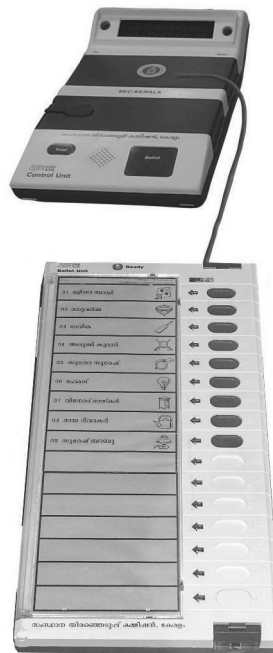


MANUAL FOR SINGLE POST ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES



STATE ELECTION COMMISSION

KERALA

2020

State Election Commission, Kerala

Manual For Single Post Electronic Voting Machines

(Used in Urban Areas)

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PREFACE

The Introduction of Electronic Voting Machines during the General Election 2005 has proved more advantages than the paper ballot system. A comprehensive Manual depicting the functions of the EVMs with the reference to the Kerala Municipality Act and Rules framed there under was adjudged the need of the hour.

This Manual was prepared based on the outcome of the discussions with the Field Level Officers, Technical Experts and vast research. The Manual contains all the essential information for the user to make use of the EVM. The manual includes a detailed description of the operation of the EVM, procedures to be adopted for the preparation of the EVMs for polling and the steps to be fulfilled before returning the EVMs to the authorities concerned after the poll.

I do expect that the officials handling the EVMs for the election in Urban Area will surely get an in-depth knowledge about Single Post EVM with the help of this Manual.

Thiruvananthapuram.
09.09.2020

V. BHASKARAN
STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONER

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Chapter - I

ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Kerala Municipality Act 1994 and Kerala Municipality (Conduct of Election) Rules, 1995 contain provisions for using EVMs in the election to the Municipalities.

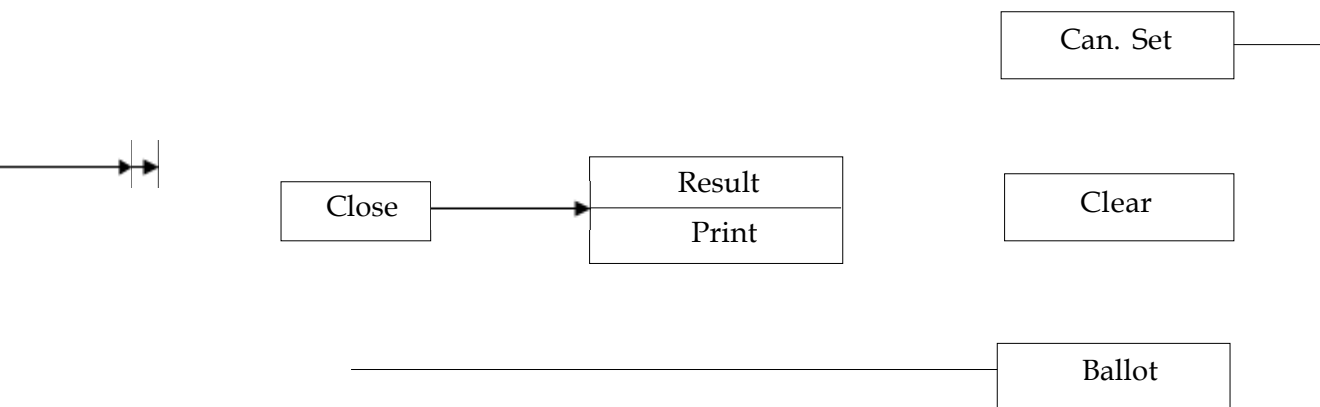
The Electronic Voting Machine operates on a 7.5 volts battery and can be used anywhere and under any conditions. It is tamperproof, error-free and easy to operate. This Electronic Voting machine consists of two units, namely, one Control Unit and one Ballot Unit. These two units are interconnected, when the voting machine is put in operation, by means of a cable, one end of which is permanently attached to the Ballot Unit. Both the units of the machine are supplied in separate carrying cases which are easily portable.

In the Ballot Unit, there is provision for display of the ballot paper (label) containing the particulars of the election, the serial numbers and names of contesting candidates and the symbols allotted to them. A Blue button is provided against the name of each candidate. By pressing this blue button, the voter can record his vote in favour of the candidate of his choice. Alongside of the said button, there is also a lamp for each candidate. This lamp will glow red when the vote is recorded. Simultaneously a beep sound will also be heard. One Ballot Unit caters upto 16 candidates.

One Control Unit can record the votes polled for a maximum of 64 candidates. For this purpose four Ballot Units linked together are connected with one Control Unit. On the top most portion of the Control Unit, there is a provision for displaying various information and data recorded in the machine, like the number of contesting candidates, total number of votes polled, votes polled for each candidate, etc are recorded. This portion is called, the 'Display Section' of the Control Unit. Below the display section, there is a

compartment for fixing the battery, which runs the machine. On the right side of this compartment, there is another compartment in which there is a button for candidate setting in the particular election. This button is called the 'Cand Set' button and the whole section of the Control Unit containing these two compartments is called the 'Cand Set Section'. Below the cand set section is the 'Result Section' of the Control Unit. This section contains (i) 'Close' button on the left side, for closing the poll, (ii) two buttons in the middle - 'Result' & Print and (iii) 'Clear' button on the right side, for clearing the data recorded in the machine, when the data is no more required. In the lower portion of the Control Unit, there are two buttons - one marked 'Ballot' and other marked 'Total'. By pressing the 'Ballot' button, the Ballot Unit becomes ready to record the vote and by pressing the 'Total' button, the total number of voters voted up to that stage (but without the candidate-wise break up) can be ascertained. This section is known as the 'Ballot Section' of the Control Unit.

The process flow chart of the machine is as follows.



Chapter - II

FIRST LEVEL CHECKING (FLC) OF EVM

First Level Checking of EVM is the technical and physical examination of the EVMs by the engineers of the ECIL. EVM that passes FLC alone should be provided for an election.

2.1 ASSESSMENT AND REQUIREMENT OF EVMs

The Returning Officers of the respective wards will analyze and finalize the requirement of EVM and additional ballot units or control units after list of contesting candidates are finalized (Form No. 6). The formula for requisition is as follows:

Sl No.	Number of Candidates	EVMS Required	
		CU	BU
1	up to 16	1	1
2	from 17 to 32	1	2
3	from 33 to 48	1	3
4	from 49 to 64	1	4

The number of polling stations in Municipality/Corporation etc will be assessed and each polling station will be assigned one set of EVM, 20% of the total EVMs will be kept as reserve and 5% will be used for training.

2.2 Commissioning of EVMs for the Election

The Returning Officer shall, at least one week before the date of preparation of the EVMs, give notice to each candidate or his election agent intimating him the place or places where the machines will be prepared and the date and time at which such preparation will commence. The candidate/ his election agent shall be intimated regarding the number of representatives that every candidate will be permitted to bring with him at the aforesaid place or places. This will again depend on the number of machines to be

prepared for poll.

If for any reason, none of the candidates or their agents is present on the date and time given in the notice sent to them, the process shall not be postponed. If any candidate/his election agent or person duly authorized by the candidate in writing comes late, he will also be allowed to witness the process from there onwards.

When the candidates and their agents are present, the procedure to be followed for preparing the EVMs should be explained. They will be allowed to inspect the control units and balloting units during the process of the preparation.

2.3 Preparation of the EVMs

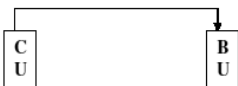
Each EVM has to be prepared at the Returning Officer's level as follows:

1. Arrange all the Control Units (CU) and Ballot Units (BU) required for the polling station.
2. Take out the BU from the carrying case.
3. Paste the sticker (Annexure - I) on the back side of CUs and BUs and enter the EVM number.
4. Enter the serial number of the BU in the register in Annexure - III.
5. Fill up the required details on the four (4) address tags for each BU. These tags are required at the time of the Returning Officers (RO) sealing, which are to be placed as follows:
 - A tag for sealing the Ballot label Screen after inserting Ballot Label
 - A tag for sealing the BU's at the right top side after closing.
 - A tag for sealing the BU's at the right bottom side after closing.
 - A tag on the carrying case after placing the BU. (This may not be sealed but only tied to one corner hole of the carrying case using a thread.)
6. Fill up the details on all the address tags.
7. Place the address tags for each polling station near the corresponding BU.
8. Place the BU in face up position on the table.
9. Open the top cover of the BU.
10. Set the slide switch if there is more than one BU at the appropriate position ie 1 for 1st BU, 2 for 2nd BU, 3 for 3rd BU and 4 for 4th BU as the case may be, according to the number of such BU which may be used depending upon the number of candidates and the sequence in which they are to be used.
11. Open the transparent acrylic Ballot Label Screen.

