



भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

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Nirvachan Sadan
Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001
Dated:19th June, 2023

To

The Chief Electoral Officers of
All States/ Union Territories.

Subject: Multiple civil (non-force) measures to keep watch on various stages of elections– Videography, CCTV and Webcasting etc.-reg.

Reference:

- (i) 464/INST/2005-PLN-I, Dated 15.10.2005
- (ii) 447/2007-PLN-IV, Dated 17.01.2007
- (iii) 464/INST/2008/EPS, Dated 19.01.2009
- (iv) 464/INST/EPS/2009, Dated 12.04.2009
- (v) 464/INST/2009/EPS, Dated .03.05.2009
- (vi) 470/INST/2011/EPS, Dated 04.03.2011
- (vii) 464/INST/2015-EPS, Dated 06.10.2015
- (viii) 464/INST/2016-EPS, Dated 30.04.2016
- (ix) 464/INST/2016-EPS, Dated 09.09.2016
- (x) 464/INST/2019/EPS, Dated 28.3.2019
- (xi) 464/INST/2019-EPS, Dated 05.04.2019
- (xii) 464/INST/2021-EPS, Dated 25.02.2021

Madam/Sir,

The Commission has a consistent policy to deploy various civil measures (non-force) for conduct of free, fair, inclusive and transparent elections in the context of emerging challenges of limited security resources available with electoral machinery. The Commission had issued instructions from time to time for use of civil measures such as photography, videography, CCTV, webcasting etc. for identified critical and other Polling Stations and for all other critical poll processes. Following consolidated instruction is being issued, in supersession of all the referenced instructions, for sake of clarity.

2. Some of the Polling Stations may be categorised as Critical Polling Stations and polling stations falling in vulnerable areas, based on pre-defined parameters prescribed by the Commission, for more focused attention on the

day of polling. The Commission has directed that such Polling Stations shall be covered by CAPF. The Polling Stations, where CAPF is not deployed due to non-availability or otherwise, they shall be covered by one or more of the following civil (non-force) measures to keep a watch on the polling process:

- (i) Micro Observer
- (ii) Video Camera
- (iii) CCTV
- (iv) Webcasting

On the basis of assessment by DEO in consultation with the Observer, the measures mentioned above can be put in place even at those Polling Stations where CAPF is deployed, to keep a watch on the polling process. Certain civil measures are not restricted to poll day only but extend to and cover all other critical poll processes.

Detailed instruction in deployment of Micro Observers is separately issued. This consolidated instruction deals with civil measures like videography, CCTV and webcasting and is used in supersession of the above referred 12 instructions for the purpose of clarity and ease.

3. Videography and CCTV:

(i) Criteria:

- a) The District Election Officer, on the basis of size of the constituency, number of critical polling stations, polling stations falling in vulnerable area, previous history of booth capturing and other malpractices, the general law and order situation, the likelihood of committing corrupt practices and electoral offences and other related factors and after consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer should decide the number of video camera teams needed for each Constituency in the district.
- b) Each member of the videography team deployed for recording of the proceedings/ important events shall be given proper duty passe for this purpose.
- c) Private videography agencies hired shall be screened thoroughly by obtaining information on their professional competence, track record, financial viability and other related factors like political affiliations etc.

d) Private individual videographers hired by the District Election Officer should not belong to any political party or should not be known sympathizers or supporters or close relatives of any contesting candidates or leaders of any political party and should not have been hired by any political party or contesting candidate.

e) A special receipt counter may be set up at the Receipt Centres to receive photos/ videos with accompanying certificate providing details of location (Polling Stations or location of other process/events), tasks assigned and number of photos/ minutes of videos taken etc.

f) Videography recording is not restricted to poll day but covers entire spectrum of critical poll processes.

g) Video cameras may be used to capture still photography wherever so required.

h) CCTV coverage can be provided for the poll processes scheduled/happening inside rooms/halls like nomination, scrutiny, withdrawal, symbol allotment, EVM/VVPAT related processes etc.

i) Keeping in view the availability and economic viability, CCTVs can be used as an alternative to video cameras and vice versa.

j) While using CCTV, it must be ensured that all the instructions/parameters mentioned above for use of video cameras are to be, *ad seriatim*, scrupulously followed in the case of CCTV coverage also.

