he should permit the polling agents present to accompany him, if they so desire.

16) MAINTENANCE OF DIARY

1. The Presiding Officer maintains a diary in which he should record the proceedings connected with the conduct of poll in the polling station. The proforma of the diary to be maintained by the Presiding Officer is given at Annexure 12 in Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018. He should go on recording the relevant events in the diary as and when they occur.

2. Ensure proper maintenance of the diary throughout the polling process, any lapse on his part in the proper maintenance of diary will be seriously viewed by the Commission.

17) CLOSING THE POLL

1. The poll should be closed at the time fixed for the purpose, even if it had commenced somewhat later than the hour appointed for the commencement of poll owing to some unavoidable reason. Ensure that all electors, who are present at the polling station at the hour appointed for the close of poll, should be permitted to cast their votes.
2. A few minutes before the time fixed for closing the poll, the Presiding Officer should announce to all those within the limits of the polling station, waiting to cast their vote, that they will be allowed to record their votes in turn. Distribute to all such electors, slips signed by him in full, which should be serially numbered from serial No. 1 onwards according to the number of electors standing in the queue at that hour. Continue the poll even beyond the closing hour until all these electors have casted their votes. Depute police or other staff to watch that no one is allowed to join the queue after the appointed closing hour.
3. The Presiding Officer should ensure that after the last voter has voted as per the above procedure, the ‘CLOSE’ button is pressed on the Control Units for both the Elections. The total number of votes recorded in the EVM should be immediately noted in Item 6 of Part I of Form 17C.
4. At the time of closure of poll, the Presiding Officer shall make a note of the Poll end date and time, displayed on the CU in the Presiding Officer’s diary.
5. After prescribed Forms have been carefully and duly filled for both the elections, he should disconnect the Balloting Units and VVPATs from the Control Units and seal them in their respective carrying cases. In the case of simultaneous election, the papers should be prepared and sealed separately.
6. At simultaneous election, the Presiding Officer should ensure that the carrying cases of all the units have identity stickers of the concerned elections, prominently pasted on the outside. He should also ensure that the Balloting Units, VVPATs and Control Units are placed only in their respective carrying cases with the election identity label firmly pasted. Further, he should also fix the duly filled address tags to the respective carrying cases.
7. Presiding Officer should ensure that all the sealed EVMs and VVPATs and election records are duly handed over to the Returning Officer, at the reception centre, as per the prescribed procedure.

18) ACCOUNTS OF VOTES RECORDED

1. After the close of poll, the Presiding Officer should prepare, under Rule 49S, an account of votes recorded in the EVM. Such account shall be prepared in Part-I of Form-17C. This should be prepared in duplicate. It should be noted for that accounts of votes in Part-I of Form-17C shall be prepared separately for the Parliamentary and Assembly elections.
2. Under Rule 49S, Presiding Officer is also required to furnish to every polling agent present at the close of poll, a true and attested copy of the account of votes recorded as prepared by him in Form-17C, after obtaining a receipt from those polling agents. Copies of the account of votes are to be given for the Assembly Constituency to the polling agents of the candidates contesting

the assembly poll and copies of the account prepared for Parliamentary Constituency are to be given to the polling agents of the candidate contesting the parliamentary poll. Copies of the account should be furnished to every polling agent present even without his asking for it.

19) DECLARATION TO BE MADE AT THE CLOSE OF POLL

In order to ensure that above mentioned requirements of rule 49S regarding furnishing of copies of account of votes recorded by polling agents are fulfilled, a declaration (Part III, Annexure-5 in the Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018) should be made and completed by the Presiding Officer at the close of poll.

