<u>Returning Officer's role in Data Management in General Elections.</u>

Since 1998 Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission of India has been displaying the background information, nomination data and the results on its website. This has been continued for all the state elections conducted thereafter. So most of the district level officers and election machinery must be aware of the procedure followed for data management and transmission and many of them would be knowing about the Commission's website i.e. www.eci.gov.in and logging with it occasionally for reference. If the ROs have never browsed this, they must do so now. However, there have been a number of changes in data management since 1998 lok sabha elections. Due to the use of EVMs, it is expected that the final results will be out quite soon and hence this time Commission is not asking for round wise, assembly segment wise results. Only the final result has to be sent from the ROs and that is now Internet based.

The forms which are required to be filled at the ROs level are P01, P02, P03, P05 and the final web based counting form (P09). In case of simultaneous assembly elections, Forms A01, A02 and the final counting results (A08) Format will be required to be filled. A copy of these forms as well as partially filled copies (with names of Assembly, Parliamentary constituency and FUSN No. Filled in) are also being circulated to the ROs by the CEOs.

Nomination data and Scanning of Affidavit

The data regarding total number of electors, the service electors and the number of regular and auxiliary polling stations gets finalised at the last date of nomination. Please ensure that this data is filled in Form P03 regarding all the assembly segment falling

within that parliamentary constituency. These forms should be faxed to the CEOs on the last date of nomination. ROs of Parliamentary Constituencies must make sure that absolutely correct data is sent to the CEO. These electorate figures are finally used in the statistical reports published by the Commission and any erroneous data sent by the ROs will result in wrong figure being published by the Commission in its final statistical reports.

The forms P01 and P02 pertaining to number of nomination, withdrawals, final number of contestants etc. should be strictly as per the nomination forms received and the finally accepted nomination forms. Please ensure that the number of male and female candidates, number of withdrawal etc. is shown accurately. Also ensure that the correct spellings of the names and party affiliation and symbol is shown. In form P02, the names of the candidates is to be shown both in English and Hindi correctly. These forms have to be faxed to the CEOs immediately after the list of contesting candidates along with their allotted symbols is ready. Please ensure that there are no inaccuracy in this because in the GENESYS software, this data will be entered at the CEO level and for all the remaining stages of the election process, the names of contesting candidates as sent by you in Form P02 will be used through out.

Another issue which needs to be tackled during the nomination phase is that the affidavits filled by the candidates are to be scanned at the ROs level and then the scanned image files are to be sent to the CEO in floppy or CDs. The criminal record form (Form 26) as well as the affidavit regarding assets, liabilities, dues, filed by the candidates as per Supreme Court order are to be scanned properly (from original affidavits) and kept in directories on the computer. The names of the image files are extremely important and

will be explained by CEOs in the district level training. The RO must make sure that the scanned affidavits are readable, otherwise there will be criticism from the media, political parties and the public. Hence the quality of scanning is extremely important and ROs must personally make sure of this. These affidavits in the scanned files in floppies or CDs must reach CEO office on the next day of final scrutiny and allotment of election symbols. The names of the contesting candidates alongwith their affidavits will be displayed on the website of the concerned CEO, and from the Commission's website there would be link to the CEO's website so that public in general anywhere in the country can view the affidavits filed by the candidates anywhere.

Polling Day-Voter turn out (PS05, A05, P05 Forms)

After the polling, the Commission requires data of voters turn out (male, female, uses of EPIC, number of tendered votes). For this purpose, Form PS05 have to be given to Presiding Officers. After the polling is over, the forms PS05 should be filled by the Presiding Officer strictly according to the figures available in the Presiding Officer's diary and register of voters. This fact has to be explained clearly to the polling parties in the training session organised for them. If a single polling officer fills incorrect form, the total of the assembly and parliamentary constituency will be wrong. After the polling is over, the filled in forms have to be deposited by the Presiding Officers at the collection centre where they have to be consolidated into form A05. The form A05 is the total of data from all polling stations in that assembly segment. Thereafter the Returning Officers has to fill in data of all the assemblies in form P05 and fax that form to CEO. This must reach CEO in the forenoon of day next to the day of polling so that CEO can consolidate the data of the state and send it to the Commission.

Arrangements for the counting day

Before the counting day, the data at the ROs level is just to be filled in manually the required forms and FAXED to the CEO. The only computerised operation required is the scanning of all the Affidavits and sending the floppy/CD to CEO office. However, for the counting, the entire responsibility of entering data in the computers using GENESYS software is of the ROs of parliamentary constituencies. In case of simultaneous elections, arrangements have been worked with the CEO of the state whether the data will be entered at RO of assembly constituency level or RO of Parliamentary Constituency level or at the DEO level.

To simplify this, we are providing an Internet based form to be filled by the ROs. For this ROs require an Internet connection, which could be from companies like BSNL, Sify, Mantra online, Reliance etc. NIC has also been requested to allow their local servers to be accessed for Internet connectivity. As a final fall back arrangement from ROs level, directly the ECI servers can be logged in by using STD dialing. For filling the forms, the user name and passwords alongwith the authentication CDs will be send. ROs must ensure that the authentication CD does not fall into wrong hands and no attempt is made to replicate (duplicate, make copy) it. ROs must also appreciate that any wrong data entered in these forms can result in wrong candidate being shown as winner on the Commission's website. Hence utmost care is to be taken in training the personnel for this event and making foolproof arrangements on the counting day itself. The procedure for this is also explained in the enclosed sheet (Technical Notes)

Index Cards

After the election is over, the index cards are required to be filled in manually and sent to the CEO office with signature of RO. These index cards are compared with the data sent and are used to generate final statistical report. Hence the ROs are expected to carefully verify all the figures on the index cards before sending it to the CEO and the Commission. Filled in index cards must reach CEO office within a week of the final declaration of results, so that CEO can consolidate state level index cards and send them to the Commission within a fortnight of declaration of results, so that, in turn, Commission can bring out the statistical report well in time.