(ii) Inventory of cameras:

The District Election Officer shall make an assessment of requirements of cameras of appropriate specification/ technology and videographers (with or without cameras) and their availability in the district. In case of shortage, the tender may be floated for hiring of cameras/ videographers or fix the hiring charges based on the prevailing market rate well in advance.

(iii) Events to be recorded:

(a) In reference to the Supreme Court's observations made in its judgment dated 11th January 2005 in Civil Appeal No.9228 of 2003 (*Janak Singh Vs. Ram Das Rai and Others*), the Commission, earlier, directed that photography may be carried inside the Polling Stations to photograph



electors and cover poll proceedings without compromising the secrecy of voting. The Commission now directs that all critical events during the entire course of election shall be recorded in CCTV or videography where CCTV is not available.

(b) Arrangements for 360° CCTV coverage inside the room and at the exit gate of the room shall be made to record the process of nomination, scrutiny, withdrawal and allotment of symbol. In case CCTVs are not available, the above processes shall be recorded through videography with date and time stamping and other instruction of the Commission in this regard.

(c) Other critical events such as First Level Checking of EVM/VVPATs, commissioning of EVM/VVPATs, important public meetings, processions during election campaign, processes related to postal ballot papers, polling process in identified critical polling stations, storage of polled EVM/VVPATs, Opening of Strong Rooms before taking out the EVM/VVPATs for counting and counting process etc. shall be recorded in CCTV or through videography.

(d) The videographer shall make sure that all other important events *inter alia* listed below are properly recorded:

- i. Attempts of intimidation of voters.
- ii. Attempts of inducement/ bribing of voters.
- iii. Canvassing within 100 metres of Polling Stations
- iv. Positioning of voting compartment
- v. Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at the Polling Station
- vi. Presence of polling agents
- vii. Mock Poll.
- viii. Clearing of Mock Poll
- ix. Sealing of EVMs and VVPATs.
- x. Process of identification of voters.
- xi. Voters in queues.
- xii. The length of queue at the time fixed for close of poll.
- xiii. Any dispute of any nature at the Polling Station.



- xiv. Visit by Sector Officers, Observers and other electoral functionaries or any important person including the candidates.
 - xv. Replacement of EVMs/VVPATs, if any.
 - xvi. Any reportable or objectionable incidents at the Polling Stations.
 - xvii. Any other processes or events specified by DEO/RO
- (e) All videography and photography should be done with date and time stamping so that the real time and date can be verified.
 - (f) Videographers, so deployed, shall not be making random videography but shall follow protocol provided by the Commission in recording events.
 - (g) Care should be taken that the videographers engaged for the purpose of covering the public meetings/rallies etc. attended by NSG/SPG protectees having high security threat, the videographers, so deployed, shall be screened for security by the district police authorities. Proper advance security liasoning with the officials of NSG/SPG shall be maintained in this regard and under no circumstances the videographers and the process of videography can become a hindrance to the process of giving security cover to such protectees.
 - (h) Regulated entry of the media persons, with authority letters, shall be allowed inside the Polling Station premises in manageable numbers to capture general poll day events without violation of secrecy of voting.

(iv) Method of placing cameras:

Cameras shall be placed/ handled in such a manner that they can record the general proceedings at the Polling Station including the process of identification of voters, application of indelible ink, voting compartment etc., on poll day. On counting day, the CCTV/ videography camera shall be placed in such a way that it captures the general proceeding and do not focus on the display of the Control Unit. Proper care should be taken to ensure that the secrecy of voting is not violated in any manner in either case.

(v) Scrutiny of videography/CCTV footage done:

- (a) Videography done at a Polling Station, shall be viewed by the RO, in presence of the Observer at the time of scrutiny of Form 17A and other documents, in case of any complaint with respect to that Polling Station.



At the time of scrutiny, concerned videographer shall be available so that the RO and Observer can seek any clarification, if required.

(b) Video films of campaigning shall be viewed by the teams appointed by the Returning Officer to check whether any of the organizers / speakers or other participants of the public meeting has committed any violations or infractions of statutory provisions and directions of the Commission or provisions of Model Code of Conduct.

(c) The Returning Officer, wherever competent to take action, shall immediately initiate corrective action including disciplinary action against all those found guilty, under intimation to the Commission.

(d) In cases of serious infringements, the RO while submitting his report to the Commission through DEO/CEO will also send a copy of the video recording in CD or in other appropriate storage device by quickest possible means. In such cases the such recordings will be carefully indexed and complete transcript thereof, a brief explanatory note mentioning the broad details of the violations, the persons responsible and the action recommended be provided to the Commission.