20) SEALING OF EVM AND VVPAT AFTER THE CLOSE OF POLL

1. After the poll has been closed and the account of votes recorded in the EVM has been prepared in Form 17C and copies thereof furnished to the polling agents present, EVM and VVPAT should be sealed and secured for transportation to the counting/ collection centre.
2. For sealing and securing the EVM and VVPAT, the power switch in the Control Unit should first be switched 'OFF' and then the Balloting Unit(s), the Control Unit and VVPAT should be disconnected. Presiding Officer should ensure that the paper slips contained in the drop box of the VVPAT should be intact. The Balloting Unit(s), the Control Unit and VVPAT should then be put back in their respective carrying cases.
3. Each carrying case should then be sealed at both ends by passing a thread through the two holes provided for the purpose on both sides of the carrying case and putting thread seal with an address tag showing the particulars of the election, the polling station and the unit contained therein and carrying the Presiding Officer's dated signatures and seal on it. The candidates or their polling agents as are present and desirous of putting their seals should also be allowed to do so.
4. The names of the candidates/polling agents who have affixed their seals on the carrying case of the Balloting Unit(s) and Control Unit should also be noted by the Presiding Officer in the declaration which he makes at the close of the poll vide Part IV of Annexure-5 in Handbook for Presiding Officer, 2018.

21) SEALING OF ELECTION PAPERS

1. After the close of poll, all election papers relating to the poll should be sealed by the Presiding Officer in accordance with the provisions of rule 49U.
2. Each packet containing election papers should be sealed with the seal of the Presiding Officer. The candidates or their agents present at the polling station shall also be allowed to affix their seals on such packets if they so desire.

22) AFTER THE COMPLETION OF POLL

1. Close and seal the EVM and VVPAT as per the instructions given in Chapter 30. Remember to switch off the Control Unit before sealing the EVM and VVPAT.
2. Ascertain the number of female voters, who have voted.
3. Complete Form 17C (account of votes recorded and paper seal account). Furnish to every Polling Agent present at the close of the poll, an attested true copy of Form 17C, after obtaining

a receipt from them on the declaration form referred to in Chapter 30. Then complete the declaration in other respects. If there is difference in number of votes cast displayed by EVM and received in voters register, inform sector/ zonal officer and RO necessarily.

4. Complete Presiding Officer's Diary, all the items should be filled. If any incident occurs at polling booth it should be reported in diary. Fill Presiding Officer's additional report to be submitted to the observer given as **Annexure 13** in the Handbook for Presiding Officer 2018.
5. Seal all election papers as per instructions in Chapter 31.
6. Prepare first packet of five statutory covers.
7. Prepare second packet of eleven non-statutory covers.
8. Prepare third packet of seven items.
9. Prepare fourth packet of all other items.
10. Follow the programme of return journey to the collection centre for depositing the sealed EVM & VVPAT and sealed packet of election papers. It is Presiding Officer's responsibility to deliver the EVM, VVPAT and other packets at the collection centre intact and obtain a receipt. Note that he has to hand over following items, viz,
 - a. EVM & VVPAT;
 - b. Cover containing the account of votes recorded and paper seal account;
 - c. Cover containing the declarations of the Presiding Officer;
 - d. Cover containing the Presiding Officer's Dairy;
 - e. Cover containing Visit Sheet;
 - f. 16-point Observer's report;
 - g. First packet superscribed 'statutory covers' containing five covers;
 - h. Second packet super scribed 'non-statutory covers', containing eleven covers;
 - i. Third packet containing seven items of election materials;
 - j. material for Voting Compartment;
 - k. lantern, if supplied;
 - l. waste paper basket;
 - m. polythene bag/gunny bag to carry polling materials; and
 - n. Fourth packet containing all other items, if any.

Items mentioned in (b), (c) and (d) should be handed over along with item (a) at the counter arranged specifically for collecting these items

11. On depositing all the materials, Presiding Officer will get formal relieving order from Returning Officer.
12. Prepare information on voters who voted through EPIC and voting by voters in the list of absentee voters provided.