12. Place the Ballot Label (this should already be signed on the reverse by the RO) under the transparent acrylic cover and ensure that the band between the name of candidates on the Ballot Label is in a line with the groove between the candidate buttons on the BU.
13. Close and press the Ballot Label screen firmly to secure the Label underneath the screen. Make sure that the position of the Ballot Label is not changed while closing the acrylic cover.
14. Pass a thread of approximately one metre length through the two holes on the screen provided for the purpose inside the top cover of the Ballot Unit. Tie one address tag to the thread and seal the knot.
15. Close the top cover of the Ballot Unit.
16. Affix the seals on the address tags placed at the right top and right bottom covers of the BU.
17. Unmask all the buttons in which candidates are assigned and mask all the unused buttons. In a Ballot Unit there are 16 candidate buttons.
18. Close the transparent acrylic Balloting Screen.
19. Take out the Control Unit (CU) from its carrying case and place it on the right side of the corresponding BU's.
20. Enter the serial number of the CU in the register in Annexure-III.
21. Fill up required details on three (3) address tags for the CU. The three tags are required at the same time of sealing, which are placed as follows:
 - A tag for sealing the Candidate Set inner section.
 - A tag for sealing the Candidate Set outer section and
 - A tag on the carrying case. (This may not be sealed but only tied on the carrying case using thread).
22. Fill up the details on the address tags.
23. Place the address tags for each polling station near the corresponding CU. Inter connect the BU with the CU as per pairing which is pictured below:

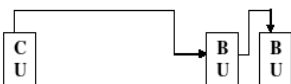
24. Place a new Power Pack in the Candidate Set Section in the CU. Ensure that the Power Pack is pressed tight.
25. Switch ON the power switch present in the rear compartment of the CU.
26. Clear off all previous data by pressing "Clear" button in the Result section following

CANDIDATES 16 OR LESS THAN 16



EVM IS ON ECI

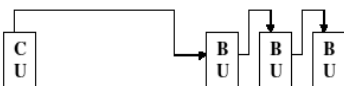
CANDIDATES 17 OR LESS THAN 32



DTE 24 - 06 - 20 TME 10 - 55 - 28

SL NO - N 31925

CANDIDATES 33 OR LESS THAN 48



CANDIDATES 16

BATTERY HIGH

SET CANDIDATE

vs GREEN, press the Cand. Set' button in the candidate set display panel in the display section will now flash "SET

t flashing on the display panel on the Control Unit, Press the Candidate's button against the last contesting Candidate in Ballot Unit. For

example, if there are 9 contesting candidates, press the 9th candidate's button. On that button being pressed, the display panel will stop flashing the letters "SET Candidate - -". Instead, the display panel will start displaying "CANDIDATES 9". The machines is set for 9 contesting candidates.

29. Switch OFF the CU (IMPORTANT).
30. Disconnect the BU from the CU and close the rear cover of the CU.
31. Close and wax seal the Candidate Set Section of the CU with an Address Tag.
32. Put a long thread (about 1 meter) through the two inner holes of the ballot label Acrylic screen.
33. Attach an address tag to the long thread and position it towards the bottom side by putting another hole in the address tag.
34. Put a knot at the address tag and affix the RO's seal.
35. Close the BU's top cover.
36. Affix the seals on the address tags placed at the right top and right bottom covers of the BU.
37. The Pink Paper Seal(BU) should be pasted around the lower part of the BU. Details of the serial number should be entered in the register for candidate setting for pink paper seal. (Annexure II).
38. Arrange the interconnecting cable of the BU in the proper fold with the rubber band.
39. Place the BU inside its carrying case.
40. Place the CU inside its carrying case.
41. Tie the respective address tags on the carrying cases with threads. They are ready for transportation to the Polling Station.

Note: 1. PUT A CARDBOARD WHILE SEALING WITH THE LAC (Wax). SO AS TO AVOID SPILLING OF MOLTEN WAX ON THE MACHINE.

2. PUT CELLOTAPE FOR FIXING THE ADDRESS TAGS PROPERLY.

2.4 Safe Preservation of Prepared Voting Machines

All the voting machines which have been prepared for use at the election, including the reserve machines, should be kept and preserved in the safe custody in a strong room under double lock which should be sealed with the seal of the Returning Officer. The candidates and their agents may also be permitted to put their seals on the lock if they so desire.

The strong room should be opened only on the appointed date and time when the machines are to be supplied to the polling parties before they leave for their polling stations. All the contesting candidates or their election agents should be given a notice in writing of

such as date and time of opening of the strong room. A proper log book should be maintained giving details of closing and opening of the strong room (Form N-23).

If for any emergent or unavoidable reason, it becomes necessary to open the strong room before the appointed date and time, RO should send for the candidate or their authorised representative and open the room in their presence. The room should be again closed and sealed immediately after the purpose for which it was opened. Details of such opening and closing should also be accurately and fully reflected in the above mentioned log book (Form N.23).

The strong room should be kept fully guarded at all times under the charge of a senior Officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police.

2.5 Maintenance of records of voting machines

Returning Officers should maintain complete record of all the control units and ballot units used at the election. That record should show clearly the number of control units and ballot units used at each polling station along with the serial numbers of each such unit. The record should also show the number of control units and ballot units along with their serial numbers which have been prepared for use and kept in reserve. If any of such control units or ballot units have been put to use, a complete record as to where each such unit was used, should be properly maintained. It should also contain reasons why the use of such reserve unit became necessary. EVMs used for training and demonstration purposes are not to be used for poll without conducting FLC.

For the above purpose of maintaining a complete record of the voting machines, a Register should be kept in Annexure -IV.

2.6 Supply of voting machines to polling parties

The voting machines should be supplied to the Presiding Officer against a proper receipt. For this purpose, RO should keep a separate register showing the number and name of the polling station, the name of the Presiding Officer and serial numbers of Control Unit and Ballot Unit(s) supplied to him and his full signature is obtained in token of having received the same (Annexure - III).

That register should have further provision for keeping proper account of the machines received back from the Presiding Officer. The Officer who receives the machines from the Presiding Officer after the poll should clearly note down the serial numbers of the Control Unit, Ballot Unit(s) and put his signature as token of having received the same. (Annexure - III).

If any machine is received back in a damaged condition, a full record of each such machine should be maintained.

2.7 Designing of Labels for Voting Machines

On every Ballot Unit, a Ballot Label (Ballot Paper) shall be displayed in the space meant thereof. The said Ballot Label shall be in the following form and language(s):-

- a. The total length of the Ballot Label will be 460 mm and its width shall be 140 mm.
- b. At the top of the ballot label, there shall be a space provided for indicating the particulars of the elections such as code numbers and the name of the constituency, of the size 12.7 mm x 140 mm.
- c. In the space so provided, on the top left hand corner, the serial number of the ballot label shall be printed. On the top right hand corner, the sheet number shall be printed if the Ballot Label is printed on more than one sheet, where the number of contesting candidates exceeds 16. The particulars of the election shall also be printed in the said space. These particulars will contain the serial number and name of the Constituency. Constituency, as the case may be, the year of election and the nature of election and details of reservation, if any, shall be printed.
- d. Below the space provided at the top for printing the particulars of the election, there shall be a thick black line of 2.1 mm.
- e. Below this line, there shall be printed the serial number of each contesting candidate, his name and the symbol allotted to him, in a separate panel for each candidate.
- f. The size of the panel for each contesting candidate shall be 25.4 mm x 140 mm.
- g. The names of the contesting candidates shall be arranged on the Ballot Label in the same order in which their names appear in the list of contesting candidates. (Form No.6)
- h. If the number of contesting candidates exceeds 16 at any level, the ballot label shall be printed on two sheets of the above mentioned size and dimensions. If the number of candidates exceeds 32, on three sheets and if the number of contesting candidates exceeds 48, on four sheets.
- i. On each such sheet, in the space provided for indicating the particulars of the election, its number shall be indicated in bold figures, e.g. 1/2, 2/2 .
- j. The names of the contesting candidates shall be printed in the same language or languages and the order in which the list of contesting candidate has been prepared (Form 6). The serial number of the candidate shall be indicated in the international form of Indian numerals.

