

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No. 51/8/VVPAT/2015-EMS

Dated: 5th May, 2015

To

The Chief Electoral Officers
of all States and Union Territories.

Ref:

1. ECI letter No.51/8/99-Vol.VIII, dated: 2nd June, 1999.
2. ECI letter No.51/8/6/2010-EMS, dated: 3rd May, 2010.
3. ECI letter No.51/8/7/2011-EMS, dated: 14th February, 2012
4. ECI letter No.51/8/6/2012-EMS, dated: 8th August, 2012

Sub:

Storage and Safety arrangement of EVMs- regarding.

Sir/Madam,

The Commission has directed that in supersession of the above referred instructions issued on the various aspects of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) viz. storage, movement, physical verification, the following instructions shall be followed strictly without any deviation, for proper safety and security of EVMs:-

1. DURING NON-ELECTION PERIOD

Non-election period means, after six months from the date of declaration of the result of the election.

A. PHYSICAL VERIFICATION OF EVMs

During non-election period, 100% physical verification of EVMs shall be carried out by the District Election Officers (DEOs) in the month of April every year so that the report of the same is made available to the Commission through the Chief Electoral Officer of the concerned States/UTs by 15th May every year. For this purpose, the Commission will issue a direction for opening of EVM-warehouses. On receiving direction from the Commission, the DEOs shall take the following course of action:-

- a) CEO/DEO shall ensure that **EVM-warehouses, in which EVMs pertaining to any election petition or court cases are stored, shall not be opened for the purpose of physical verification of EVMs.**
- b) Such nominated in charge Deputy Collectors shall nominate an Officer not below the rank of Additional District Magistrate/Deputy Collector, who will be in charge of the overall storage of EVMs in the entire district, for the purpose of opening of EVM-warehouse [**except EVM-warehouse mentioned at (a) above**] and for conducting physical verification of EVMs. The concerned Deputy Collectors or Tehsildar, opening the warehouse or verifying the EVMs, will be personally responsible for the safety of EVMs. Similarly DEO will also nominate one officer, not below the rank of Deputy Collector, who will be in charge of each godown.
- c) National and State recognized political parties shall be informed in writing, at least 24 hours in advance, about the date and time of opening and closure of EVM warehouse. Their

authorized representatives shall be allowed to remain present at the time of opening and closure of the warehouse. A report shall be prepared in this regard and signature of the authorized representatives of political parties shall also be taken on the report.

- d) Details of EVMs shall be maintained in a Master Stock Register (MSR). MSR shall be maintained warehouse-wise for every district in the format given in **Annexure –A**.
- e) Based on this MSR, the DEO shall send a physical verification report in the format given in **Annexure - B** to the Commission through the CEO of the concerned States/UTs.

B. STORAGE OF EVMs

- i. EVM should be stored in Treasury, wherever possible.
- ii. EVMs must be stored in a separate warehouse where nothing other than EVM is kept.
- iii. Normally the EVMs should be stored at District Head Quarters.
- iv. However, if it is not possible to store the EVMs at District HQs, then EVM storage warehouse should not be at a place below Tehsil headquarters.
- v. No EVM shall be kept outside the EVM warehouse (i.e. all the EVMs should be kept in EVM warehouse and not at any other place) for any purpose without specific approval of the Commission
- vi. EVM storage warehouse must not have more than one (1) entry point. If there are any other doors or windows in the warehouse, they should be sealed using brick-masonry or concrete.
- vii. Entry of EVM storage warehouse must be secured by a double lock system, which should be held jointly by two separate officers, to be nominated by the DEO. One of who shall not be below the rank of Deputy Collector.

C. Physical Condition of the Warehouse:

- i. Warehouse must be free from dampness, pests, rodents etc. Proper fire-fighting arrangement must be made available. Warehouse should be free from flood/water logging risk/cracks/leakage/broken window etc. To provide an inlet/outlet for air-circulation to avoid foul smell in strong rooms, exhaust fan may be installed, subject to the following conditions:-
 - a) Exhaust fan shall be installed on the front side of the strong room, where security guards are posted and not on the rear side;
 - b) Exhaust fan shall be installed at the highest point feasible, below the roof;
 - c) A strong iron grill shall be installed at the vent/passage where exhaust fan will be installed.
 - d) A vacuum cleaner for each warehouse should be provided.*
 - e) Safety Alarm system/CCTV should be installed.*
 - f) EVMs must be kept in a safe manner.
- ii. Adequate security arrangement to be made at warehouse by deputing police/security guard on round the clock.