(e) The videographic clippings are required to be shown to the Observers concerned deployed in the Constituency/ District on daily basis to enable him/her to apprise the Commission of the situation prevailing in that Constituency to enable it to take prompt remedial measures, if required.

(vi) Videography/CCTV at Counting Centre:

(a) Video/CCTV coverage shall be ensured at every stage of counting by deploying adequate teams of videographers. This video/CCTV coverage shall include the randomization process for counting personnel, opening of Strong Rooms, transfer of CUs from Strong Room to Counting Hall, Counting Hall arrangements, process of counting and tabulation counters, checking of two CUs per round by the Observers, security arrangements in and outside the Counting Hall/Centre, presence of candidates and their agents, declaration of results, handing over of Certificate of Return of Election, placing VVPAT slips in black envelopes and sealing of EVM/VVPATs after counting and any other significant events of the counting process.

(b) The videography shall have the date and time stamping. Storage devices, containing unedited video recording should be sealed, clearly labelling/indexing all the details contained therein, after the counting process is over for future reference. CDs/ Storage devices of the video recording should be kept in safe custody of the District Election Officer.

(c) No still or video camera of the media (except the official video camera for officially recording the entire counting process) is allowed to be fixed inside any Counting Hall. No camera stand should, therefore, be allowed to be taken inside Counting Halls by media persons. Hand held cameras can be allowed for media persons carrying authority letter/ pass issued by the Commission. Further, while covering the counting process with camera carried in hand by the media persons, in no circumstances, the actual votes recorded on an individual EVM or ballot papers is to be videographed/photographed.

(d) The exact location, up to which the cameras of the media can move, should be indicated by the Returning Officer in advance, marked by a line or a string for guidance of all concerned.

4. Webcasting:

(i) Meaning of webcasting-

(a) Webcasting simply means live streaming of video on the Internet. Any video camera including a webcam capable of being connected to the Internet can be used for webcasting. Webcasting in polling stations will be restricted for monitoring by the election machinery, to prevent vitiation of the poll process, at Polling Station.

(b) In the context of poll day webcasting, it is preferable that cameras of appropriate specification/technology are installed at identified Polling Stations, in such a manner to record general proceedings and not to violate secrecy of vote. Such live stream data of webcasting on poll day events shall only be displayed at Control Rooms of Chief Electoral Officer, District Election Officer and Returning Officer and nowhere else. The Commission shall also be provided with the link to view live streaming on need based.



- (c) Webcasting arrangement shall have enough analytical and alert capabilities to provide run time and end of the day analysis on functional/non-functional cameras and alerts on critical system events.
- (d) Such live streaming, as described above, shall be recorded in the Control Rooms of the District Election Officers and nowhere else. District Election Officer shall be custodian of the entire video data and shall be responsible for its safe keep.
- (e) This civil measure is primarily to provide immediate support to Polling Stations, by monitoring, in case of any events that could jeopardize the integrity of the voting process.
- (f) Webcasting shall cover poll process inside the Polling Station and voter's queue and peripheral areas of the Polling Station,

(ii) Identification of locations for webcasting:

Arrangements for webcasting shall be done in all critical Polling Stations and all Polling Stations in vulnerable areas or at least in 50% of total polling stations including auxiliary polling stations, whichever is higher. Therefore, necessary arrangement of webcasting in Polling Stations shall be made, to provide immediate support, for ensuring free and fair election and as a confidence building measure for voters.

(iii) Installation of webcasting at Polling Stations:

- (a) A temporary landline or mobile broadband connection or any other means of connectivity should be provided in all identified Polling Stations where webcasting is proposed.
- (b) Cameras of appropriate specification/technology should then be provided at Polling Stations.
- (c) Provision for sufficient number of 3 pin sockets in Polling Station for powering such cameras.
- (d) It is preferable that a State-wide composite tender is issued by the Chief Electoral Officer, with necessary service level benchmarks, to install webcasting infrastructure and its operation. However, the Chief Electoral Officer may, on his own discretion and convenience, adopt any other method to provide webcasting infrastructure and its operation.

(e) It shall be ensured that webcasting infrastructure is ready for full testing by P-3 days at all identified locations including Control Rooms facilities. Full rehearsal shall be ensured on P-2 and P-1 days to ensure glitch free operation on poll day.