- k. Serial number and the name of the candidate panel shall be printed on the left hand side and his/her symbol on the right hand side in the space meant for him/her.

2.8 Precautions for Printing of Labels

The Ballot Labels shall be printed in such a way that after fixing the Ballot Label on the Ballot Unit in the space provided for the purpose, dividing line drawn below the space in which the particulars of election are printed and the dividing lines below the panel of each candidate shall be in exact alignment with the corresponding grooves or lines engraved on the Ballot Unit. Utmost care will, therefore, have to be taken while printing the Ballot Labels and to ensure that the Ballot Label have been correctly printed. The Ballot Unit may be shown to the technicians of the printing press if necessary. They may be asked to take the exact measurements of the space meant for printing the particulars of election and the panels of candidates and the thickness of the dividing lines so that the Ballot Labels are printed in exact alignment.

The Ballot Labels which are to be fixed on the Ballot Units, should not be stitched into bundles.

2.9 Assessment of Requirement of Labels

The number of Ballot Labels to be printed depends upon the number of polling stations to be set up, number of voting machines to be used including reserve machines and the number of Ballot Labels to be supplied to each polling station for using as tendered ballot papers. The total requirement of ballot papers to be printed thus has to be made on the following basis:-

- (i) One Label (Ballot) shall be required for display on each Ballot Unit. Therefore, the number of Ballot Labels required for this purpose will be equal to the number of Ballot Units to be used, including the reserve machines, in the constituency.

16 candidates : 1 label (one page)

17-32 Candidates : 2 labels (two pages)

As such 5 ballot labels are to be provided for each level in a polling station.

- (ii) The Presiding Officer shall cancel one Ballot Label and keep it in the cover along with the ballot paper account in Form 24 A.
- (iii) Each polling station may be supplied with fifteen Ballot Labels to be used, if necessary, as tendered ballot papers. The total requirement of Ballot Labels to be supplied to the polling stations for use as tendered ballot papers shall accordingly be worked out depending upon the number of polling stations in the constituency.
- (iv) In addition to the total requirement of Ballot Labels worked out in accordance with

Paragraphs (i) and (ii) above, 25% of the above number may be printed as extra Ballot Labels to meet the contingencies, like mutilation at the time of fixing the Ballot Labels in the Ballot Units, defective Ballot Labels, supply of additional tendered ballot papers to the polling stations, if necessary, through the Sectoral Officers.

2.10 Arrangements for Printing of Ballot Labels

The arrangements for printing of Ballot Labels required for the constituency will be made by the State Election Commission. The Government Press where the Ballot Labels to be printed will be intimated in due course. Requisition has to be sent to the press concerned, proof verification, scrutiny, printing and transportation of the required ballot paper have to be done in time by the RO.

Special arrangements should be made to collect the Ballot Labels from the Printing Press immediately after the same have been printed. The arrangements for the transport of Ballot Labels should be done under proper security. The Ballot Labels shall be kept under lock and seal in the treasury or as directed by the DEO till it is required for the purpose of the poll.

2.11 Safe Custody of Undistributed Ballot Labels

Some Ballot Labels may remain undistributed with RO after the same have been fixed on the Ballot Units of the voting machines and supplied to the polling stations for use as tendered Ballot Papers. Such undistributed Ballot Labels should be kept by RO for supply to any polling stations as may be required on the day of poll. Proper safeguards must be taken to ensure that such undistributed Ballot Labels remain either in the custody of the RO or of the Assistant Returning Officers.

2.12 Tendered Ballot Papers (Rule 35 E of Conduct of Election Rules)

Rule 35 E provides that the tendered Ballot Paper shall be of such design and the particular of that Ballot Paper shall be in such language or languages as the Commission may specify.

The Commission, therefore, specifies that the Tendered Ballot Paper and Postal Ballot Paper shall be of the same design and shall be printed in the same language or languages as the Ballot Label used for display on the Ballot Unit. In other words, the Ballot Labels to be used on the Ballot Unit and the Tendered Ballot Papers and Postal Ballot Papers shall be identical. But the Ballot Labels to be used in the Electronic Voting Machine and the Tendered Ballot Paper shall be printed without counterfoils and the words "Tendered Ballot Paper" shall be stamped or written on the back of the each Ballot Paper to be used as Tendered Ballot Paper.

Chapter - III

POLL DAY

3.1 Preliminary

The Presiding Officer at the polling station should acquaint himself with the latest position of the rules and procedures prescribed for the conduct of poll using voting machines. The RO should also thoroughly familiarize with each step to be taken in the conduct of poll at the polling station, and with the operation of voting machine. A slight mistake or lapse or wrong application of the law or rules or inadequate knowledge of various functions of the voting machine may vitiate the poll at the polling station.

3.2 Polling Materials Required for Voting Machines

A list of various items of polling materials which will be required for use at polling stations where voting machines are used is given at Form N-L1 check list (Refer Hand Book of Returning Officer/Presiding Officer)

3.3 Voting Compartment

Voters have to cast their vote in secrecy and for that purpose, the Ballot Units are required to be kept in Voting Compartments. The Voting Compartment has its three sides covered. The Ballot Units are to be placed inside the Voting Compartment on a Table. The Ballot Units are to be placed in such a way that voters do not find any difficulty in casting their votes. The connecting Cable, which is permanently attached to the Ballot Unit, has to come out from the back portion of the Voting Compartment through an aperture cut out at the bottom of back portion of the Voting Compartment. This aperture should be wide enough so that that portion of the Ballot Unit through which the Cable comes out is visible from outside. This is necessary to keep a watch that no voter tries to tamper or damage the Cable while inside the Voting Compartment. However, this aperture in the Voting Compartment should not be too wide as to violate the secrecy of voting. For this purpose, it must be ensured that Voting Compartment is not near the window or the door of the

polling station. It must be ensured that the voting compartment is made of corrugated cardboard and is of the prescribed dimension and has been placed away from the window/door. Adequate lighting should be provided.

3.4 Checking Before Mock Poll

Before an EVM is used at the polling station for poll, its Control Unit needs to be prepared further by taking the following steps in the presence of the candidates/their agents. The Presiding Officer should start the preparations about an hour before the time fixed for the commencement of the poll. If any polling agent is not present, the preparations by the Presiding Officer should not be postponed so as to await the arrival of the polling agent. If any polling agent turns up late there is no need to do the preparations again. Any polling agent arriving late can watch subsequent stages of preparation only.

3.5 Checking of Ballot Unit

The Ballot Unit has already been duly prepared in all respects at the RO's level and as such the Presiding Officer is not required to do anything more at the polling station on the day of poll, except that its interconnecting cable plugged carefully into the control unit.

However, the Presiding Officer should see that –

- i. The Ballot Labels are properly fixed in the ballot display panels under the ballot label screen; and
- ii. The two seals affixed at the top and bottom portion on the right hand side of each Ballot Unit are intact.
- iii. Pink paper seal is fixed at the lower most portion of the BU in such a manner that no candidate's button or candidate's name or symbol is hidden by the seal.
- iv. The entire length of the cable connecting the Ballot Unit to the Control Unit should be visible to the polling agents.

3.6 Checking the Control Unit

The Presiding Officer will check whether the seal put by the Returning Officer on the 'Candidate Set Section' on the left side of the Control Unit is intact.

The following preparations are then to be made by PO on the Control Unit:

3.7 Connecting the Control Unit with the Ballot Unit

- a) Presiding Officer should plug the interconnecting cable of the first Ballot Unit into the socket provided for the purpose in the rear compartment of the Control Unit. Inter connecting cable of the IInd BU shall be connected to the socket provided in the Ist BU.
- b) The 'Power' switch provided in the same compartment of the Control Unit should then be put to 'ON' position, whereupon there will be a beep sound and the 'ON' lamp on the display section of the Control Unit will glow green.
- c) Close the rear compartment after performing the functions at (a) and (b) above
- d) Open the cover of the Result section by pressing slightly inwards the latch provided on the left side.
- e) The door of the inner compartment of the result section should be opened by inserting the thumb and a finger through the two apertures above the 'Result' and 'Print' buttons and then pressing the inner latches simultaneously, slightly inwards. (In no case, this inner door should be forced open without releasing the latches in the manner described above, to avoid any damage to this most vital compartment).
- f) After opening the inner compartment, 'CLEAR' button is visible. 'CLEAR' button is used to clear the data and make the votes polled (data) to all the candidates to 0. The clearing operation is initiated on pressing this button. This operation takes about 15 seconds with "Beep" sound.

