

**OFFICE OF THE ELECTION COMMISSIONER FOR DISTRICT COUNCIL  
TRIPURA : AGARTALA**

No.F. 2(20)/EC/DC/GEN--ELEC/2020 / 18998

Date:-26/03/2021

**MEMORANDUM**

**Sub: - Maintenance of discipline inside Counting Hall for TTAADC Election-2021.**

The Election Commissioner for District Council feels that certain additional safeguards, like multiple angle video capturing, firm restrictions on use of mobile phone, regulated entry etc. are necessary inside the counting hall, so that process of counting of votes inspires greater confidence. Further, the Commission also feels that emphasis needs to be laid down on certain traditional practices which are equally essential for free and fair counting process.

2. Therefore, it has been decided that special attention shall be paid to the following points / restrictions / requirements while making arrangements for the counting process for the Gen-Election to TTAADC-2021.

2.1 **Placement of multiple angle video cameras:** Each Counting Hall shall have four video cameras which shall be placed in the following manner.

- i. Two cameras shall cover the two respective rows of counting tables. The video recording of proceedings at counting tables shall be done in such a manner that a clear view is obtained of all counting personnel and the counting agents positioned adjacent (across the wire mesh) to Counting Tables. The counting shall be continuous without any break of any kind. Each process of proceeding at counting table shall be videographed.
- ii. One camera shall record the proceedings of the table of Returning Officer. This Camera shall necessarily record all the doubtful votes such that there is a clear image and voice of the Returning Officer.
- iii. One camera shall be used for recording the opening and closing of strong room and movement of Polled EVM. It may be noted that strong room shall be opened only in presence of Political Parties agent and Observers, the whole process should be video graphed maintaining standard procedures. No movement of Polled EVM shall be allowed in absence of video recording. This camera shall also be used for capturing the proceedings outside the hall. The same camera shall also record other mandatory proceedings like, sealing of envelops, etc. as required after counting process.

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- iv. In case there is any **disturbance or conflict or disorderly conduct** within the counting hall, the video footings on the same, shall be recorded by the camera at Returning Officer's table. At the same time, the other camera shall record the proceedings outside to capture any unruly conduct or behavior.
  - v. Under no circumstances, the angle of the two video Cameras deployed for Videography of counting tables shall be disturbed.
  - vi. All video footages regarding any violent / unruly behaviors in the counting hall or counting premises shall necessarily be shared with local police.
- 2.2 Restriction on various objects/materials /equipments–the following materials shall not be allowed inside the counting hall:
- i. **Ban on carrying of mobile / Cellular phones / Pagers /Laptops / Smart phones or any other electronic gadgets inside the Counting Hall:** No person, other than those specially authorized by the Commission, shall be allowed to carry Mobile phones / Cellular Phones / Pagers / Laptops / Smart Phones or any other electronic gadgets inside the counting hall. The security, deployed at the entry of Counting Hall, should not allow him/her to enter in the Counting Hall unless he / she deposits the same at the **counter meant** for this purpose. **Only RO and Observer's are allowed to carry mobile phone inside the counting hall.**
  - ii. **Other Banned materials:** Materials like-Belts, wrist watches, sticks, metal rods, wallets, pen, pencil, pointer, ring, any kind of material which has potential to be used as a weapon, food stuffs, bag, ceramic glass, any solid bottle /plastic bottle are strictly banned and security forces, manning the Hall shall have full authority to restrain any person who carries the banned materials inside the counting hall. It may be noted that pen, pencil etc. for the counting personnel and agents will be provided by the ROs Office.
  - iii. **Cameras:** Cameras (both still and Video camera) other than those possessed by authorized Media personnel and deployed by the Returning Officer, shall not be allowed inside the Counting Hall.
- 2.3 **Entry restriction:** Only the following persons can be allowed inside the counting hall.
- i. Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants with valid identity Cards (**White colour**).
  - ii. Observer.
  - iii. Persons authorized by EC for DC (Possessing authority letter duly issued by EC for DC)

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- iv. Public servants on duty in connection with the election having valid pass of EC for DC/ Returning Officer. "Public servant on duty in connection with election" does not include police officers; such officers whether in uniform or in plain clothes, should not be as a general rule, be allowed entry inside the counting hall without any exception, unless RO decides to call them for the maintenance of law and order or some similar purpose.
- v. Ministers of state Govt. and MLA's cannot enter Counting Hall unless they are contesting candidates themselves.
- vi. Returning Officer shall give sample of ID cards / Authority Letters / Passes to the Security in-Charge such that they can fully enforce the regulations.

