

**PRESS RELEASE**

During the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2009 held recently as well as in the bye-elections to Thirumangalam AC held earlier, complaints were received that some of the Presiding / Polling Officers were ignorant of Rule 49 O of the Conduct of Election Rules 1961 which provides that if an elector decides not to record his vote, a remark to this effect shall be made in the Register of Voters by the Presiding Officer and the signature or thumb impression of the elector obtained against such remark. Further, some polling officials told the electors that no Form had been given for exercise of the above option and hence they could not exercise the option. This had invited unnecessary complaints from voters and adverse publicity in the media. The Chief Electoral Officer has accordingly sent a letter to all DEOs directing them to instruct all the Zonal Officers to educate all the Presiding / Polling Officers in regard to the rule position and the procedure to be adopted so that there is no confusion at the time of poll.

2. Instructions were issued already that immediately that after 5.00 p.m. on 16.8.2009, ie., in the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the close of poll, no campaigning is to be permitted and all political functionaries / party workers etc., from outside the Constituency who are not voters of the constituency should be flushed out from the constituency.

3. Further, checking of Kalyana Mandapams/ Community Halls where such people have been housed as well as verification of lodges and Guest Houses should be done so as to ensure that the above said people are not allowed to remain in the constituency to organize bogus voting or adopting unfair practices and / or do anything which may vitiate the fairness of the poll.

4. The following companies of SAPs from other States have been deployed for the 5 ACs :

**SAPs from Karnataka**

Bargur	:	1 Companies
Thondamuthu	:	2 Companies
Ilayankudi	:	2 Companies

**SAPs from Kerala**

Cumbum : 2 Companies

Srivaikuntam : 2 Companies

In addition, some TSP forces have also been provided. They would do area domination and engage themselves in Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) before the poll and, on the poll day, be on active duty in the Polling Stations.

5. Some complaints were received during the General Elections to Lok Sabha 2009 that while the electors who brought slips were allowed to cast their votes without any delay, in the case of others, i.e., who did not have slips, without even verifying properly the electoral roll, the persons were informed that their names was not there in the electoral roll. The polling officials should be warned not to indulge in this.

**6. After the last voter has recorded his vote, the EVM has to be closed so that no further recording of votes in the machine is possible and for that purpose, the Presiding Officer should press the 'close' button on the Control Unit at the end of the poll in the presence of the polling agents; otherwise, there would be an apprehension in the minds of the candidate that the Presiding / Polling Officers have cast votes in the EVM without closing the EVM.**

7. It was found that in earlier elections, in some polling stations, the PO-II had not noted the nature of the identity document and its number in the Register of Voters in Form 17A. Failure to note this would create suspicion that voting has taken place without any of the identification documents authorized by the Election Commission and there has been impersonation and bogus voting. The Commission has warned that polling officials (PO-II and Presiding Officer) would be liable for severe disciplinary action. The Zonal Officer during their visit to the polling stations must invariably check whether the identification document and its number are being noted in the 'Remarks' column of the Register of Voters.

Nach 16.08.09

Chief Electoral Officer,  
Tamil Nadu

வெளியீடு, இயக்குநர்.  
செய்தி, மக்கள் தொடர்புத் துறை.  
கலைமைச் செயலகம், சென்னை 6