ANNEXURE 1

LIST OF POLLING MATERIALS FOR A POLLING STATION WHERE EVM AND VVPAT IS USED

S. No	Items	Quantity
1	Control Unit	1
2	Balloting Units	1 or more depending on number of candidates (including NOTA)
3	VVPAT	1
4	Register of Voters (Form 17A)	1/as per actual requirement
5	Voter's slips	As per requirement
6	Marked copy of electoral roll	1
7	Working copies of electoral roll	3
8	Copy of list of contesting candidates (Form 7A)	1
9	Ballot papers (for tendered votes)	20
10	List of CSV, if any	1
11	Photo copy of signature of Candidates/agents	1
12	Indelible ink	2 phials of 10 cc
13	Common Address tags for Balloting Unit, Control Unit and VVPAT	14
14	Special tag	3
15	Green paper seals for EVM	3
16	Strip seal	3
17	Rubber stamp with arrow cross mark	1
18	Stamp pad (purple)	1
19	Metal seal for Presiding Officer	1
20	Match box	1
21	Presiding Officer's diary	1
22	Distinguishing mark rubber stamp	1
23	Commission order for identification of electors through alternate documents	1
24	Forms	
i.	List of contesting candidates	1
ii.	List of challenged votes (Form 14)	2
iii.	List of blind and infirm voters (Form 14A)	2
iv.	List of tendered votes (Form 17B)	2
v.	Account of votes recorded	10
vi.	Record of paper seals used	2
vii.	Receipt book for deposit of challenged votes fee	1
viii.	Letter to SHO	4
ix.	Declaration by the Presiding Officer before the commencement of poll and at the end of the poll (Part I to IV)	2
x.	Declaration by elector about age	2
xi.	List of electors who voted after giving declaration / refused to give declaration	4 / 4
xii.	Declaration by the companion of blind and infirm voter	10

xiii.	Entry passes for polling agents	As per requirement
xiv.	Format for Presiding Officer's additional 16-point report to be submitted to constituency observer/ Returning Officer	2
xv.	Visit sheet	2
xvi.	Receipts of return of election records and materials after poll	2
25	ENVELOPES	
i.	For smaller envelopes (statutory covers) (SE-8)	1
ii.	For marked copy of electoral rolls (SE-8)	1
iii.	For other copies of electoral rolls (SE-8)	1
iv.	For tendered ballot paper and tendered voters list	1
v.	For declaration by the Presiding Officer before and after the poll	1
vi.	For account of votes recorded (Form 17C) (SE-5)	1
vii.	For list of challenged votes (SE-5)	1
viii.	For unused and spoiled paper seals (SE-5)	1
ix.	For appointment letters of polling agents (SE-6)	1
x.	For list of blind and infirm voters (SE-5)	1
xi.	For Presiding Officer's diary report (SE-6)	1
xii.	For election duty certificate (SE-5)	1
xiii.	For receipt book and cash forfeited (SE-6)	1
xiv.	For declaration of companions (SE-5)	1
xv.	For smaller envelopes (others) (SE-7)	1
xvi.	For Register of Voters having signatures of voters (17A) (SE-8)	1
xvii.	For other relevant papers (SE-5)	1
xviii.	For smaller envelopes (SE-8)	1
xix.	Cover for Presiding Officer's brief record under rule 40 (SE-6)	1
xx.	Plain envelopes (SE-7)	2
xxi.	Plain envelopes (SE-8)	3
xxii.	For unused ballot papers (SE-7)	1
xxiii.	For any other paper that the RO has decided to keep in the sealed cover	1
xxiv.	Cover for unused and damaged special tags (SE-7)	1
xxv.	Cover for unused and damaged strip seal (SE-7)	1
26	SIGN BOARDS	
	Presiding Officer	
	Polling officer	
	Entry	
	Exit	
	Polling agent	
	Miscellaneous notice specifying area etc. as required by rule 30 (1)(a)	
27	STATIONARY	
i.	Ordinary pencil	1
ii.	Ball pen	3 blue + 1 red
iii.	Blank paper	8 sheets
iv.	Pins	25 pieces
v.	Sealing wax	6 sticks

vi.	Voting Compartment	As per requirement
vii.	Gum paste	1
viii.	Blade	1
ix.	Candle sticks	4
x.	Thin twine thread	20 meters
xi.	Metal rule	1
xii.	Carbon paper	3
xiii.	Cloth or rag for removing oil etc.	3
xiv.	Packing paper sheets	3
xv.	Cup/empty tin/plastic box for holding indelible ink bottle	1
xvi.	Drawing pins	24 pieces
xvii.	Check lists	2
xviii.	Rubber bands	20
xix.	Cello tape	1

LIST OF POLLING MATERIALS TO BE RETURNED BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER TO THE SECTOR OFFICER SEPARATELY WHO IN TURN WILL DEPOSIT THEM IN STORE AT THE OFFICE OF THE CEO/DEO.