3.8 Mock Poll

After displaying that no votes are recorded in the machine, a mock poll should be held by recording some votes. For that purpose, perform the following operations :-

- a) Press the 'Ballot' button on the ballot section of the Control Unit. On pressing the 'Ballot' button, 'Busy' lamp in the display section will glow RED. Simultaneously, the 'Ready' lamp on the Ballot Unit will start glowing 'GREEN'.
- b) Ask any polling agent to vote for candidates of his choice, by pressing the candidate button on BUs. The corresponding arrow lamp adjacent to the button glows 'RED', and a long beep sound will also be heard.
- c) After completion of voting, the GREEN 'Ready' lamp and the RED light in the candidate's lamp of BU, RED busy lamp of CU and the beep sound will go off simultaneously. This will be the indication that the voter's choice has been recorded in the Control Unit and the machine is now ready to receive next vote.
- d) Repeat the process explained in the preceding paras (a), (b) and (c) for voting by

other polling agents. Keep an account of the votes so recorded in respect of each candidate.

- e) When the votes are being so recorded, press the “Total” button on the ballot section to verify at any time that the total number of voters who voted till then as recorded in the machine tally with the number of mock votes as recorded manually.

Note: ‘Total’ button can be pressed any number of times during the poll, while the ‘Busy’ lamp in the Display Section is off i.e., when the system is idle.

- f) At the end of mock poll, press the ‘Close’ button in the Result section. On the ‘Close’ button being so pressed, the Display Panel in the Display Section will show the details of votes polled.
- g) Now press the button ‘Result’ in the Result section. The display will start showing results.

Once the candidates and/or their agents are satisfied with the result, the EVM has to be cleared before the actual polling. For this press the ‘CLEAR’ button. After displaying ‘DELETING’ the EVM will display the votes to show that all the votes recorded in the EVM are cleared. Utmost care should be taken to see that the votes recorded during mock poll are cleared before proceeding to actual poll.

Now switch off the Control Unit.

3.9 Declaration by the Presiding Officer before Commencement of the Poll

In order to ensure free and fair election, the Presiding Officer should carry out the following procedure scrupulously before commencement of the actual poll;

- i. Demonstrate to the polling agents and others present -
 - a. by holding a mock poll that the voting machine is in perfect working order and that no vote is already recorded therein;
 - b. that the marked copy of the electoral roll to be used in the poll does not contain any marks other than indication of Postal Ballot (PB)
 - c. that the Register of Votes (Form 21 A) to be used in the poll does not contain any entry in respect of any elector;
- ii. Affix Presiding Officer’s signature on the Special Tag, Strip Seal and Green Paper Seal used for securing the Result Section of Control Unit of the voting machine and obtain thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and desirous of affixing the same.

- iii. Read out the pre-printed serial numbers of the Special Tag, Strip Seal and Green Paper Seal and ask the candidates/polling agents present, to note down the serial numbers.

A declaration, in this regard, prescribed by the Commission in **Part-I of Form N-10 A** should be signed by the Presiding Officer. He should also obtain thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and are willing to affix the same. If any polling agent declines to affix his signature on the declaration, the Presiding Officer should record the name of such polling agent in that declaration.

Chapter - IV

ACTUAL POLL

4.1 Fixing the Green Paper seal and closing of inner compartment:

These seals have been printed specially on security Paper which are serially numbered. On the white surface of the paper seal projecting outwards, the Presiding Officer should affix his signature in full immediately below the serial number of the seal. It shall also be got signed by the candidates/polling agents who are present and desirous of putting their signatures. Note down the serial number of the paper seal used and also allow the candidates/polling agents present to note down the serial numbers.

4.2 Sealing Process of Green Paper Seal and ABCD Strip Seal

- i. Keeping the Outer Door and Inner Door of the Result Section of the Control Unit in wide open position, insert the Green Paper Seal through the Inner Door frame with the white side of the seal upside and the arrow thereon pointing towards the Display Section.
- ii. Fine tune the alignment of the Green Paper Seal so that dotted line on the white side of the seal aligns with the upper edge of the outer door, when the two doors are in closed position. After the alignment, the Outer Door may be opened and Inner Door be sealed by passing a twine thread through the two holes provided for the purpose on the left side of the Inner Door and tie a knot. Then pass the loose ends of the twine thread through the hole in the Special Tag and put a knot. Seal the knot on the Special Tag with the wax seal of the Presiding Officer.
- iii. After sealing, adjust the Special Tag over the Close button and fit the tag in the "Close" button compartment. Care is to be taken such that 'Close' button is easily accessible for operation.

- iv. Close the Outer Door and Result Section and allow the Green Paper seal to project out.
- v. Seal the outer door with an Address Tag.
- vi. Fold the lower end of the Green Paper Seal inwards/upwards. Then take the ABCD Strip Seal and after removing the wax paper from A, paste A on the Strip Seal over the A on the Green Paper Seal.
- vii. Remove the wax paper from B on the Strip Seal and fold the Strip Seal towards the left over the Green Paper Seal so that B on the Strip Seal is pasted over B on the Green Paper Seal and C of the Strip Seal is visible on the top side.
- viii. After removing wax paper from C on Strip Seal, fold the upper end of the Green Paper Seal downwards/inwards and stick C on the Green Paper Seal over C on the Strip Seal.
- ix. Run the Strip Seal around the Control Unit starting leftwards and on reaching the D on Green Paper Seal, remove the wax paper from D on the Strip Seal and fix it over D on the Green Paper Seal, in such a way that the Strip Seal does not block the Close button cap and serial numbers as well as the emblem of the Commission on both seals are clearly visible. Presiding Officer should put his signature on the space provided for the authentication on the Strip Seal. He should also allow the polling agents desirous to affix his signature. On completion of the affixation of these seals, the EVM is ready in all respects for use in actual poll. Switch ON the Control Unit.
- x. Before commencing the poll place the Ballot Unit inside the voting compartment. This compartment should be located at a sufficient distance from the table of the Polling Officer where the Control Unit shall be kept and operated. The Interconnecting Cable between the Ballot Unit and the Control Unit has the length of approximately five meters. Therefore, the voting compartment should be reasonably distanced. Also, the cable should be so routed that it does not obstruct the movement of the voters inside the polling station and they will not trip or tread over it. Also, the cable may be tied to one of the table legs at Control Unit side as well as Ballot Unit side.

4.3 Procedure During Poll

The Polling shall commence at the hour fixed for such commencement. **Before proceeding to Poll, Press the 'Total' button and ensure that the total displayed is zero.** After all procedural requirements relating to identification of voter, application of indelible

ink on his/her forefinger and obtaining his/her signature/thumb impression in the register of votes have been completed with regard to the first voter, the voter concerned has to be allowed for recording his vote. Press the 'Ballot' button on ballot section of the Control Unit which would make the Ballot Unit ready for casting of the vote.

