

STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

3rd Floor, Buddha Bhavan, M G Road, Secunderabad – 500 003.

C I R C U L A R No.15

No.796/SEC-F1/2009

Dated:15-07-2009

Sub:- Conduct of elections to GHMC - Accountability for spreading awareness about EVM voting in the areas of GHMC concentrating on slum areas – Regarding.

<<>>

The State Election Commission had introduced EVM voting in the elections held to (98) Municipalities and (11) Municipal Corporations in 2005 and also conducted elections with EVM voting to Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation and Rajahmundry Municipal Corporation and Hindupur, Palasa-Kasibugga and Kandukur Municipalities held in 2007. Further, the elections to Badvel and Armour Municipalities were also held with EVMs in 2008.

At that time, the Commission had taken various initiatives to spread the awareness about EVM among all sections of voters. The fact that EVMs have been repeatedly used in all elections to urban local bodies in recent times should not result in EVM awareness being taken for granted. There is a need to renew the campaign as there are lakhs of new voters who have become eligible to be voters in the meanwhile and there is a considerable gap between one ordinary election and another ordinary election.

For spreading EVM awareness among urban voters especially in slum areas, various innovative methods can be used but there is no substitute for giving an opportunity to the voter to handle the EVM prior to the election so that the voter has 'hands on experience' about voting using EVM even before elections. Considering the need for giving a 'hands on training' to the voters on EVMs, the Commission has decided to issue the following instructions, based on certain methods adopted by Election Commission of India for the conduct of elections to Legislative Assemblies in various States.

1. Accountability for taking EVM to all remote slums should be fixed on Slum Development Officer/Community Development Officer working in the wing of Urban Community Development of GHMC at the ward level by identifying one Slum Development Officer/Community Development Officer for each ward who would be the nodal officer for spreading awareness about EVM in all slums under the jurisdiction of GHMC. If the EA&C&SO, GHMC desires he can create such accountability polling station-wise instead of ward-wise so that the EVM awareness spread in polling station area by the officer responsible for it duly entrusting this task to a specified officer by clearly demarcating the area.

2. The EA&C&SO, GHMC should fix a time frame for a focused campaign so that the time frame is used uniformly throughout GHMC. It is relevant to note that such a focused approach in itself will generate its own momentum.
3. The EA&C&SO, GHMC will direct the Dy. Municipal Commissioners of all circles to identify ward-wise or polling station-wise officer-in-charge of this exercise and approve the same. A directory of such ward-wise or PS-wise nodal officers will be maintained by concerned Dy. Municipal Commissioner/ Returning Officer for his respective jurisdiction.
4. The EA&C&SO, GHMC will make available the required number of EVMs needed for this campaign for the specific period. The EVM used for this purpose should bear the label indicating "T" (meaning Training).
5. A schedule for this awareness campaign should be prepared by the EA&C&SO, GHMC ward-wise and he should give adequate publicity by informing the media about the campaign. Leaflets shall be printed in this regard and circulated in all wards duly concentrating on slum areas.
6. During the schedule for campaign, the officer nominated will carry the EVM and give exposure to the voters by convening ward-wise/polling station wise meetings. The campaign should make use of such locations where the people normally congregate in the slum areas.
7. During the campaign period, supervisory officers such as DMCs/ROs/AROs should take test check to find out whether the schedule is being followed by the officers nominated for this purpose. At the end of the campaign, the nominated officer shall submit a certificate to the effect that he had undertaken to campaign as per the instructions of EA&C&SO, GHMC. This certificate will be given by the nominated officer to the ARO/RO who will submit a similar certificate to the concerned DMC. Finally, the EA&C&SO, GHMC will obtain a certificate about EVM awareness in all the wards of GHMC from the respective DMCs. A clear timetable should be adopted for this purpose. No deviation shall be allowed in this matter.
8. Simultaneously, before launching of the campaign period, the EA&C&SO, GHMC will entrust this responsibility to a Municipal Officer not below the rank of Superintendent, who are having publicity skills, who will be called "EVM Awareness Campaigner". This officer can be identified with the help of Dy. Municipal Commissioner. These officers may be given independent mobility. These officers will furnish the details of awareness campaign done in a ward to the DMCs, who will after making random inspections especially covering slum areas submit a report to the EA&C&SO, GHMC. During the random inspection, if the DMC detects lack of awareness, he should take action for creating further awareness and he should also simultaneously fix up responsibility on the officer who was responsible for creating awareness during the

campaign period and initiate necessary disciplinary action against that officer.

9. After the campaign period is over, after obtaining certificate from all the DMCs, the EA&C&SO, GHMC should send a report to the Commission.
10. For the purpose of spreading EVM awareness, the EA&C&SO, GHMC may use the audio visual campaign materials which are available in ECI website, which were already used during the elections held to APLA/HOP, 2009. The EA&C&SO, GHMC may also adopt audio visual campaign materials in the respective vernacular language prepared by the CEO, AP., Hyderabad for the purpose of better dissemination. He should also finalize suitable posters and leaflets for spreading EVM awareness in all wards concentrating on slum areas.

The above instructions shall be brought to the notice of all concerned and be followed without any deviation.

**Sd/-B.Venkateswara Rao,
SECRETARY**

To

The Election Authority & Commissioner & Special Officer, GHMC.

All the Dy. Municipal Commissioners in GHMC.

Copy to the Collectors and Addl. Election Authorities of Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Medak districts.

Copy to the Zonal Commissioners and Dy. Election Authorities, GHMC.