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ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No.576/3/2015/ SDR

Dated: 16th March, 2015

To,

The Chief Electoral Officers
of all States and UTs.

Sub: Printing of ballot papers- photograph of candidate to be also printed along with the other particulars.

9 MAR 2015

Madam/Sir,

Dy CEO (RA)
SO (L)
to R. Jain
R

Under Rule 49B of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, the ballot paper to be displayed on the balloting unit of the EVM shall contain such particulars as the Commission may specify. Similarly, Rules 22 and 30 provide, inter alia, that the particulars on the postal ballot paper and ordinary ballot paper shall be as specified by the Commission.

2. In terms of the abovementioned Rules 22, 30 and 49B, the Commission has specified the particulars to be printed on the ballot paper to be displayed on the balloting unit and the postal ballot paper. The particulars so specified at present are the serial numbers for the candidates, names of candidates and the election symbol allotted to each candidate and a panel for 'None of the Above' after the name of the last candidate. The existing directions which apart from the particulars to be printed, also contain specifications on other aspects, such as, size of the ballot paper, size of panels, number of columns, etc., have been given in the Handbook for the Returning Officers.

3. The Commission has noted that there are many cases where candidates with same or similar names contest from the same constituency. Although appropriate suffixes are added to the names of candidates in the event of two or more candidates having same name, the Commission considers that additional measures are required for removing confusion in the minds of electors at the time of voting. There is also a writ petition on this very subject pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court [WP (C) No. 541 of 2014- Akash Gahlot Vs. Election Commission of India & another].

4. Having considered all aspects of the matter, the Commission in partial modification of its existing directions under Rule 22, Rule 30 and Rule 49B of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, hereby specifies that for elections to be held from 1st May, 2015 onwards, the

postal ballot papers, the ordinary ballot papers and the ballot papers to be displayed on the balloting unit of EVM shall, in addition to the particulars as per the existing directions, also contain the photograph of the candidate. The photograph of the candidate shall be printed in the panel for the name of the candidate and shall appear on the right side of the name in between the name and symbol of the candidate. The size of the photograph printed on the ballot paper shall be 2 cm.X 2.5 cm. (two cm. in breadth and 2.5 cm. in height). A sample ballot paper for election to Lok Sabha is enclosed for reference (Annexure-1).

5. The above direction for printing of photograph of candidate on the ballot paper shall also apply in relation to elections by Assembly members and elections from Council constituencies. In respect of the said elections, the directions are in exercise of powers under Rule 30 as made applicable to these elections by Rule 70 of the said Rules.

6. The specifications for the photograph are as follows:

- (i) Candidates are required to submit their recent photograph (taken during the preceding period of 3 months before the date of notification).
- (ii) Photograph should be of stamp size 2 cm.X 2.5 cm. (two cm. in breadth and 2.5 cm. in height) in white/off white background, with full face view directly facing the camera, neutral facial expression with eyes open. The photo may be in colour or black and white as may be convenient for the candidate.
- (iii) Photograph should be in normal clothing. Photograph in uniform is not permitted. Caps/hats should be avoided. Dark glasses also to be avoided.

7. The candidates at every election shall be required to submit their photograph conforming to the above requirements/specifications alongwith their nomination papers and, in any case, latest by the date fixed for scrutiny of nominations. The photograph should bear the signature of the candidate/election agent on the reverse side of the photograph. When the photograph is submitted, the candidate/election agent/proposer submitting the photograph shall be asked to give a declaration stating that the photograph being submitted is that of the candidate (mentioning the name and address) taken during the period of preceding 3 months. A printed format for the declaration as annexed (Annexure-2) to this letter shall be kept with the RO/ARO for this purpose.

8. When the nomination is filed, if the photograph of the candidate is not submitted, the RO shall give a notice asking the candidate to submit the photograph latest by the date of

scrutiny of nomination. In the same Notice, it shall also be added that if the photograph is not submitted, his/her photograph will not be printed on the ballot paper. If any candidate still fails or refuses to give his photograph, that candidate will not have his photograph printed on the ballot paper. It may be added that non-submission of the photograph by the candidate shall **NOT** be a ground for rejection of the nomination of the candidate.

9. The Returning Officer shall display a list of validly nominated candidates with the photographs of the candidates against their names on the day following the date fixed for scrutiny of nominations. The Returning Officer shall inform the candidates at the time of scrutiny that the photographs to be printed on ballot paper will be displayed on his notice board on the next day (time may also be specified). If there is any error in the photograph or other particulars, the candidates/others will get an opportunity to point out the same to the Returning Officer for rectifying the error.

10. These directions may be brought to the notice of all DEOs, ROs and other election authorities in the State/UT. These may also be brought to the notice of all political parties based in your State, including the State Units of recognized parties. A press release may also be given for wider dissemination of the directions.


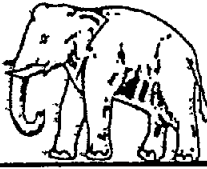

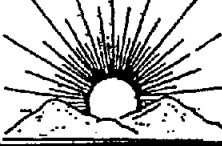






11. Please note that as mentioned in paragraph 4 above, these directions shall be applicable for elections to be held from 01-05-2015.

11. Please acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,



(K.F. WILFRED)
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

1.	అశోక్ కుమార్, కె. అశోక్ కుమార్, కె.		
2.	శాన్పాషా, ఎం. చాన్భాషా, ఎం.		
3.	శిన్న పిల్లప్ప, పి. చిన్నపిల్లప్ప, పి.		
4.	శివలక్ష్మణం, డాక్టర్. అ. శివలక్ష్మణం, డాక్టర్. అ.		
5.	కవల, ఎం.ఎస్.ఎం. గౌడ, ఎం.ఎస్.ఎం.		
6.	శుందరం, ఎస్. సుందరం, ఎస్.		
7.	మణి, జి.కె. మణి, జి.కె.		
8.	మృణాల, కె. మునిరాజ్, కె.		
9.	అశోక్ కుమార్, ఎ. అశోక్ కుమార్, ఎ.		
16.	మేధావీలు నామాలలో నామాలలో నామాలలో		NOTA

Declaration by candidate/election agent/proposer while submitting the
photograph of the candidate

Subject – Election to _____ (mention the name of
the House) from _____ (name of the
constituency)/election to Council of States/Legislative Council by
Assembly Members.

(name and address), Son/daughter/wife of Sh. _____, nominated as
candidate for the abovementioned election, am submitting herewith my
photograph for the purpose of printing the same on the ballot paper. I declare that
the photograph has been taken during the last 3 months before the date of
notification of election.

(fill up this part when the candidate himself is submitting the photograph).

OR

I _____ (name), election agent/proposer of
Sh. _____
_____, (name and address of the candidate), son/daughter/wife of
Sh _____, a candidate for the abovementioned election,
hereby submit the photograph of the said candidate for the purpose of printing the
same on the ballot paper. I declare that the photograph has been taken during the
last 3 months before the date of notification of election.

(fill up this part when the election agent/proposer is submitting the photograph).

Date: _____

Name : _____

Address: _____

Tel No. _____