C. MOVEMENT OF EVMs

During non-election period, EVMs shall not be moved in or out of the EVM warehouse without specific approval of the Commission.

In case of intra or inter State shifting of EVMs, on the direction of the Commission, the following shall be strictly followed:-

- i. The CEO will communicate the direction of the Commission on shifting of EVMs to the DEO concerned.
- ii. DEO(s) will issue written order to the officer referred in para 1 (A)(b) above for opening of EVM-warehouse [except EVM-warehouse mentioned at 1 (A) (a)] to shift the required number of EVMs.
- iii. On receiving the written order of the DEO, the nominated Officer shall identify the EVMs to be moved out and make an entry of the details of such EVMs in the Master Stock Register/Movement Register and shall take a written acknowledgement from the officer, who is receiving the EVM, as proof of having received the EVMs.

2. DURING ELECTION PERIOD

A. PHYSICAL VERIFICATION OF EVMs

If there is a general election during the year, the DEO shall carry out 100% physical verification of EVMs during the First Level Checking of the EVMs and send the report to the Commission through Chief Electoral Officer in the format in **Annexure –C**.

B. STORAGE OF EVMs

a) Pre-Poll Storage:

After FLC and first randomization of EVMs, EVMs shall be handed over to the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer concerned. The Returning Officers shall follow the following guidelines:-

- i) RO/ARO shall store the EVMs, allocated for his constituency, in a strong room in the presence of representatives of National/State Level Political Parties, under videography. EVMs meant for training and awareness of voters shall be kept in a separate strong room so that strong room having EVMs (including reserve EVMs) meant for poll need not to be opened before preparation of EVMs.
- ii) Thereafter, RO shall open the strong room having EVMs (including reserve EVMs) meant for poll at the time of preparation of EVMs (candidate setting) in the presence of candidates/their representatives, under videography.
- iii) After preparation of EVMs at RO level, EVMs including reserve EVMs shall again be kept in strong room in the presence of candidates/their representatives, under videography.

- iv) Thereafter, RO shall open the strong room having EVMs (including reserve EVMs) on the day of dispersal of polling parties in the presence of candidates/their representatives, under videography.
- v) After completion of poll, polled EVMs shall be escorted back to the strong room for storing in double lock system in the presence of candidates/their representatives, under videography.

b) Post-Poll Storage:

The following instructions shall be strictly followed for the security and safety of strong rooms where the polled EVMs are kept for counting of votes –

- i The strong rooms should have double lock system. One key should be kept with District Election Officer and the other with Returning Officer of concerned assembly constituency.
- ii Two cordoned security arrangements should be made round the clock for the strong rooms having polled EVMs kept for counting of votes. The CPF should man the innermost perimeter security immediately outside the strong room and the State Armed Police should man the outermost perimeter security.
- iii All contesting candidates should be intimated in writing to depute their representatives to keep a close watch on security arrangement of strong room. They should be allowed to stay outside the inner perimeter at a location, which enables them to view the entry points of the strong room. As far as possible, facilities such as proper shade, drinking water, etc. shall be provided to them. If there is no direct view to the entry point of the strong room, CCTV may be arranged at such location, so that they can see the strong room door on CCTV. In such a case, they may be taken periodically to the inner perimeter in batches, to see, verify and satisfy themselves regarding the security of strong room.
- iv A control room adjacent to the strong room SHOULD BE operative round the clock.
- v A Gazetted officer along with a police officer should be put on duty round the clock for monitoring the security arrangements of strong room.
- vi There should be sufficient arrangement of fire extinguishers near and inside the strong room.
- vii There should be an arrangement round the clock for the security of unused EVMs also.
- viii No one should be allowed to enter the inner perimeter without adhering the following protocols:-
 - a) The log book shall be maintained by the CPF in which entry should be made about date, time, duration and name(s) of person(s) crossing the second security ring i.e. the middle perimeter. This includes visits by the Observers or DEOs or SPs or candidates or their agents or any other person.
 - b) Video cameras should be provided to the CPF contingent to record all visits made by such visitors.
- ix It should be ensured that there is uninterrupted power supply at the strong room locations during the entire period wherein EVMs are stored. CEO may address the Chairman of

Electricity Board concerned separately regarding this. Local Electricity Board officials should be asked to ensure the same. Contingency arrangement of stand by generators should be made to ensure uninterrupted power supply.

