

# ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

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## PRESS NOTE

**Sub: General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of Uttar Pradesh, 2007 – Deployment of Observers.**

The Commission today held a briefing meeting for the Observers (both General and Expenditure) who are being deployed for Phase-I to Phase-IV of the General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of Uttar Pradesh.

The meeting was addressed by Shri N. Gopaldaswami, Chief Election Commissioner, Shri Navin B. Chawla and Dr. S. Y. Quraishi, Election Commissioners, About 320 officers are being appointed as Observers (234 General, 61 Expenditure, 25 Special Observers and Phase-Coordinators) to supervise the election process in forthcoming Legislative Assembly Elections, 2007 for Uttar Pradesh.

To ensure close monitoring and supervision, one General Observer is being appointed for each assembly constituency. Expenditure Observers more than the usual one per district are being deployed for a district.

The Election Observers will reach the allotted constituencies at least one day before the last day of nomination and stay continuously in the constituencies assigned to them till the end of poll day. This would ensure immediate redressal of complaints that are received from various political parties/candidates.

During the first visit, they will supervise the processes of nominations, scrutiny, withdrawal, campaign and poll. They would also be supervising preparation of Electronic Voting Machines, training of polling personnel and conduct of voter awareness programmes. All Observers have been asked to look into deployment plan of forces in the constituency. They will also be critically examining classification of hypersensitive and sensitive polling stations. During second visit, all Observers will monitor counting and declaration of results.

Observers, who are appointed under Section 20B of the Representation of the Peoples Act, play an important role in ensuring free and fair elections. They act as crucial link between the field and the Commission. These officers remain under disciplinary control of the Commission till the end of elections.

During the forthcoming elections, not more than three vehicles will be allowed to come within 100 metres of Returning Officer's/Assistant Returning Officer's office at the

time of nomination. To curb the tendency of overcrowding, the Commission has issued directions that at the time of nominations only candidates and four others will be allowed to enter the office of Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer. The Observers have been asked to make sure that the affidavits that are filed by the candidates at the time of nomination detailing their movable/immovable assets, qualifications, convictions, cases pending in courts, are displayed prominently and made available for public scrutiny without any loss of time.

Observers have specifically been asked to tour their respective allotted Assembly Constituency extensively and build confidence among weaker and disadvantaged sections. They will constantly review execution of non-bailable warrants, recovery of illicit arms and collection of licensed arms from undesirable elements. The Observers will monitor strictly the enforcement of Model Code of Conduct. The Observers were informed that during the forthcoming elections, no videography or photography will be allowed inside the polling stations except in cases where the same are ordered by the Commission/ Observers as per order of the Supreme Court without compromising the secrecy of voting which has to be maintained at all costs. The Observers were directed to make sure that extensive videography is done of all critical events that may take place during the election process, and polling at hyper-sensitive/sensitive polling stations.

During these elections, Central Government employees will be engaged for poll duty to the extent possible.

The Observers were also asked to ensure that all those officers who stand transferred (because they were in their home districts or they had completed three years of tenure at last station during last four years or they were charged of misconduct during previous elections or charges have been framed against them in Court of Law) physically move out.

The Commission has asked all District Election Officers to prepare a comprehensive communication plan in consultation with Observers to ensure proper and effective communication takes place on the day of poll.

The Commission also directed that in cases where start of poll has been delayed for more than two hours for any reason, a repoll should be recommended. The Expenditure Observers were asked to monitor the expenditure closely and check the accounts submitted by candidates regularly. The accounts submitted periodically by the candidates shall be displayed by the Returning Officer prominently.

**(LALIT MOHAN)  
SECRETARY**