

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

PRESS NOTE

Panchkula, the 3rd December, 2020: Dr. Dalip Singh, State Election Commissioner, Haryana stated that the programme for the conduct of the General Elections of the seats of Mayor & Members of all the wards of Municipal Corporation, **Ambala, Panchkula & Sonapat** and President & Members of Municipal Council, **Rewari**, Municipal Committee, **Sampla** (Rohtak), **Dharuhera** (Rewari) & **Ukalana** (Hisar) and Bye- elections of W. No. 07 of Municipal Committee, Indri (Karnal), W. No. 13 of Bhuna (Fatehabad), W. No. 12 of Rajound (Kaithal), W. No. 14 of Municipal Council, Fatehabad and W. No. 29 of Municipal Council, Sirsa been issued on 03.12.2020. The Election programme to the above said municipalities is as under:-

(1)	Date on which notice shall be published by the Returning Officer for inviting nominations.	04.12.2020 (Friday)
(2)	Dates on which Nomination papers shall be presented and posted.	11.12.2020 (Friday) to 16.12.2020 (Wednesday) 11.00 A.M. to 03.00 P.M. (Except 13.12.2020)
(3)	Date on which the nomination papers shall be scrutinized.	17.12.2020 (Thursday) 11.30 A.M. onwards
(4)	Last date for withdrawal of candidature.	18.12.2020 (Friday) Between 11.00 A.M and 3.00 P.M.
(5)	Date on which symbols shall be allotted to the contesting candidates.	18.12.2020 (Friday) after 3.00 PM
(6)	Date on which the list of contesting candidates shall be posted.	18.12.2020 (Friday)
(7)	Date on which list of polling stations shall be posted.	18.12.2020 (Friday)
(8)	Date on which poll shall be held.	27.12.2020 (Sunday)
(9)	Re-poll, if any.	29.12.2020 (Tuesday)
(10)	Timing of the poll.	Between 8.00 A.M. to 5.30 P.M
(11)	Date, time and place on which the votes polled shall be counted.	On 30.12.2020 at 8.00 A.M at the place(s) specified by the Deputy Commissioner concerned.
(12)	Date on which the election result shall be declared.	Immediately after the completion of counting.

2. The detail of wards, reserved seats and voters etc. of the municipalities where general elections shall be held, is as under:-

Municipality	No. of wards	Expected Polling Booths	Ward reserved for S.C.	Ward reserved for S.C.(W)	Ward reserved for B.C.	Ward reserved for Women	Voters			
							Male	Female	Trans-gender	Total
CORPORATION										
Ambala	20	200	1,2,7	11,14	4,18	6,9,12,17,20	97739	89385	07	187131
Panchkula	20	176	6,16	7,12	15,20	3,4,10,11,19	98323	87316	05	185644
Sonepat	20	234	2,17	16	1,6	4,10,11,13,20	132186	118583	-	250771
COUNCIL										
Rewari	31	96	3,24,28	27,30	5,20	1,4,9,12,14,16,22,25,26	55779	51433	02	107214
COMMITTEES										
Sampla (Rohtak)	15	15	8,9	5	1,2	3,6,12,14	7639	6738	--	14377
Dharuhera (Rewari)	17	18	4,6	14	11,12	1,2,3,10,17	12067	9773	01	21841
Ukalana Hisar)	13	14	10,11	9,12	2,13	3,5,6	7388	6296	--	13684
Total										780662

The seat of Mayor in Municipal Corporations and President in Municipal Council & Committees is reserved as under:-

Municipality	Reserved for
CORPORATION	
Ambala	Women
Panchkula	Unreserved
Sonepat	Unreserved
COUNCIL	
Rewari	B.C. (Women)
COMMITTEES	
Sampla (Rohtak),	S.C. (Women)
Dharuhera (Rewari)	Unreserved
Ukalana Hisar)	Unreserved

3. Dr. Singh further added that the seats of Chairpersons in the municipalities i.e. Mayor in Corporations and President in Council & Committees shall now be filled up through direct elections from the territorial constituencies/wards of the Municipal Corporations, Council and Committees concerned. The eligible voters of the constituencies/wards of the municipalities shall thus elect their Mayor and President by casting their votes, whereas earlier these seats were being filled up from amongst the elected members of the concerned municipality. However, the seats of Sr. Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Corporations and Vice President of the Council & Committees shall be filled up as per earlier practice i.e. through indirect election from amongst the elected members of the municipality concerned.

