

PRESS RELEASE

The counting of votes for Bye-election to Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly from Thirumangalam Assembly Constituency will be taken up at 8 a.m. on 12.1.2009 (Monday) at the Madurai Medical College in Madurai.

2. For allowing the Counting Agents into the counting centre, the Returning Officer will obtain the list of Counting Agents with their photographs from all the contesting candidates prior to the date fixed for counting and issue photo identity cards to the Counting Agents with the seal and signature of the Returning Officer. Those agents holding photo identity card alone will be allowed inside the counting halls. All the contesting candidates and political parties will be informed of this by the Returning Officer well in advance.

3. Barricades will be provided for the counting table in such a way that process of counting is transparent to the Counting Agents. All reasonable facilities will be provided to enable the Counting Agents to observe the whole counting process.

4. The seating arrangements for the Counting Agents at the counting tables will be in the following order of priority:-

- i) Agents of recognized State parties
- ii) Agents of Registered unrecognized political parties
- iii) Agents of independent candidates

5. Each Counting Agent should have a badge indicating the name of the party / candidate he is representing and the serial number of the table at which he will watch the counting. He should keep seated near the table earmarked and should not be allowed to move all over the hall.

6. The candidates and their Election Agents will be free to go around to any part of the hall.

7. In order to ensure a higher level of transparency in the counting process, additional Counting Assistants will be posted for each counting table in addition to the officials who are posted as counting assistants and counting supervisors. The General Observers appointed by the Election Commission of India will pick up control units at random during each round after the counting is over and check the counting results for each round and the result of each round will be announced by the Returning Officer only after clearance by the Observer. If any discrepancy is found between the result obtained from the counting table and that ascertained through random checking by the Observer, the Observer shall arrange for re-verification. The Observers would continuously maintain their presence in the counting hall and periodically inspect the counting tables to ensure that the counting is going on according to the instructions of the Commission in a transparent and systematic way.

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER,
TAMIL NADU.

ISSUED BY: DIPR, CHENNAI.