2.4 **Computation of Counting:** The computation and compilation of data from each table at the conclusion of each round shall be done in the counting hall alongside the RO's table where the candidate / agent will also be seated. Under no circumstances, it will be in any other room. For greater transparency, signatures of counting agents shall be obtained at all tables before sending any sheet to RO's table.

2.5 **Returning Officer shall not take any call / instructions from any person other than officer of EC for DC / DEO / Observer.** In the performance of RO's duties, RO is only bound by the provisions of law and the instructions of the Election Commissioner for District Council. RO is thus, not to take order from any officer (other than DEO and EC for DC).

2.6 **Returning officer can speak to police officials on need:** Notwithstanding anything in these instructions, Returning Officer is free to contact any Police Officer on mobile /cellular/land line telephone in the interest of security and law and order inside the Hall.

2.7 **Restriction on movement on counting personnel:** Counting personnel shall not leave counting hall without clear permission of the Returning Officer. This however does not mean that there would be a free movement of officials with simple permission of Returning Officer. Any suspected movement of counting officials should be closely observed by the Returning Officer. This is required to insulate these officials from any pressure of any kind.

2.8 **The counting agents to maintain discipline and order:** All counting agents shall be required to maintain discipline and control inside the Counting Hall. Any disorderly conduct shall invite immediate expulsion from the Hall. Returning Officer should use video camera at his table to record such disorderly conduct and take immediate action for expelling the person from the Hall. The security, deployed at the hall shall be suitably informed of such an expulsion. RO should hold a meeting with all political parties & above restrictions & instructions should be briefed to them to remove any confusion on the day of counting.

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- 2.9 **Mandatory presence of counting agents:** It must be ensured that the counting Agents, assigned to each table, remain present during the respective rounds. In case, any Counting Agent is absent, the counting supervisor shall, before taking up counting, first inform the Returning Officer who shall in turn make an announcement and inform the Counting Agents of concerned political party at the RO Table for ensuring presence of the persons who have otherwise left or are absent. Immediately after announcement if the concerned Counting agent does not arrive/reach the specified area than on waiting for 2 (two) minutes counting will start.
- 2.10 **Round wise counting and running serial of polling station:** As per standard practice, counting shall be done in different rounds maintaining running serial number of the Polling Stations. Under no circumstances, whatsoever, the running serial shall be broken.
3. It may be noted that video footages of all the four cameras shall be preserved as election record. No portion shall be edited. Any attempt to edit video footage, would invite action as in the case of tempering of election record. All Returning Officers shall suitable sensitize all the officers who will act as in-charge of video recording.

**By order of the Election Commissioner for District Council.**

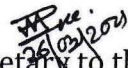
  
**(P. Bhattacharjee)**  
Secretary to the,  
Election Commissioner for  
District Council

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1. PA to Election Commissioner for District Council for information of Election Commissioner for District Council.
2. The DEO (DM & Collector), North/Unakoti/Dhalai/ Khowai/ West/Sepahijala/ Gomati & South Tripura District for information.
3. RO(s) (SDMs) Kanchanpur/L.T.Valley/ Kumarghat/ Gandacherra/ Ambassa/ Khowai / Teliamura / Mohanpur / Jirania / Jampuijala/ Bishalgarh/ Udaipur/ Amarpur/ Karbook/ Santirbazar & Sabroom Sub-Division for information & necessary action.

**Copy forwarded to:-**

1. The Chief Secretary, Tripura for information.
2. The Director General of Police for information.
3. The Police Nodal Officer for TTAADC Election (IGP TSR & Ops) for information.

  
Secretary to the,  
Election Commissioner for  
District Council