4. Dr. Singh also added that in the last general election of municipalities the position of wards, polling booths, voters and poll percentage (%) etc. was as under:-

Municipality	Last Election held on or newly constituted on	No. of wards	No. of Polling Booths	No. of Electors			Poll %
				Male	Female	Total	
CORPORATION							
Ambala	02.06.2013	20	274	145358	127628	272986	67.0
Panchkula	02.06.2013	20	231	123020	107197	230217	64.1
Sonepat	newly constituted on 06.07.2015	--	--	--	--	--	--
COUNCIL							
Rewari	10.02.2013	31	86	45860	40450	86310	76.0
COMMITTEES							
Sampla (Rohtak),	23.02.2014	15	15	6463	5438	11901	86.9
Dharuhera (Rewari)	25.05.2014	17	19	8858	6815	15673	78.7
Ukalana Hisar)	31.12.2014	13	13	5831	4740	10571	85.5

5. Dr. Singh further added that elaborate arrangements shall be made for the conduct of free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections. Adequate police force shall be deployed to maintain law and order at the polling stations and in sensitive and hyper sensitive areas for conducting the elections.

6. Dr. Singh also stated that the expenditure limit of the contesting candidates, contesting the election of the seat of Mayor & members of Municipal Corporation and President and Members of Municipal Council & Committee has been revised and is fixed as under:-

Municipality	Mayor		Member		President		Member	
	Previous	Revised	Previous	Revised	Previous	Revised	Previous	Revised
Corporation	20,00,000	22,00,000	5,00,000	5,50,000	--	--	--	--
Council	--	--	--	--	--	15,00,000	3,00,000	3,30,000
Committee	--	--	--	--	--	10,00,000	2,00,000	2,25,000

All the contesting candidates are required to maintain account of election expenditure and submit the same within 30 days from the date of declaration of

election result to the Deputy Commissioner or an officer authorized by the State Election Commission, failing which the defaulting candidate shall be liable to be disqualified for 5 years. After the last general election of these municipalities (except Sonapat) total 122 contested candidates have been disqualified by the Commission for non submission of election expenditure statements within a stipulated time period.

7. Dr. Singh further stated that the election of municipalities shall be conducted by the use of EVMs. The photographs of the contesting candidates shall be got printed on the ballot papers alongwith other particulars to be displayed on the balloting unit of EVMs. The photograph of the candidate shall be printed in the panel and shall appear on the right side of the name in between the name and symbol of the candidate. The ballot paper for Mayor & President shall be of pink colour and for members it shall be of white colour.

8. Dr. Singh further added that NOTA (None of the above) option will be used in these elections, so that voters, who come to the polling stations and decide not to vote for any candidate in fray, may be able to exercise their right of not to vote while maintaining their right of secrecy. The salient features of the NOTA are as under:-

- i). NOTA is to be treated as a "Fictional Electoral Candidate" while declaring the election results.
- ii). If in election, all the contesting candidates individually receive lesser votes than the 'Fictional Electoral Candidate' i.e. NOTA, then none of the contesting candidate will be declared as elected and fresh election shall be held for that post.
- iii). In case contesting candidate and the 'Fictional Electoral Candidate' i.e. NOTA receive equal valid votes; then the contesting candidate (not NOTA) shall be declared as elected.
- iv). Fresh election will start from nomination stage itself.