S. No.	Items
1	Arrow cross mark rubber stamp
2	Metal seal of Presiding Officer
3	Stationary bag containing
(i)	Self-inking pad
(ii)	Material for Voting Compartment
(iii)	Metal rule
(iv)	Container for holding indelible ink bottle
(v)	All other unused items

Additional Items of Polling Materials to be Provided to the Polling Party with VVPAT.

S. No.	Item	Quantity
1	Envelope made of thick black paper (for sealing printed paper slips of Mock Poll)	2
2	Plastic Box for Black paper envelope sealing	1
3	Pink Paper seal for sealing Plastic Box	2
4	Forms for declaration by elector under rule 49MA	10
5	Operational manual of VVPAT	1
6	Mock Poll Slip Stamp	1
7	Poster on How to cast vote on EVM & VVPAT	1
8	Brochure for Presiding Officer on use of EVM & VVPAT	1
9	Trouble shooting on use of EVM & VVPAT	1

ANNEXURE 2

CHECK MEMO FOR PRESIDING OFFICER

ITEM	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	REMARKS
1	Obtaining and keeping in possession all relevant instructions from the Returning Officer.	Whether obtained and kept?
2	Familiarization with the other members of the polling party and maintenance of close relationship with them.	Whether done?
3	Collection of election material, List of ASD voters, Alphabetical list of Electors.	Whether, ensured that all the election materials and that too in sufficient quantities and numbers have been collected?
4	Checking up of Balloting unit(s), Control Unit, VVPAT, marked copies of the electoral roll, arrow cross mark rubber stamp, green paper seals, Register of Voters, voters slips etc.	Whether done?
5	Separate entrance and exit for voters at polling stations.	Whether ensured?
6	Display of Notice specifying the polling area and the number of electors assigned and also a copy of the list of contesting candidates.	Whether done?
7	Inter-linking of Control Unit, Balloting unit(s), VSDU (provided with M2 VVPAT only) and VVPAT after placing Balloting unit(s) and VVPAT in Voting Compartment. Switching on Control Unit and VVPAT.	Whether done?
8	Conducting Mock poll and Result of Control Unit tallied with VVPAT paper slips. Clearing Control Unit by pressing 'CLEAR' button. Putting VVPAT paper slips in black envelope and plastic box after stamping 'mock poll slip'. Prepare Mock Poll certificate.	Whether done?
9	Fixing green paper seal on result compartment of Control Unit. Allowing polling agents to note the serial number of the green paper seal.	Whether done?
10	Sealing the result section of the Control Unit by using address tag, special tag and strip seal. Sealing of VVPAT drop box using address tag.	Whether done?
11	Declaration to be made at the commencement of the poll.	Whether made?
12	Reading out the provisions of the section 128 of the R.P. Act, 1951 with regard to the secrecy of voting by Presiding Officer at the beginning of the poll.	Whether done?
13	Allowing polling agents to note the serial numbers of Balloting Unit(s), Control Unit and VVPAT.	Whether allowed?
14	Marking of indelible ink on left fore-finger and obtaining the signature / thumb impression on the Register of Voters (17A).	Whether properly done?
15	Declaration from under-aged electors.	Whether obtained?
16	Maintenance of Presiding Officer's diary	Whether events are recorded from time to time as and when they occur?
17	Maintenance of Visit sheet.	Whether maintained?
18	Close of poll by pressing Close button of Control Unit, after Poll.	Whether done?
19	Supply of copies of account of votes recorded in Form 17C to all the polling agents.	Whether done?
20	Declaration to be made at the close of poll.	Whether made?
21	Sealing of EVM and VVPAT and election papers.	Whether done according to instructions?