Repeat the above procedure every time the next voter is to be allowed to cast his / her vote. It should be ensured that only one voter goes inside the voting compartment to vote. **Special care should be taken to ensure that a voter goes in that compartment in the same order in which his Name is entered in the 'Register of Votes, in form 21A.** Also ensure that the ballot button is pressed only when the earlier voter has come out of the voting compartment. At any time, if the total number of voters who voted has to be ascertained, 'Total' button should be pressed. The display panel will then show the total number of voters who voted till that time. **Please remember that the 'Total' button is to be pressed only when the 'Busy' lamp is OFF.**

Note: Confirm the Recording of Votes by Pressing the 'Total' Button of the machine after Completion of First or Second Vote

4.4 Sequence of Events inside the Polling Station

The Sequence of events when an elector enters the polling station is as follows:

- A. When an elector enters the polling station, he will have to go first to the 1st Polling officer. The 1st Polling Officer shall be in charge of the marked copy of the electoral roll, who shall;
 - (i) Check whether his name is in the electoral roll being used for the poll.
 - (ii) Check his identity document prescribed by the Commission at the time of voting.
 - (iii) Read out the name and Sl. No. of the elector so that the polling agents may note down it in their copy of electoral roll.
 - (iv) Having established the elector's identity, score the entry relating to his name in the marked copy of the electoral roll diagonally starting from the left bottom corner to right corner and round the serial number of the elector, if the voter is a female. This will help to count the number of women voters at the end of the poll.
- B. Thereafter the voter will move to the 2nd Polling Officer who will, -
 - i. Note down in the register of votes in Form 21 A, the serial number of electoral roll of that elector as it is read out aloud by 1st Polling Officer.
 - ii. Apply indelible ink on the left forefinger of the elector in such a way to make a line from the top end of the nail to the bottom. If any elector refuses to allow his left

- forefinger to be inspected or marked with indelible ink or he has already such a mark on his left forefinger, or he does any act with a view to removing the ink mark, he shall not be allowed to vote.
- iii. After the ink has been applied, then obtain the signature or thumb impression of the elector in the relevant column of Register of votes in Form 21 A.
 - iv. Prepare a voter's slip filling all required particulars and
- C. Thereafter, the elector will move to 3rd Polling Officer or the Presiding Officer, who is in charge of Control Unit -
- i. Who will first check that the indelible mark is clear on the finger of the elector. If it is found that it is not clear or has been wiped off, then apply ink once again.
 - ii. Thereafter, he will collect voters slip and allow the voter to go to voting compartment so that he may cast vote. For this, he will press "Ballot" button of the machine.
- D. The voter shall cast his vote and then leave the compartment immediately.

This voter slip shall be kept by the third Polling Officer and handed over to the collection centre in Packet II.

4.5 Failure of Machines

In case of errors the following will be displayed. The Returning Officers/Presiding Officers can rectify these defects by taking action as per Column 4.

Sl. No.	Errors	Reasons	Action to be taken
1.	'ON' lamp does not glow when the EVM is switched on.	Power pack is not fixed properly or voltage is low.	Insert the power pack properly or replace the power pack with a new one.*
2.	Display showing 'INVALID OPERATION' and a beep sound is heard.	The button pressed is not in proper sequence of operation.	Press the button in proper sequence.
	a. When 'Cand. Set' button is pressed.	CRC (Close, Result and Clear) not done in that order.	Perform CRC by pressing 'CLOSE', 'RESULT' and 'CLEAR' in that order.*
	b. When 'Clear' button is pressed.	Result of the previous poll is not viewed.	EVM accepts Clear button only after result of the previous poll is taken. Then press 'Result' button.

* The situation in Sl No.1 & 2a cannot be rectified at Presiding Officer's level.

	c. When 'Ballot' button is pressed.	'Close' button was pressed to close the poll and hence no further polling is possible.	This button will become operational only after the previous result is taken and cleared.
	d. When 'Result' button is pressed.	The polling is not closed by pressing the 'Close' button.	Close the poll by pressing the 'Close' button before pressing 'Result'.
4.	Display showing 'Er' and a beep sound is heard	CU is defective and not fit for use	Replace the entire EVM with a good one and report to the Commission
5.	No response to 'Total' button in the Control Unit.	'Busy' lamp is 'ON'.	Allow the voter to record his vote. Once the vote is recorded, the 'Busy' lamp goes 'OFF'.
6.	When the Presiding Officer presses the 'Ballot' button, the 'Busy' lamp does not glow. Instead 'PRESSED ERROR-1' appears on the display panel and a short interrupted 'Beep' sound is heard.	Some voter must have left one of the candidate buttons in the Ballot Unit pressed or jammed by inducing foreign bodies.	First of all take the total number of votes polled in using the 'TOTAL' button. Then switch 'OFF' the machine and the Presiding Officer alone should enter the voting compartment and check whether any of the candidate buttons in the BUs are jammed using any foreign body. If so, remove it appropriately and then leave the voting compartment. Thereafter, switch 'ON' the machine and take the total votes polled in using the 'TOTAL' button. The totals taken before and after the trouble shooting procedure will be the same. This should be done invariably to convince the polling agents that no votes has been accidentally recorded in the machine while resolving the temporary issue. Thereafter, normal voting process can be carried on.

The Errors that **cannot be rectified** are as follows:

Sl. No.	Errors	Reasons	Action to be taken
1.	If 'INOPERATIVE' is displayed on panel.	EVM status is Inoperative	These errors cannot be rectified at PO level. The existing EVMs shall be closed and sealed as poll has been completed. Poll has to be continued using another EVM.
2.	When switching on the "Power ON" switch, if display shows 'SECURITY NOT CONFIGURED'	EVM has to be configured.	
3.	In BU if ready lamp flashes	BU status is inoperative	
4	No beep sound and display indication when the EVM is switched ON.	The Control Unit is defective and not fit for use.	

4.6 Failure of Machines in Polling Stations where Additional EVMs are Allotted

There are occasion when EVMs are required to be replaced in the polling station after commencement of poll. Such situation arises when the EVMs develop problems in the midst of poll. In Polling Stations additional EVMs after candidate setting will be issued. When EVMs are replaced as above, the Presiding and Polling Officers should ensure that the requirement of conducting mock poll should be fulfilled in the new EVMs and clear the data as in the case of originally allotted EVMs. The Presiding Officer will make a declaration in Part II of Form N-10A

4.7 Procedure at the Close of Poll

After the hour fixed for the close of the poll, and the last voter has recorded his vote, EVM has to be closed so that no further recording of votes in the machine is possible. For that purpose, perform the following operations.

- (a) Lift the plastic cap over the 'Close' button.
- (a) Press the 'Close' button.
- (b) Note down the details in the prescribed form the total number of voters and votes polled in Form 24A as displayed in the display panel.
- (c) Refix the plastic cap over the 'Close' button.
- (d) Open the rear compartment of CU.
- (e) Switch OFF the EVM by pushing power switch to OFF position.
- (f) Disconnect the BU cable by pressing the two latches and pulling the cable out.
- (g) Close the rear compartment.
- (h) Put back the Ballot Unit and Control Unit in their respective carrying cases.
- (i) Seal the carrying cases by passing the thread through the holes provided for the purpose on the upper and lower portions of the carrying cases and put thread seal on the prescribed address tag showing the particulars of the polling station with the presiding Officer's seal and also with the seal of such polling agents as are present and desirous of putting their seals. While sealing proper care should be taken to ensure that the direct flame does not come in contact with carrying cases and the molten wax does not fall on any part of the machine.
- (j) The sealed cover containing vote account in Form 24A, a cancelled Ballot Label (for Constituency) will be pasted on the side of the Control Unit's carrying case with Cello tape.
- (k) The Presiding Officer will make a declaration in Part III Form N-10 A.

Now the EVM is ready to be transported from polling station to storage place (i.e., strong room).

Chapter - V

TRANSMISSION OF VOTING MACHINE AND ELECTION PAPERS TO THE RETURNING OFFICER

5.1 After the voting machine and all election papers have been sealed and secured by the Presiding Officer, the Presiding Officer has to deliver them or cause them to be delivered at such place as R.O. may direct.

R.O should make proper arrangements for the safe transportation and custody of voting machines and other election papers and materials after the close of the poll from the polling stations to the storage centre, where the voting machines and election papers will be stored till counting. In this connection, the following instructions should be particularly taken note of and followed:-

- (a) It will be desirable to take the sealed voting machines and other election papers and materials after the completion of the poll direct to the place fixed for counting of votes. This arrangement would ensure that the sealed voting machines are handled only once before the votes are counted. It must be ensured that there are sufficient arrangements for the safe transportation and custody of voting machines.
- (b) The candidates or their election agents should be informed sufficiently in advance about the programme of the collecting parties being sent, if any, and the route chart for the collection of the voting machines and other election materials from the polling station after the conclusion of the poll, so that the candidates may make their own arrangements, if they so desire, for sending their agents to accompany such collecting parties. The agents of the candidates should, however, make their own arrangements for their transport and, in no case, they should be allowed to travel in the same vehicles in which the voting machines and other election materials and polling parties are transported.

Sufficient number of counters should be opened and polling station numbers should be so distributed that at any time neither any counter should be crowded nor any counter left free.