(iv) Setting up Web-casting in Polling Station:

(a) During webcasting in polling stations, it should be ensured that camera(s) is/are placed at sufficient height (e.g., 7-8 ft) above the ground.

(b) The camera(s) should be placed on a stable and sturdy position on a wall and kept in fixed position.

(c) The camera(s) should be in such a position that a broad view of the following aspects of poll processes is clearly captured and transmitted:

- Process of identification of voter by Polling Officer;
- Application of indelible ink on the finger of voter;
- Initialisation of Control Unit of EVM by Presiding Officer after satisfactory identification of voter;
- Voter's visit to voting compartment for casting vote on the balloting unit of EVM, but without showing cover face of Ballot Unit and VVPAT so that secrecy of vote is preserved under all conditions.
- Presence of Polling Agents to the possible extent.
- At the time of closing of poll, distribution of slips/tokens to the voters in queue.
- Sealing of EVM (BU/CU), VVPAT, their carrying cases and distribution of attested copies of Form 17C to polling agents.
- Voter's queue and peripheral area of the Polling Station.

(d) The name and number of Polling Stations along with date of poll should be pasted at such a place so that it is displayed in camera view throughout the polling day till completion and sealing.

(e) The Booth Level Officer and the Sector Officer concerned should give Polling Station-wise certificate to the Returning Officer that webcasting arrangements have been made as specified and are functioning properly with the cameras oriented correctly. On the basis of above certificates,



the District Election Officer shall furnish a consolidated report to the Chief Electoral Officer for onward submission to the Commission.

(f) The RO shall prepare signages of size 30"X18" with colour scheme of black letters on fluorescent yellow background, having the following text "**YOU ARE UNDER WEB CAMERA/CCTV SURVIELLANCE**". These signages shall be displayed prominently at multiple locations, inside and outside the Polling Stations or any other relevant locations.

(g) It must be ensured that no advertisement is displayed during webcasting.

(v) Recording of video in case of webcasting:

It is reiterated that. in all cases where webcasting is done, the video of the entire day's proceedings must be recorded in the Control Rooms of the District Election Officers and nowhere else. District Election Officer shall be the custodian of the records so created. The record footage of the relevant period should be made available to the Returning Officer for viewing at the time of scrutiny on the next day after the poll in case of any complaint with respect to that Polling Station.

(vi) Monitoring of webcasting:

Monitoring of webcasting shall be normally two tier, in addition to viewing by the Commission, as below:

- a) **State Control Room:** A separate control room within State Control Room shall be set up to monitor webcasting for appropriate action through District Control Room.
- b) **District Control Room:** A separate control room within State Control Room shall be set up to monitor webcasting for appropriate action through Returning Officer or Sector Officers or QRTs or any other mechanism.

(vii) No Webcasting of Counting Centre:

There shall be no webcasting of the process of counting of votes. However, the sufficient numbers of CCTV cameras of appropriate resolution shall be installed in all Counting Halls. CCTV Camera for counting table earmarked for VVPAT Counting Booth (VCB) shall be installed on ceiling just above the counting table, as per instructions contained in the latest edition of 'Manual on Electronic Voting Machine and VVPAT'. CCTV recordings of

the full counting process shall be under the custody of the District Election Officer and shall be treated as records under Rule 93(1) of Conduct of Election Rules 1961.

5. Training of personnel deployed for videography, CCTV and webcasting:

Personnel deployed videography, CCTV and webcasting should be trained by the Returning Officer or Nodal Officer on what and how to capture during videography. It must be instructed that the purpose of the scheme is to record critical events that could vitiate the poll. They should not simply take photographs or videos or footage in a routine or random manner in order to fill up a storage device, or camera memory. A proper training for setting up CCTV/ webcasting cameras shall also be provided.

Training of all officers/ staff associated with webcasting is very important. All Presiding Officers, polling officers and Sector Officers for the Polling Stations where webcasting is planned must be familiarised in webcasting and duties associated with it. The officials at State/District Control Room shall also be trained for monitoring methods and appropriate reaction to be initiated.

6. Logistics for teams deployed for videography, CCTV and webcasting:

All teams so deployed for videography, CCTV and webcasting should be under the personal supervision and guidance of a Nodal Officer, appointed by the DEO/RO. Such teams will be provided suitable transportation/vehicles, food etc. during their duty, subject to terms and conditions of the contracts, and it shall be ensured that no hospitality from any candidate or political functionaries is accepted by them.