ANNEXURE 3

FREQUENT ASKED QUESTIONS ON EVM

- Q1. Is it possible to vote more than once by pressing the button again and again?
- Ans. No. As soon as a particular button on the Balloting Unit is pressed, the vote is recorded for that particular candidate and the machine gets locked. Even if one presses that button further or any other button, no further vote will be recorded. This way the EVMs ensure the principle of “one man, one vote”. The next vote is enabled only when the Presiding Officer/ Polling Officer in-charge of the Control Unit releases the Ballot by pressing the Ballot Button. This is a distinct advantage over the ballot paper system.
- Q2. How can a voter be sure that the EVM is working and his vote has been recorded?
- Ans. As soon as the voter presses the ‘blue button’ against the candidate and symbol of his choice, the lamp against symbol of that particular candidate glows red and a long beep sound is heard. Thus, there is both audio and visual indications for the voter to be assured that his vote has been recorded correctly. In addition, VVPAT provides an additional visual verification in the form of paper slip to the voter so he can ensure that his vote has been correctly recorded for the candidate of his choice.
- Q3. In the conventional system, it will be possible to know the total number of votes polled at any particular point of time. In EVMs ‘Result’ portion is sealed and will be opened only at the time of counting. How can the total number of votes polled be known on the date of poll?
- Ans. In addition to the ‘Result’ button, there is a ‘Total’ button on Control Unit of EVMs. By pressing this button, the total number of votes polled up to the time of pressing the button will be displayed without indicating the candidate-wise tally.
- Q4. Ballot boxes are engraved so as to avoid any scope for complaint of replacement of these boxes. Is there any system of numbering EVMs?
- Ans. Yes. Each Balloting Unit and Control Unit has a unique ID Number, which is engraved on each unit. The list containing ID number of EVM (Balloting Unit & Control Unit) to be used in a particular polling station is prepared and provided to the contesting candidates/their agents.
- Q5. In the conventional system, before the commencement of poll, the Presiding Officer shows to the polling agents present that the ballot box to be used in the polling station is empty. Is there any such provision to satisfy the polling agents that there are no hidden votes already recorded in the EVMs?
- Ans. Yes. Before the commencement of poll, the Presiding Officer demonstrates to the polling agents present that there are no hidden votes already recorded in the machine by pressing the result button. Thereafter, he conducts a Mock poll with at least 50 votes in the presence of the polling agents and tallied with the electronic result stored in the CU to fully satisfy the polling agents to satisfy them that the result shown is strictly according to the choice recorded by them. Thereafter, the Presiding Officer will press the clear button to clear the result of the mock poll before commencing the actual poll. He then again shows to polling agents, by pressing ‘Total’ button that it shows ‘0’. Then he seals the Control Unit before starting actual poll in the presence of polling agents. Now, with 100% VVPAT use at every polling booth, after the Mock Poll, the VVPAT paper slips are also counted
- Q6. How can one rule out the possibility of recording further votes at any time after close of the poll and before the commencement of counting by unscrupulous elements?

Ans. After completion of poll i.e. when the last voter has voted, the Officer in-charge of the Control Unit/Presiding Officer presses the 'Close' Button. Thereafter, the EVM does not accept any vote. After the close of poll, the Control Unit is switched off and thereafter the Balloting Unit is disconnected from the Control Unit and kept separately in the respective carrying cases and sealed. Further, the Presiding officer has to hand over to each polling agent a copy of the account of votes recorded. At the time of counting of votes, the total votes recorded in a particular control unit is tallied with this account and if there is any discrepancy, this can be pointed out by the Counting Agents.

Q7. What will happen if the EVM in a particular polling station goes out of order?

Ans. If an EVM of a particular polling station goes out of order, the same is replaced with a new one (On poll day Zonal/Area/Sector Magistrate keep on patrolling with reserved EVM/VVPAT). The votes recorded until the stage when the EVM went out of order remains safe in the memory of the Control Unit and it is perfectly fine to proceed with the polling after replacing the EVM with new EVM and there is no need to start the poll from the beginning. On counting day, votes recorded in both Control Units are counted to give the aggregate result of that polling station.

Q8. Can booth- capturing/mass rigging be prevented by the use of EVMs?

Ans. Presiding officer or one of the Polling Officers can always press the 'Close' button as soon as they see some intruders inside the polling station. It will not be possible to record any vote when once the 'Close' button is pressed and this will frustrate the efforts of the booth-capture.

Q9. Whether EVMs are checked before using in an election or not?