Dr. Singh further clarified that.-

- i). No candidate shall be eligible to file his nomination if he was a contesting candidate in first election in which his votes were less than 'Fictional Electoral Candidate' i.e. NOTA.
- ii) If in re-election, NOTA again get highest votes, then no further election shall be held and contesting candidate with highest votes (excluding NOTA) shall be declared as elected.

9. The Model code of conduct in respect of these municipal elections shall come into force from today i.e. 03.12.2020. No Officer/Official connected with the election work shall be transferred till the completion of election process.

10. Dr. Singh further apprised that the State Election Commission, has not prepared the electoral roll of the above said municipalities, only the electors of the Vidhan Sabha electoral roll published by the Election Commission of India on 25.09.2020 with reference to 1st January, 2020 as qualifying date, have been divided into the wards of the municipalities. It is also come to the notice of the State Election Commission that some more electors have been included in the Vidhan Sabha electoral roll w.e.f.25.09.2020 to 15.11.2020; data of the same has been obtained from the Chief Electoral Officer, Haryana and provided to the Deputy Commissioners for including these electors into the relevant wards of municipalities.

Dr. Singh further added that if any person get his name entered in the electoral roll Vidhan Sabha up to the 1st day of nomination of the municipality he would be allowed to include his name in the municipality roll provided that he has submitted his application in the form "A" to the Deputy Commissioner, concerned.

11. Dr. Singh further stated that for the conduct of free, fair and peaceful elections, the State Election Commission shall appoint one senior IAS Officer as Election Observer, one senior IPS Officer as Police Observer for the maintenance of Law and Order and one senior Officer of Excise and Taxation Department as Expenditure Observer at Municipal Corporation, Ambala, Panchkula & Sonapat and Municipal Council, Rewari. These observers shall keep reporting to the Commission from time to time.

12. Dr. Singh also stated that State Election Commission shall 1st time start to get nomination through online on trial basis at Panchkula only. The link in this respect shall be available on Commission's website i.e. www.secharyana.gov.in on the first day of nomination i.e. 11.12.2020. Except this, e-Dashboard shall also be available at the website with all the information about the candidates' particulars, nominations, results etc.

13. Dr. Singh further stated that for the voter's awareness, the Commission has hosted video clips in Commission's website. The Commission in this respect shall also release advertisements in the local newspapers and electronic media i.e. radio and local t.v. channels, from time to time.

14. Dr. Singh also added that after onset of COVID-19 pandemic in India, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and State Governments are issuing guidelines from time to time. The State

Election Commission, Haryana after considering the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India and views/suggestions received from various State Election Commissions have framed the broad guidelines for the safety of general public to be followed during local bodies (Municipal and Panchayat) General/Bye-elections and has sent the same to all the Deputy Commissioners for strict compliance. Some of the major guidelines to be followed at the time of polling are as under:-

- 1) Mandatory sanitization of Polling Station, preferably, a day before the poll.
- 2) Every person involved on election activity and come for casting vote shall wear face mask.
- 3) Those electors who are not carrying the mask shall be provided masks at the entry point of polling station.
- 4) Thermal Scanning of all persons shall be made at the entry point of polling station.
- 5) Sanitizers shall be kept inside the booth at appropriate locations with clear direction for the use by voters.
- 6) Sanitizer, soap and water shall be made available at the polling station.
- 7) Hand gloves shall be provided to the voter, for signing on the voter register and pressing button of EVM for voting.
- 8) COVID-19 patients who are quarantined will be allowed to cast their vote at the last hour of the poll day at the irrespective Polling Stations, under the supervision of health authorities, strictly following COVID-19 related preventive measures. Sector Magistrates shall coordinate this in their allocated polling stations.

The Deputy Commissioners have also been authorised to issue any further guideline for the safety of general public during election process by taking into account local conditions, If required.

15. Dr. Singh finally appealed to the voters to participate in the elections to elect the members of municipalities for strengthening the democracy at grass root level.