

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD , NEW DELHI -110001

No. ECI/PN/98/01

Dated : 1st January, 1998

PRESS NOTE

Subject: General Elections to Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies of Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat and Bye-elections to fill casual vacancies in some-State Legislative Assemblies

The President of India dissolved the Lok Sabha on the 4th of December 1997. In a Press Communiqué issued on the same day; the President also directed the constitution of the new Lok Sabha by the 15th March 1998.

The Commission had detailed interactions with the representatives of National and State recognised political parties on the 22nd and 23rd of December, 1997 regarding matters connected with the ensuing General Elections.

The Commission also held detailed consultations with the Govt. of India through the officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs and obtained detailed inputs on the security and law and order situation in the country, in the context of the General Elections of the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies.

The Commission, after considering all relevant factors has decided to forward its recommendations to the President, for issuing notifications calling upon all the Parliamentary Constituencies in all the States and Union Territories to elect members to the House of the People as per the detailed schedule appended hereto at Appendix 'A'. A summary of the Schedules is given at Appendix D.

The terms of Legislative Assemblies of the States of Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura are due to expire in the next six months.

The Legislative Assemblies in the States of Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat have been dissolved by the Governors of the States on 24-12-1997-and 25-12-1997 respectively.

State	No. of Seats in Assembly	Expiry of term of Existing House of Dissolution
Meghalaya	60	01-03-1998
Nagaland	60	17-03-1998
Tripura	60	13-05-1998
Himachal Pradesh	68	24-12-1997
Gujarat	182	25-12-1997

The Commission has decided to forward its recommendations to the Governors of the five concerned States, for issuing Notifications (under Section 15 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951), calling upon the State Legislative Assembly Constituencies to elect members to the concerned State Legislatures, as per schedule appended hereto at Appendix 'B'.

There are 21 casual vacancies in various State Legislative Assemblies. Bye elections for filling these vacancies will also be held simultaneously, as per the schedule for the elections to the concerned Parliamentary Constituencies. A list of such State Legislative Assembly Constituencies for which bye-elections are proposed to be held is given at Appendix 'C'. In respect of these Constituencies no court proceedings are pending.

The Commission has decided that it would be appropriate from the point of view of the voters, of the political parties, of candidates and of the Governments concerned, as well as from the point of view of reducing avoidable expenditure, to hold general elections to the Lok Sabha and the Legislative

Assemblies and the bye-elections to the Legislative Assemblies simultaneously.

As the tenure of the **Meghalaya Assembly** is only upto 1st of March, 1998, counting for the two Parliamentary Constituencies in Meghalaya and all the Assembly Constituencies in the State will be taken up on the 23rd of February, 1998 after completion of the second phase of the poll in the whole country which would also have covered all the States in the North East. The Commission has taken the decision after consultations with all recognised political parties on the 22nd and 23rd of December, 1997.

Highlights:

POLLING

The country will vote on four days. The dates of polling are the 16th, 22nd, 28th of February and the 7th of March, 1998.

All the Parliamentary Constituencies in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Manipur, Meghalaya, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and the NCT of Delhi will vote on the **first day of poll**

All the Parliamentary Constituencies in the States of Mizoram, Nagaland and Pondicherry will vote on the **second day of poll**

All the Parliamentary Constituencies in the States of Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Daman and Diu will vote on the **3rd day of poll**

Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh will be covered in **two phases on the first and second day**.

Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal, will vote in **two phases on the second and third day**.

Jammu and Kashmir will vote on **three days**, on the **first**, **third** and the **fourth** day.

No of Constituencies Voting on each day

Of the 543 Parliamentary Constituencies, **222 will vote on the first day, 186 on the second day, 132 on the third day and 3 on the fourth day.**

Counting:

Counting for the **two Parliamentary Constituencies** and all the **Assembly Constituencies** in **Meghalaya** will be taken up on the **23rd of February, 1998.**

Counting in **three constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir** going to poll on the 7th of March, will be taken up on the **9th of March, 1998.**

Counting in **the whole country** except those in Meghalaya and the three constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir mentioned earlier, will be taken up on the **8th of March, 1998.**

The Commission has noted that in pursuance of its recommendations, the Central Government have issued necessary amendments to Rule 90 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, thereby enhancing the maximum limit of election expenses in any one Parliamentary or Assembly Constituency.

It has also noted that the President has issued an Ordinance on the 23rd of December, 1997 amending the provisions of section 159 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. By this ordinance, the Chief Electoral Officers have been enabled to requisition the services of employees of Local Authorities, Universities established by Central, Provincial, or State Acts, any other Institutions concern or Undertakings (not being an Institution, a concern or an Undertaking established under a Central,

Provincial or State Act or a company within the meaning of section 617 of the Companies Act,1956) controlled , or financed wholly or substantially by funds provided, directly or indirectly, by the Central Government or a State Government.

The Commission would like to place on record its appreciation of all the Political Parties for supporting its proposals on the above matters and the Central Government for taking prompt action for facilitating smooth conduct of the current Elections.

Consequent on the announcement of the schedule for the General Elections through this Press Note, the **Model Code Of Conduct For The Guidance of Political Parties and Candidates** comes into operation with immediate effect in the entire country.

In terms of the recently announced policy of the Commission regarding **Registration of New Political Parties**, processing of any fresh application or their registration would remain suspended till completion of the election process on the 15th March, 1998.

(SUBAS PANI)
DEPUTY ELECTION COMMISSIONER