Technical Notes

Final Result Transmission for PC/AC from RO to ECI

The result for the PC/AC shall be transmitted from RO headquarter to ECI through online web based forms. The RO's should ensure that they have proper infrastructure in place:

Pre-requisites for transmission of final result to ECI:

- Each RO headquarter is supposed to have a PC, a dial-up modem for connectivity to Internet and STD telephone line. The officials at RO headquarter should ensure that they have been able to connect to Internet by dialing to their local ISP.
- Each RO headquarter would be given a unique "Authentication CD". This CD has to be present in the computer for transmission of Final result. It will not be possible to transmit the final result if this CD is not present.
- Two sets of separate username/passwords shall be given for each PC to enter the final result. First set shall be used during the testing phase and the second set shall be used during the Actual counting. The second envelope of password shall be opened only on the day of counting. Prior to that, it shall be kept strictly in the safe custody.
- RO's headquarters having poor Internet Connectivity or those who have connectivity issues, may connect by dialing to the ECI RAS (011-23408899) and from thereon they should plug-in to the GENESYS (http://genesys.eci.gov.in) web site for result transmission. This is a fallback arrangement and should be rarely used by only those places, who have serious connectivity problems through local ISP.

  Authentication CD and username/passwords for each RO shall be provided subsequently, after the zonal level trainings.

GE 2004 Testing Operation of Final Result (PC/AC)

- Goto the website http:/genesys.eci.gov.in
- A login page shall appear
- Enter the username/password provided for the field testing. Also ensure that the Authentication CD provided to each RO shall be present in the computer, otherwise RO may not be able to transmit the final result for the PC/AC.
- After username/password verification, the result page showing the list of contesting candidates shall appear. Enter the dummy votes secured by each candidate and Save the result by clicking on Submit button.

There shall be two rounds of testing before actual counting.
- *First Round Of Testing* - shall be done with the previous General Election 1999 data from all the States and RO level.
- *Second Round Of Testing* - shall be done simultaneously from all the states and RO level on the same day using the pre-counting data for GE 2004 elections.

GE 2004 Actual Counting Operation

♦ Goto the website http:/genesys.eci.gov.in
♦ A login page shall appear
♦ Enter the username/password provided for the Actual Counting. Also ensure that the Authentication CD provided to each RO shall be present in the computer, otherwise RO may not be able to transmit the final result for the PC/AC.

Same Authentication CD and separate username/password shall be used for the actual counting.
♦ After username/password verification, the result page showing the list of contesting candidates shall appear. Enter the votes secured by each candidate and Save the result by clicking on Submit button.
♦ The RO can confirm the transmission of result by visiting the website www.eci.gov.in. And ensuring that the results being displayed there regarding his PC/AC are correct. Please note the results which you fill on internet are automatically sent to Commission's website www.eci.gov.in .

Schedule for Transmission of Data from RO to CEO

Sl. No.	Information to be transmitted	Form-ID	Mode of Transmission to CEO	Scheduled Date	
1.	Number of Electorate & Polling Stations	P03	FAX	Last Date of filing of Nominations	As per Election Schedule in the State.
2.	Summary Information on Nominations, Rejections, Withdrawals & Contestants for Parliamentary Constituencies	P01	FAX	Date of Withdrawal	
3.	List of Contesting Candidates for Parliamentary Constituencies On daily basis, information in prescribed format to be faxed to CEO. On last date of withdrawal, the final list of contesting candidates in the prescribed format to be Faxed to CEO.	P02	FAX	Date of Withdrawal	For states going for elections in multiple phases, phase wise information shall be transmitted on completion of a phase.
4.	Affidavits for Parliamentary Constituencies in JPEG form for publishing on CEO's Website. ▪ Affidavits furnished by candidate along-with his/her Nomination paper to be scanned from original Affidavits (not from Photocopy/Fax). ▪ Scanning to be done at RO level. All the scanned affidavits for the PC to be transmitted to CEO.		CD	Last date of Withdrawal.	
5.	Data on Voter Turnout	P05	FAX	Date of Poll	
6.	Results of Counting	P09	Online Web based form http://genesys.eci.gov.in	Date of Counting	

In addition to the above, RO's for the states going in for simultaneous Assembly elections (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa & Sikkim) also needs to transmit the following information:

Sl. No.	Information to be transmitted	Form-ID	Mode of Transmission to CEO	Scheduled Date	
1.	Summary Information on Nominations, Rejections, Withdrawals & Contestants for Assembly Constituencies	A01	FAX	Date of Withdrawal	As per Election Schedule in the State.

For states going for elections in multiple phases, phase wise information shall be transmitted on completion of a phase. |
| 2. | List of Contesting Candidates for Assembly Constituencies.

On daily basis, information in prescribed format to be faxed to CEO. On last date of withdrawal, the final list of contesting candidates in the prescribed format to be Faxed to CEO. | A02 | FAX | Date of Withdrawal | |
| 3. | Affidavits for Assembly Constituencies in JPEG form for publishing on CEO's Website.

▪ Affidavits furnished by candidate along-with his/her Nomination paper to be scanned from original Affidavits (not from Photocopy/Fax).
▪ Scanning to be done at RO level. All the scanned affidavits for the AC to be transmitted to CEO. | | CD | Last date of Withdrawal. | |
| 4. | Results of Counting | A08 | Online Web based form

http://genesys.eci.gov.in | Date of Counting | |