5.2 Safe Custody of Voting Machines after Poll

All Returning Officers or the Collecting Parties should deposit the voting machines and election papers and materials at the storage centres without any delay. Any officer who fails in this respect will make himself liable to disciplinary action.

Floor space of the storage room or building may be marked, in the form of squares, in advance for stacking the voting machines received from the particular polling stations. The arrangement for this should follow the serial number of polling stations.

All ballot unit(s) and control unit received from one polling station must invariably be kept together at one place on the same square. The control unit should be kept on top of the ballot unit(s) with Form -24 A, as returned by the Presiding Officer concerned. Sealed envelope containing the declarations made by the Presiding Officers before the start of the poll and at the end of the poll, the paper seal account should be kept under RO's safe custody along with the Presiding Officers Diary and other records like Register of Votes in Form 21 A. Under no circumstance, these papers/records should be put in strong room where polled EVMs are kept.

Sufficient space should be left between rows of voting machines as they are being stacked so that other machines received subsequently out of turn (from the point of view of serial numbers of the polling stations) may be kept at their appropriate allotted space without the necessity of having to shift any of the voting machines received and stacked in earlier point of time.

If any of the contesting candidates so desires, he may be permitted to post an agent to keep watch at the place where the voting machines are stored pending the counting and allow him to affix his own seals to the doors and windows of the building in which voting machines have been stored in addition to the seals affixed by RO. It should also be ensured that immediately after all the voting machines have been received and stored, the room is locked forthwith. Thereafter, no one will be allowed to enter the hall till the day of counting. If during this interval, for some unavoidable reason, the room has to be opened, RO should send for the candidates or their authorized representatives by giving them intimation in writing and open the room in their presence and immediately after the purpose for which the room is opened is over, the candidates or their representatives should again be allowed to put their seal on the door lock and windows.

Whenever it is necessary to open the room in which the voting machines are stored, proper entries should be made in the logbook in Form N-23 reflecting the details of the persons entering the room, the purpose of such entry, time of entry, time of exit, signature of the guards, etc.

Chapter - VI

COUNTING

6.1 The Counting Halls, including partitions as planned, should be got ready at least three clear days ahead of the date of counting and a compliance report sent by each RO to the DEO. DEOs shall send a consolidated report to the Commission.

Notice to candidates about the date, time and place of counting, should be given in advance.

Counting of votes should be done on tables arranged in rows. The number of counting tables in a counting hall is to be decided by RO keeping in view the number of polling stations, size and available space of the hall, the number of candidates/counting agents, the total number of counting personnel to be deployed and security aspects. There cannot be more than 14 counting tables in a counting hall.

In each counting hall, necessary arrangements should be provided for each counting table so that counting agents are prevented from handling the control unit. However, the counting agent must be given all reasonable facilities to witness the whole counting process at the counting table. RO shall have to ensure that the agents do not get any opportunity to handle the Control Units in any manner.

The RO's table shall be in the counting hall itself. It should be a separate table in a demarcated area. Candidates and their Election Agents will also be seated at this table to watch the counting proceedings. In order to ensure proper watch over the counting process, the seating arrangements of counting supervisors, counting assistants should be made in a sequence. They should not be allowed unnecessarily to roam here and there in the counting hall.

Similarly, the table and the computer on which the computation and compilation of data from each table shall be in the counting hall alongside the RO's table where the

candidate/agent will also be seated. In case the table is a separate one from RO's table then one additional counting agent shall be allowed to sit at that table. This should not be in any other room under any circumstance.

After every stage of counting, the results of that stage should be written on a board. Only after that the EVMs for the next stage shall be brought from the strong room to the counting hall.

6.2 Counting of Votes Recorded in Voting Machines, Scrutiny and Inspection of Control Units

After commencement of the counting of postal ballots, counting of votes in the EVM can commence. The CUs can be brought under escort (agents can accompany) from the strong room to the counting hall even if the counting of the postal ballot is still going on. Distribution of control units to the counting tables should be done in the serial order of the polling stations.

RO will arrange a senior officer to function as nodal officer for this purpose. An account of such distribution should be kept. EVMs brought for counting for a particular stage are properly counted and after recording the votes in form 24 A, the EVMs for next stage are brought to the counting hall.

At the time of counting, only the Control Unit of the voting machine is required for ascertaining the result of poll at the polling station at which the Control Unit has been used. The Ballot Unit used at a polling station is not required. The Ballot Units have to be kept in strong room. It may be taken to the counting hall only if its inspection becomes necessary in any particular case on demand by any candidate or his agent or otherwise.

The sealed cover containing the relevant Account of Votes Recorded in Form 24 A and the cancelled ballot paper pertaining to a polling station shall also be supplied to the counting table along with the Control Unit used at that polling station.

6.3 Opening of Carrying Cases of Control Units

The Control Units received from the polling stations are duly kept and sealed in their carrying cases by the Presiding Officers. As each carrying case is brought to the counting table, the seals put thereon by the Presiding Officer at the polling station should be examined. Even if the seal of a carrying case is not intact, the control unit kept therein could not have been tampered with, if the seals thereon and particularly the paper seals on that unit are intact.

After breaking the seals of the carrying case, take out the Control Unit and place it

on the counting table for the inspection and checking of seals thereon by the candidates or their agents present at the counting table.

6.4 Checking Seals on the Control Units

Before the votes recorded in the control unit of any voting machine are counted, the candidates or their election agents or their counting agents present at the counting table shall be allowed to inspect the outer strip seal, the special tag, the papers seals and such other vital seals as may have been affixed on the carry case and the control unit to satisfy themselves that the seals are intact. It should be ensured that none of the voting machines are tampered with. In any case if it is felt that any voting machine has in fact been tampered with, the votes recorded in that machine shall not be counted and the matter shall be reported to State Election Commission immediately.

6.5 Checking of Seals and Identity Marks on the Control Unit

As each control unit is taken out of the carrying case, RO shall first check its serial number and satisfy that it is the same control unit, which was supplied by the RO to the Presiding Officer for use at that polling station. Then, check the Serial Number of the Pink Paper Seal used for sealing the Control Unit, the seal on the Candidate Set section of the Control Unit (which had been put at RO's level before the supply of the machine to the polling station) and also the Outer Strip Seal, and seal on Special Tag on the outer cover of result section which was put by the Presiding Officer at the polling station after mock poll. Even if any of these seals is not intact, the control unit could not have been tampered with, if the paper seal put on the inner cover of the Result Section is intact.

6.6 Comparing the Serial Numbers in the Special Tag, Green Paper Seal and Strip Seal

Remove the Strip Seal and the Address Tag on the outer door of the Result Section and open that door. On opening the outer door of the Result Section it could be seen that the inner door is sealed with the Special Tag. In the inner door of the Result Section, there will be a Green Paper Seal passing over the two windows concealing the buttons viz Result-I and Result-II. Serial numbers on the Strip Seal, Green Paper Seal and Special Tag should be compared with that as denoted in the paper seal account prepared by the Presiding Officer in Part I of Form 24A. The candidates or their agents present at the counting table should invariably be allowed to compare such serial numbers of the Strip Seal, Green Paper Seal and Special Tag and satisfy themselves that the Strip Seal, Green Paper Seal and Special Tag are the same which had been fixed by the Presiding Officer at the polling station before commencement of the poll.

6.7 Checking of Serial Number of Control Unit

On the counting table, the Counting Supervisor shall verify and satisfy that the serial number of the Control Unit taken up for counting is the same as what is noted in the Part-I of Form 24 A.

6.8 Control Units to be Kept Apart if Found Tampered With

If the voting machine has been tampered with, or is not the same which was supplied for use at that polling station, the machine should be kept apart and the votes recorded therein should not be counted. The matter should be reported to the State Election Commission. It is not necessary to adjourn the entire counting if any voting machine has been found by RO to have been tampered with. RO may, proceed with the counting in respect of the other polling stations.

6.9 Ascertaining Result

After satisfying that the Paper Seals are intact, the Control Unit is the same as was issued at the polling station and there is no tampering with the same, the votes recorded therein shall be counted.

During counting, Counting Supervisors will ensure that at the time of pressing the result button on the control unit of the EVM, the display panel of the Control Unit is shown to the counting agents of all candidates to their satisfaction so that they can note down the votes polled in favour of each candidate as displayed on the control unit display panel. For this purpose, the control unit may be kept lifted, if necessary, by one of the counting assistants in such manner and position that the display panel is clearly visible to the counting supervisor, the second counting assistant sitting at the counting table, and also to the counting agents of candidates. In case, any counting agent desires to have the result displayed on EVM more than once, it shall be done by the Counting Supervisor to the satisfaction of the counting agents.

