

**CIRCULAR NO. 11**

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH  
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (ELECTIONS F) DEPARTMENT

Memo No.532/Elections F/2007-209

Dated: 24.03.2007

Sub:- Elections – A.P. Legislative Council - Elections to Graduates Teachers Constituencies – Counting of Votes certain instructions – Issued.

Ref:- From the Collector & DEO Visakhapatnam, Rc.No.620/2007 H1, dt.20-3-2007.

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The following instructions are reiterated for scrupulous compliance by all the Returning Officers in connection with the counting of votes for Graduates' and Teachers Constituencies to be held on 25.03.2007.

1. The Returning Officers shall before the commencement of counting read out the provisions of Section 128 of the ROP Act 1951 to such persons as may be present. **(Rule 54 of Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961)**
2. Once the counting process starts, no person shall be allowed to enter or leave the counting hall without the permission of the Returning Officer. Admission to the Counting Hall as per Rule 53 of Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 is restricted to counting staff, candidates, election agents and counting agents, as well as ECI authorized persons. Any person who disobeys the lawful directions of the Returning Officer can be sent out of the counting hall to ensure that the counting proceeds in a disciplined, orderly and business like manner. The Returning Officer can even take the assistance of a Police Officer for any such purpose **(Rule 53(4), Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961)**. No smoking is permitted inside any counting hall. Mobile Phones are also not allowed inside any counting hall, and also within the area cordoned off by the police to regulate the entry of persons to counting centers.
3. Only those representatives of media who are authorized by the Election Commission of India and carrying valid special permits for this purpose are to be allowed into the counting hall. However, media personnel cannot enter the counting hall at all times on the authority of the above permits. To see that the counting process is not disturbed by the frequent visits of the media personnel, particularly, the camera teams of the news agencies and television channels, only limited coverage of short duration by manageable audio visual groups should be allowed from time to time. However, all information required by the media for the dissemination of the latest news giving out trends and results of the counting should be made available to them at the media centers, which are to be set up by the Returning Officers near each counting halls.

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4. Rule 60 of Conduct of Election Rules 1961 says that the Returning Officer shall, as far as practicable, proceed continuously with the counting and shall, during any intervals when the counting has to be suspended, keep the ballot papers, packets and all other papers relating to the elections sealed with his own seal and the seals of such candidates or election agents as may desire to affix their seals and take sufficient precaution for their safe custody during such intervals.

Thus counting can be suspended only where it is interrupted or obstructed by any violence or open riot or because of any natural calamity or where some reference has been made to the Election Commission seeking its direction on some particular point or issue which arose during the course of counting. During any such interval when the counting has to be suspended, all precautions have to be taken for the safe custody of ballot boxes, ballot papers and all connected records. All candidates and their agents have also to be extended all facilities to keep a vigil over these boxes and records, and affix their seals thereon, if so desired by them.

If the counting proceeds for very long hours, the Returning Officer can consider appointing two sets of counting personnel in the interest of proper and efficient counting. The counting personnel can be changed after completion of a particular round so that the same set of counting personnel complete a particular round. If the need arises to change counting personnel, it should be ensured that all requests for reexamination or recount of votes are satisfactorily dealt with prior to doing so.

V.BHASKAR,  
CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER &  
PRL.SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To  
All the Returning Officers of A.P.Legislative Council Graduates' and Teachers"  
Constituencies in the State Through District Election Officers.

//Forwarded : By Order//

SECTION OFFICER