7. Storage and retention of photo/webcasting/CCTV/videography data:

(a) The webcasting data and videography data/ photography *inside the Polling Stations* produced in compliance with the orders of the Commission shall form a part of the record of the concerned election under Rule 93(1) Conduct of Election Rules 1961 and stored with due precautions for its safety. The recording shall be kept in CDs or other suitable storage devices, properly sealed and indexed for easy retrieval, in the safe custody of District

Election Officers, as in the case of all other election related records. The DEO will ensure that there is no leakage and data theft.

(b) Data as above shall be kept in the trunk in the Strong Room, designated for documents different from EVM/VVPAT Strong Rooms, where all the statutory documents relating to that election have been stored. CD/ storage device of video recordings shall be indexed with a uniform code number in the following standard formulation: *State/ District/AC/Date of recording/location/Gist of event recorded*. This data shall be retained for a period of one year and destroyed thereafter, under Rule 94(b) Conduct of Election Rules 1961.

(c) A copy of the data shall be kept in the secured custody of DEO concerned for use during scrutiny process, if required. The copy shall be destroyed after the completion of the scrutiny process.

(d) The locking seal of CDs shall remain intact, so that contents cannot be copied to another CD possible. Before consigning the CD for storage, it shall be covered with tape to prevent accidental erasure, editing, or manipulation. etc. Similar precaution shall be taken for other types of storage device, if used.

(e) The recordings of various stages of election process (not related to the Polling Stations) like nomination of candidates, scrutiny, withdrawal of candidature etc. by videography/CCTV shall be kept in the safe custody of the DEO till the expiry of 45 days from the date of declaration of result of the election concerned.

(f) The video recordings of election campaign activities of candidates and political parties made by the election expenditure monitoring teams, FSTs, SSTs etc., shall be kept in safe custody of DEOs till the expiry of 8 months from the declaration of the result of the election.

(g) On receipt of an application for copies of the data/ record or to inspect such data/ record, within 45 days of the declaration of the election result in case of (e) above, and within 8 months of the declaration of the election result in case of (f) above, following facilitation shall be permitted:

(i) Copies of still photo or video recording should be given on demand, free of cost to candidates and on due payment of a fee of Rs 300/- per CD/ storage device (exclusive of cost of CD/storage devices) to any other person.

(ii) Inspection may be allowed as per follows:

- The video CDs/ storage devices will be made available for inspection in the office of the District Election Officer or Chief Electoral Officer, as the case may be.

- No guarantee for authenticity and veracity of the contents of the CDs/storage devices will be undertaken under any circumstances and these will be made available on 'as is' basis.

- Effective supervision by officials shall be ensured to avoid removal of any footage or damage or mutilation of the CD/ storage device. Simultaneous inspection by a large number of persons shall not be allowed.


(h) On expiry of the prescribed period of 45 days or 8 months, as the case may be, it should be ascertained whether any election petition or any other petition/complaint etc. has been filed in respect of the election concerned or pertaining to electoral offence etc., in which video recording could be relevant. In case no Election petition or any other petition etc., is pending, the recording should be destroyed after following the usual procedure prescribed for the purpose.

(i) If there is any election petition filed in respect of the election or any other petition etc. in any competent court in respect of which the data mentioned at (e) and (f) would be relevant, then such data shall be retained in safe custody of DEO till the disposal of such matter.

Manual on Force Multipliers and Civil Measures (*latest edition*) may be referred for detailed instructions and clarification on all types of civil (non-force) measures.

The aforesaid consolidated instructions shall be brought to the notice of all concerned for strict compliance.

Yours faithfully,



19/06/2023

(SANJEEV KUMAR PRASAD)
SECRETARY

**Civil (Non-Force) Measures Matrix for
Photography/Videography/CCTV/ Webcasting**

Location or Event/Civil Measure	Videography	CCTV	Webcasting	Remarks
Polling Station (identified for video coverage)	YES (in case of webcasting not feasible)	NO	YES	Data is part of election records under Rule 93(1) and hence can't be shared without order of competent court.
Counting (VCB shall have CCTV only)	YES (in case 360° CCTV not provided)	YES	NO	Data is part of election records under Rule 93(1) and hence can't be shared without order of competent court
Any Poll Process other than Polling Station and Counting	YES	YES	NO	Data can be shared/inspected within 45 days of the election result
Campaign, Expenditure Control etc	YES	YES	YES (need based at check nakas)	Data can be shared/inspected within 8 months of the election result.