- x The phone nos. of CEO, Addl. CEOs, DEC in-charge in the ECI and the DEO/SP/COP/ROs concerned should be given to the candidates, who may provide the same to their representatives, keeping vigil at the strong room location(s). The candidates may advise their representatives to contact the officials, in case of any emergency.
- xi All the entry points (doors etc.) of strong rooms should be under constant videography using the web-cams and laptops available. If there are other doors of the strong room, they should also be covered by the web-cams/videography. Persons coming to take back-up from the laptops should have identity cards given to them and their names should be recorded in advance with the CPF contingent stationed there. Their visits should be videographed by the CPF contingent with the video camera provided for the entire duration.
- xii Returning Officers should visit the storage campus (upto the inner perimeter only) every day in the morning and evening and check the log book and videography and send a report to the DEO on the status every day. In case of strong rooms located in the district headquarters, the DEO should do the same. Where the strong rooms are situated outside the District Headquarters, DEO should visit the same as frequently as possible and at least once in 3 to 4 days.
- xiii No vehicle, including that of any official or ministers or any other political functionary should be allowed inside the secured campus where the EVMs are stored. Alighting point for the vehicles should be marked clearly ahead of the outer security perimeter itself beyond it, it should be a pedestrian zone only.
- xiv DCs and SPs shall be personally responsible for security of strong room within the district and meticulous implementation of the protocol. The copy of this letter should be made available to all candidates, DEOs, ROs and CPF commandant.
- vi) On the day of counting of votes, the strong room shall be opened in the presence of candidates/their representative, RO and Observer under videography.
- vii) After completion of counting of votes, Control Units shall be sealed as per existing instruction of the Commission. Thereafter, EVMs (Ballot Units and Control Units) shall be shifted to Strong Room for storage.

Yours faithfully

(Madhusudan Gupta)
Under Secretary

Annexure-A**(Master Stock Register)****Part- A (Control Unit)**

Name of State/Union Territory:

Name of District:

Name of sub-division/taluka:

Address of Warehouse:

| Box No. | CU ID No. | Name of Manufacturer | Year of Manufacture | Date of Receipt | Receipt Challan No. | Date on receipt challan | Name and designation of receiver | Signature of receiver | Signature of Warehouse-in-charge | Remarks |
|---------|-----------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Part-B (Ballot Unit)

| Box No.. | BU ID No | Name of Manufacturer | Year of Manufacture | Date of Receipt | Receipt Challan No. | Date on receipt challan | Name and designation of receiver | Signature of receiver | Signature of Warehouse-in-charge | Remarks |
|----------|----------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Annexure-B**(Physical Verification Report)**

Name of State/Union Territory:

Name of District:

| Name of warehouse | Location of warehouse | No. of Control Units in warehouse as mentioned in Master Stock Register | | No. of Control Units physically verified | | No. of Control Units not in warehouse as mentioned in Master Stock Register | | No. of Ballot Units in warehouse as mentioned in Master Stock Register | | No. of Ballot Units physically verified | | No. of Ballot Units not in warehouse as mentioned in Master Stock Register | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---|------|--|------|---|------|--|------|---|------|--|------|
| | | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Note- Reasons for EVM not available in warehouse shall be clearly mentioned in the report.**(Signature of District Election Officer)****Annexure-C****(Physical Verification Report)**

Name of State/Union Territory:

Name of District:

| Name of warehouse | Location of warehouse | No. of Control Units in warehouse | | No. of Control Units physically verified and FLC done | | No. of Control Units found defective during FLC | | No. of Ballot Units in warehouse as mentioned in Master Stock Register | | No. of Ballot Units physically verified and FLC done | | No. of Ballot Units found defective during FLC | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------|---|------|---|------|--|------|--|------|--|------|
| | | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL | BEL | ECIL |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Note- Reasons for EVM not available in warehouse shall be clearly mentioned in the report.