Ans. Yes, before elections, First Level Checking (FLC) is done for each EVM/VVPAT by the engineers of manufacturing firms of EVM/VVPAT i.e. M/s Bharat Electronics Limited, Bangalore and M/s Electronics Corporation of India Limited, Hyderabad, to find out any defects. All defective EVMs/VVPATs are kept separately and not used in the election. The FLC is done in presence of representatives of all recognized political parties and is videographed. There are very elaborate guidelines for 'Protocol of the FLC'. After FLC, Pink Paper Seal is affixed appropriately on the Control Unit, so as to ensure the Control Unit can't be opened without damaging this seal. If later at any stage, this seal is found damaged then that EVM is not used for taking poll.

Q10. Is there any provision to verify the functioning of EVM at polling station?

Ans. Before actual poll, to ensure that EVM and VVPAT are working properly and to clear doubts of the candidates/their authorized agents mock poll is conducted by the Presiding Officer in the presence of the candidates/their authorized agents and mock poll certificate is issued. This is done one hour before scheduled time for commencement of poll.

Q11. Is there any provision of sealing the EVM/VVPAT at polling station?

Ans. After mock poll, the Presiding Officer seals the Result Section/Bottom Compartment of Control Unit using: -

- i. Green paper seal for result section
- ii. Special Tag and thread seal for inner door of result section
- iii. Address Tag and thread seal for Bottom compartment (outer door of result section)
- iv. Thread seal for connector box for cascading Balloting Units, if any (when there are more than 16 candidates)

Sealing of drop box (VVPAT slips compartment) of VVPAT with Address Tags and thread seals.

ANNEXURE 4

FREQUENT ASKED QUESTIONS ON VVPAT

Q1. What is Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)?

Ans. Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail is an independent system attached with the Electronic Voting Machines that allows the voters to verify that their votes are cast as intended. When a vote is cast, a slip is printed containing the serial number, name and symbol of the candidate and remains exposed through a transparent window for 7 seconds. Thereafter, this printed slip automatically gets cut and falls in sealed drop box of the VVPAT. The slip cannot be taken by the voter. The slip cannot be taken by the voter.

Q2. Where are VVPAT Printer and VSDU kept in a polling station?

Ans. M2 VVPAT consists of a Printer and a VVPAT Status Display Unit (VSDU). Control Unit and VSDU are kept with the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer and Balloting Unit and VVPAT Printer are kept in the voting compartment.

However, in case of M3 VVPAT, there is no VVPAT Status Display Unit (VSDU). Hence, Control Unit is kept with the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer and Balloting Unit and VVPAT Printer are kept in the voting compartment.

Q3. What procedure shall be followed in case of complaint about the paper slip generated by the printer has shown the name or symbol of a candidate other than the one he voted for?

Ans. Procedure in case of complaint about particulars printed on paper slip:

- (1) Where printer for paper trail is used, if an elector after having recorded his vote under rule 49M alleges that the paper slip generated by the printer has shown the name or symbol of a candidate other than the one he voted for, the presiding officer shall obtain a written declaration from the elector as to the allegation, after warning the elector about the consequence of making a false declaration.
- (2) If the elector gives the written declaration referred to in sub-rule (1), the presiding officer shall make a second entry related to that elector in Form 17A, and permit the elector to record a test vote in the voting machine in his presence and in the presence of the candidates or polling agents who may be present in the polling station, and observe the paper slip generated by the printer.
- (3) If the allegation is found true, the presiding officer shall report the facts immediately to the returning officer, stop further recording of votes in that voting machine and act as per the direction that may be given by the Returning Officer.
- (4) If, however, the allegation is found to be false and the paper slip so generated under sub-rule (1) matches with the test vote recorded by the elector under sub-rule (2), then, the presiding officer shall-
 - (i) make a remark to that effect against the second entry relating to that elector in Form 17A mentioning the serial number and name of the candidate for whom such test vote has been recorded;
 - (ii) obtain the signature or thumb impression of that elector against such remarks; and
 - (iii) make necessary entries regarding such test vote in item 5 in Part I of Form 17C.

Q4. Do all Balloting Unit + Control Unit + VVPAT to be replaced, if VVPAT fails during actual poll?