The following procedure should be followed for counting of votes recorded in the machine:-

- i. Switch 'ON' the control unit by lifting the power switch provided in the rear compartment to 'on' position. The 'ON' lamp in the Display Section of the control unit will then glow green.
- ii. Pierce the paper seal over the Button with a paper knife provided below the upper aperture of the inner cover of Result Section.

- iii. Press the “Result” Button.
- iv. At the “Result” Button being so pressed, the total number of votes recorded for each candidate at the polling station shall be displayed automatically in the Display Panels of the Control Unit.
- v. The Counting Supervisor shall note down, carefully, the above result as displayed sequentially candidate-wise in ‘Part II of Form – 24 A. If required, press the “Result” Button again to enable the candidates or their agents to note down the above result.

After the result has been noted, close the cover of Result Section and switch ‘OFF’ the Control Unit.

6.10 Completion of Part II of Form 24 A

As the votes secured by each candidate are displayed on the Display Panel of the control unit, the counting supervisor should record the number of such votes separately in respect of each candidate in Part II of Form No. 24 A. It should be verified whether the total number of votes as shown in Part-II tallies with the total number of votes shown against Item 5 of Part I of that Form. After completing that form in all respects, the counting supervisors should sign it. He should also get it signed by the candidates or their agents present at the counting table. He should handover that Form to the Returning Officer. When the Form 24 A at each Polling booth is received at the RO’s table, it will be his responsibility to show it to the candidates/their election agents/counting agents sitting at the Returning Officer’s table to enable them to note down the results of each candidate for each polling station. He should countersign Form 24 A after satisfying that the same has been properly filled and completed in all respects. The Returning Officer shall compile the details of votes and declare the result in Form 25.

The votes polled to each candidate, polling station wise as entered in Form 25 should be written on a display-board put up conspicuously so that each counting agent can see and note down /cross check the entries therein. The RO may announce the same through public address system. This will enable RO to proceed uninterruptedly with the counting of votes.

In case a particular CU used at a polling station does not display result due to technical mal-functioning, the assistance of technicians of ECIL may be sought to retrieve the data. If they also are not able to do so, then that EVM shall be sealed and kept aside. It must, without fail, be brought to notice of the State Election Commission for further directions. The counting of remaining machines will continue unabated. If any machine

has been kept apart and not counted for this reason or found tampered with, then Commission's written approval will be needed before declaring the result of the election of that constituency.

In order to maintain transparency and also to keep vigil over the counting process, the Returning Officer should conduct random checking of the result noted down in the counting table with that displayed in the respective EVM.

If any discrepancy is found during this process, then:

- i) The result of that stage for each table shall be verified from the EVMs.
- ii) The counting staff who wrongly entered the result should be replaced by another set of staff and the matter reported to the Commission. Severe disciplinary action will then follow on the erring staff for their omissions and errors.
- iii) The result provided by such staff in the preceding stages should invariably be checked again and corrected sheets prepared, wherever necessary.
- iv) The result from the counting table after correction will be passed on to the data entry operator for uploading in the TREND software.

The next stage of counting should start only after all the tables of the current stage have finished counting and its result has been posted on the black board / white board. Also the EVMs for the next stage counting should be brought on to the tables only after completion of the current stage in all respects.

6.11 Action to be Taken in Case of Malfunctioning of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) During Counting of Votes

In the case of malfunctioning of an EVM during counting of votes, the following steps are to be taken.

- a. In case any Control Unit does not display result, it should be kept back inside its carrying case and then be kept in the Returning Officer's custody in the counting hall. Counting of votes in other machines should continue as usual.
- b. When counting of votes in other machines is complete, the Returning Officer should see whether difference in the margin of votes between the candidate having the highest votes and the candidate having next higher votes is more than or less than the votes polled in the malfunctioned machine (s).
- c. In both the cases, the Returning Officer should try to retrieve the result from this machine, with the help of engineers of ECIL, using Auxiliary Display Unit (ADU) in the presence of candidates or their election agents. If the result can be retrieved

by using an ADU, the result of the election can be declared accordingly. In such a case, the Returning Officer should send a detailed report to the Commission in the format mentioned in Form N-38.

- d. In case it is not possible to retrieve the result from the malfunctioned machine inspite of using ADU, then the Returning Officer should try to retrieve the result from the machine by taking a print out of the result with the help of Engineers of ECIL. If the result can be retrieved by using a printer, the result of the election can be declared accordingly. In such a case also the Returning Officer should send a detailed report to the Commission in the format mentioned in Form N 38.
- e. If the result from the malfunctioned machine cannot be retrieved despite using printer, the matter should be reported to the SEC by the Returning Officer in Part I of Form N -39.
- f. Where the margin of vote between the candidate having the highest vote and the candidate having the next higher votes is more than the votes polled in the malfunctioned control unit, the RO shall report the matter in Part II of Form N 39 to the SEC for its decision.
- g. Where the margin of vote between the candidate having the highest vote and the candidate having the next higher votes is less than the votes polled in the malfunctioned Control Unit, the RO shall report the matter in Part III of Form N 39 to the SEC for its decision.
- h. The malfunctioned Control Unit should be kept and safely sealed in its carrying case and no attempt should be made to repair the machine.

6.12 Action to be Taken During Counting of Votes in Case Presiding Officer Did Not Press Close Button of CU at the End of Poll

In case a Presiding Officer is found to have not pressed the 'CLOSE' button of Control Unit at the end of poll, the following action should be taken during counting of votes in the presence of candidates/their authorised agents.

The Returning Officer shall first check the serial number of the strip seal and the serial number of the green paper seal and satisfy that the number of green paper seal tallies with the number as entered in Part I of Form 24 A. Further verification may be done with the number shown in Presiding Officer's diary. He shall also verify the total number of voters entered in the Register of votes in Form 21 A. He should ascertain the total number of votes displayed in the EVM by pressing the 'Total' button. If the total number of voters as per the voting machine and the number of voters in Form 21 A are the same, the RO shall press the 'Close' button in the presence of counting agents/candidates. Then the RO

shall press the Result I button and continue to count the votes as usual.

In case, total number of voters who cast votes in the machine does not tally with the total voters in the Register of Votes in Form 21 A, the matter should be reported to the SEC by the Returning Officer for its decision and action may be taken as per the direction of the Commission.

6.13 Redisplaying of Votes

Normally, there will be no question of recounting of votes recorded in the voting machines. Every vote recorded by the voting machines is a valid vote and no dispute will arise as to its validity or otherwise. At the most, some candidates or their agents may not have noted down the result of voting at any particular polling station properly when the control unit displayed that information. If necessity arises for re-verification, the Result Button can be pressed, whereupon the result of voting at that polling station will again be displayed in the Display Panels of that control unit.

Accordingly, when the counting is completed and the Result Sheet in Form 25 has been prepared, RO should announce the total number of votes polled to each candidate as entered in the Result Sheet. RO should then wait a minute or two. If during this period any candidate, or in his absence, his election agent or any of the counting agents, asks for a recount, RO should allow a reasonable time to him for applying for recount in writing. RO will wait for receiving the written application for recount. RO should not sign the Result Sheet in Form 25 until the expiry of the time so allowed.

When an application for recount is made within the time allowed, RO should consider the grounds urged and decide the matter on merit. In every case RO should record a brief statement of reasons for his decision. The decision of the RO shall be final.

If in any case, if an application for recount either wholly or in part is allowed, the votes recorded in the voting machines are to be counted again. The postal ballot papers will also be counted again if so decided by the RO. After the recount, correct the result sheet to the extent necessary. Announce the amendments so made, if any, by the RO. After the total number of votes polled to each candidate after recount have been announced, the RO shall complete and sign the Result Sheet. No candidate has a right to demand a recount after RO has completed and signed the Result Sheet in Form No. 25. Reject any demand for any recount of votes after the RO has completed and signed the Result Sheet.

The Commission has decided that where the result of an election is going to be decided by difference of postal ballots received by the first two candidates, then there shall be mandatory and comprehensive recount of postal ballot papers, even though no candidate asks for it.

