

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/46/2024

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Press Note

ECI cracks down on anonymous political hoardings; directs disclosure of publishers and printers for traceability and accountability

Disclosure of publishers' identity regulates accounting of campaign financing

Authorities to ensure strict adherence to provisions of Section 127A of Representation of the People Act, 1951

Sending a strong message, the Election Commission of India today has directed all States/UTs mandating the clear identification of printer and publisher on printed election-related material including hoardings, ensuring accountability and transparency in campaign communications. The decision was taken by the Commission consisting of Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar, and Election Commissioners Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu after representations were received in the Commission stating that in hoarding spaces controlled by Municipal authorities, hoardings without the identity of the printer or publisher have been noticed. (Link of letter to States/UTs: <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJP1KivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2Fzye%2BFD1PRcKxhOuiYZ2Ra3yvClfjrXZzQxNV8nOMcYrTC7LPp3m4XGwdTSJzL%2BVp1CSv%2B1yJkuMeCkTzY9fhBvw%3D%3D>)

Section 127A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, unequivocally prohibits the printing or publishing of election pamphlets, posters, placards, or banners without prominently displaying the name and address of the printer and publisher. This requirement of disclosing the identity of publishers serves as a cornerstone for regulating campaign financing and fixing of responsibility in case content is found unbecoming of the framework of Model Code of Conduct or the statutory provisions.

It may be recalled that CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar has highlighted addressing the issue of Misinformation as one of the challenges along with Money and Muscle power, for a level playing field. With this directive, the Commission now has put the accountability on printers, publishers, licensees/contractors of urban local bodies renting out outdoor advertising space for the political advertisements published on outdoor media. This is in continuation of the ECI recent advisory vide press note dated 02.04.2024 to editors of all newspapers to be cautious while publishing political advertisements in newspapers.

Attention of all stakeholders is also brought to the instructions issued by **Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)** dated **03.04.2024** to all its licensees and contractors on **political advertisements on Outdoor media of MCD**. The instructions, while allowing political ads for promotion of a party/candidate, prohibits any political advertisement given against a party or candidate. Any political ad released at the cost of exchequer regarding advertisement of a party/government in power is also prohibited. All political advertisements will be displayed only after certification/approval of the designated authority responsible for approving advertisement.



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