- Ans. No, only VVPAT alone to be replaced. Moreover, no mock poll is required to be conducted.
- Q5. Do all Balloting Unit + Control Unit + VVPAT to be replaced, if only BU or CU or both BU & CU fails during actual poll?
- Ans. Yes. However, in such case only one vote to each contesting candidate including NOTA should be polled in the mock poll.
- Q6. Whether additional Polling Official is required in each polling station to handle the VVPAT unit?
- Ans. Yes. Additional polling official is required in each polling station to handle the M2 VVPAT unit. The duty of this polling official will be to watch the VVPAT Status Display Unit (VSDU), kept on the presiding officer's table, continuously during the entire poll process.
- Q7. What action should be taken in case of display of low battery on VSDU in case of M2 VVPAT and low battery of VVPAT in Control Unit in case of M3 VVPAT?
- Ans. In case of low battery message on VSDU in case of M2 VVPAT or low battery of VVPAT in Control Unit in case of M3 VVPAT, the battery of VVPAT should be immediately replaced with new power pack (battery) by the Presiding Officer in the presence of polling agents.
- Q8. VSDU displaying error message but yet VVPAT is working fine?
- Ans. In such case VVPAT should be immediately replaced with new VVPAT by the Presiding Officer.
- Q9. What action should be taken in case of display of printer error on VSDU in case of M2 VVPAT or printer error on display panel of Control Unit in case of M3 VVPAT?
- Ans. In such case, only VVPAT should be immediately replaced with new VVPAT.
- Q10. What action should be taken in case of short-circuit of Power-pack (Battery) of VVPAT?
- Ans. In such case VVPAT should be immediately replaced with new VVPAT by the Presiding Officer.
- Q11. Whether changing of paper roll is allowed at polling stations?
- Ans. No. Changing of paper roll is strictly prohibited at polling stations.
- Q12. What is the most important action required to be taken immediately after mock poll at the polling stations?
- Ans. The Presiding Officer shall ensure that the data of mock poll is cleared in the Control Unit, without fail, and also remove all the printed paper (ballot) slips from the drop box in the VVPAT unit. The printed paper slips of the mock poll, should be stamped on their back side with rubber stamp having inscription "MOCK POLL SLIP" before keeping and sealing these printed paper slips in the thick black envelope supplied for the purpose. The envelope will be sealed with the seal of the presiding officer. Thereafter, the envelope should be kept in plastic box and sealed with pink paper seal. Presiding Officer and polling agents will have to sign on the pink paper seal.
- Q13. Whether it is advisable to connect or disconnect the connection of VVPAT with EVM at SWITCH ON condition of the Control Unit?
- Ans. No. Always ensure that connection and disconnection of VVPAT should be done when Control Unit is in SWITCH OFF condition.
- Q14. Whether Mock poll is required to be done if EVM/VVPAT is replaced during poll process?
- Ans. In case of replacement of VVPAT only, no mock poll is required to be conducted.

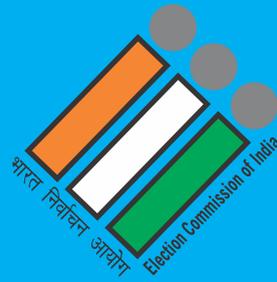
However, in case of replacement of whole set of EVM and VVPT (in case of BU or CU does not work properly), only one vote to each contesting candidate including NOTA should be polled in the mock poll.

Q15. What action shall be taken if the printed paper slip does not cut and is hanging from the paper roll?

Ans. In such case no effort should be made to make it fall into the drop box. The VVPAT shall be replaced with the new VVPAT. Only VVPAT to be replaced. Further voter should be allowed to cast vote after replacement of VVPAT, as his vote has not been recorded in EVM.

The details of such an occurrence should be clearly recorded in the Presiding Officers diary in the following format:

- i. The date and time of the occurrence.
- ii. The name of the voter and his serial number in part in the electoral roll who was allowed to cast his vote after replacement of VVPAT.
- iii. Whether the voter cast his vote after replacement of VVPAT or went away without casting his vote.
- iv. The Total number of votes cast before the occurrence.



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग Election Commission of India

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"No voter to be left behind"

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