6.14 Adjournment of Counting

RO should proceed with the counting at each place continuously. In case RO has to suspend or adjourn the counting before its completion for any unavoidable reason, seal up all the voting machines and also all other papers relating to elections. Allow every candidate or his agent, if he so desires, to put his seal on every voting machine and packet, etc., in which the election papers are kept.

N.B. It is preferable to keep all the sealed voting machines and packets, etc., in a separate room and have the room sealed and secured with seal of the RO and the seals of candidates or their agents.

6.15 Procedure to be Followed in Case of Destruction, Loss, etc., of Voting Machines before Completion of Counting

The Commission may direct, after taking all material circumstances into account, the counting of votes to be stopped and, if necessary, order fresh poll if it is reported by the Returning Officer before completion of the counting of votes that the voting machine used at a polling station has been

- i. Unlawfully taken out of RO's custody, or
- ii. Accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost, or
- iii. Damaged or tampered with, to such an extent that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained. If any such occasion arises, RO should forthwith report full facts of the case to the Commission and await its directions in regard to the counting of votes.

6.16 Procedures to be Followed in the Case of Booth-Capturing at the Counting Centre

If booth capturing takes place at any counting centre, the Returning Officer shall forthwith report the matter to the State Election Commission.

On receipt of the report of the Returning Officer, the Commission shall, after taking all circumstances into account, either direct a repoll at the affected polling stations or countermand the election. Therefore, once RO has reported the matter to the Commission, RO has to wait for the directions of the State Election Commission in the regard.

6.17 Procedure for Holding Re Poll

If at a polling station -

- i) any voting machine has been unlawfully taken away by an unauthorized person,
or

- ii) any voting machine has been accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or damaged or tampered with and the RO is satisfied that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained for that reason, or
- iii) any voting machine develops a mechanical failure during the course of the recording of votes and the use of a subsequent machine becomes not possible, or
- iv) any error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll has been committed,

the Returning Officer should report such facts forthwith to the State Election Commission and the District Election Officer. Thereupon the SEC shall, after taking all the material facts and circumstances of the case into account, either

- i) declare the poll at the polling station to be void and fix the date and time for repoll
- or
- ii) if satisfied that the result of the poll at the polling station will not in any way affect the result of election or that the error or irregularity or the mechanical failure developed in the voting machine in question is not material, issue such direction as it may deem proper to the Returning Officer for the completion of election.

Returning Officer should send a consolidated report in that format in respect of all the polling stations where the poll has been vitiated. The State Election Commission will not accept piecemeal reports in this regard.

After considering all the material circumstances, the Commission will, if necessary-

- i) declare the poll at the polling station to be void; and
- ii) formally fix the date and hours for a Re-poll.

On receiving intimation from the Commission, Returning Officer should inform in writing the contesting candidates or their election agents of the date, time and place fixed for the Re poll and affix a notice on the notice board, notifying the date and hours so fixed. Also, wide publicity should be given in the polling area concerned about the place, date and hours so fixed.

All electors entitled to vote at the polling station or stations in question will be entitled to vote at the Re poll. The marks of the indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored at the Re poll. To distinguish the marks to be made at the Re-poll from those already made at the original poll, the Commission directs that the mark of the indelible ink should be put on the voter's finger as specified by the Commission at the poll.

A new voting machine [the Ballot Unit(s) as well as the Control Unit] and a new marked copy of electoral roll shall be used at the Re poll.

The provisions of Conduct of Elections Rules, 1995 and orders made thereunder will apply to the fresh poll in exactly the same way as they apply to the original poll. All the voting machines used for the original poll at the polling station(s) where Re poll has been directed by the Commission should be preserved carefully, unopened and with the seals intact.

ANNEXURES & FORMS

Annexure - I

Sticker for Pairing EVMs

EVM No	:
CU No	:
DMM No	:
BU No. (1)	:
BU No. (2)	:
BU No. (3)	:
BU No. (4)	:

(Colour - pale yellow)

Annexure - II

Candidate Setting Register for Pink Paper Seal (Ballot Unit)

Sl.No	Ballot Unit No	Pink Paper Serial No	Signature of the Returning Officer
1	2	3	4

Annexure - III

**Register for distribution and receipt of Control Unit & Ballot Unit
from Returning Officers to Presiding Officers and
from Presiding Officers to Returning Officers**

District: Name of Municipality/Corporation :

Strong Room : (No. & Name)

SL No.	Date	Distribution to the Presiding Officer				Receipt of EVM from Presiding Officer	
		Control Unit No.	BU No.	Polling Station No.	Name & Designation Sign. of Presiding Officer receiving the EVM	Date & Time of receipt	Name & Designation Sign. of the RO/ Officer receiving back the EVM
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Annexure - IV

**Form for Maintenance of Records of Voting Machines
with Returning Officers**

District: Name of Municipality/Corporation :

Strong Room : (No. & Name)

The total no. of CUs in the stock of RO	The total no. of BUs in such stock	The total no. of polling stations in the constituency	The total no. of CUs required for use at the polling stations	The total no. of BUs required for use at the polling stations	The total no. of CUs in reserve stock	The total no. of BUs in reserve stock
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Name & Signature of the Returning Officer

Annexure - V
Stickers for EVMs

POLL

SECTORAL

RESERVE

TRAINING

FORM N—10A

DECLARATION BY PRESIDING OFFICER

PART-I

Declaration by the Presiding Officer before the commencement of the poll for the election to
..... District/Block/Grama Panchayat
Constituency/Municipal Ward.

Serial Number & Name of Polling Station

Date of Poll

I do hereby declare:

- (1) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and others present-
 - (a) by holding a mock poll that the voting machine is in perfect working order and that no vote is already recorded therein;
 - (b) that the marked copy of the electoral roll to be used in the poll does not contain any marks other than those used for issuing postal ballot papers and election duty certificates;
 - (c) that the Register of Votes (Form 21A) to be used in the poll does not contain any entry in respect of any elector;
- (2) that I have affixed my signature on the Special Tag, Strip Seal and Green Paper Seal used for securing the Result Section of control unit of the voting machine and obtained thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and desirous of affixing the same.
- (3) that I have read out the pre-printed serial numbers of the Special Tag, Strip Seal and Green Paper Seal and asked the candidates/ polling agents present, to note down the serial numbers.

Signature :

Name of Presiding Officer :

.....

Signature of polling agents

1 (of candidate.....)

2.....(of candidate.....)

3(of candidate.....)

4.....(of candidate.....)

The following polling agent(s) declined to affix his/her signature(s), on this declaration.

1 (of candidate.....)

2.....(of candidate.....)

3(of candidate.....)

4.....(of candidate.....)

Date

Signature

Presiding Officer

Part - II

Declaration by the Presiding Officer at the time of using subsequent EVMs, if any.

Declaration by the Presiding Officer before the commencement of the poll for the election to
..... District/Block/Grama Panchayat
Constituency/Municipal Ward.

Serial Number & Name of Polling Station

Date of Poll

I hereby declare ;

- (1) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and others present by holding a mock poll that the subsequent voting machine is in perfect working order and that no vote is already recorded therein
- (2) that I have affixed my signature on the Special Tag, Strip Seal and Green Paper Seal used for securing the Result Section of control unit of the voting machine and obtained thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and desirous of affixing the same.
- (3) that I have read out the pre-printed serial numbers of the Special Tag, Strip Seal and Green Paper Seal and asked the candidates/ polling agents present, to note down the serial numbers

Signature :

Name of Presiding Officer :

.....

Signature of polling agents

1 (of candidate.....)

2.....(of candidate.....)

3(of candidate.....)

4.....(of candidate.....)

The following polling agent(s) declined to affix his/her signature(s), on this declaration.

1 (of candidate.....)

2.....(of candidate.....)

3(of candidate.....)

4.....(of candidate.....)

Date

Time

Signature :

Name of Presiding Officer:

PART III

Declaration at the End of Poll

I have furnished to the polling agents, who were present at the polling station at the close of the poll and whose signatures are affixed below, an attested copy of each of the entries in 'Part I -Account of Recorded Votes' of Form 24A as required.

I have also affixed my seals, and I have allowed the polling agents who were present at the polling station at the close of poll to affix their seals, on the carrying cases of the control unit and balloting units of the voting machine.

Date.....

Signature :

Name of Presiding Officer :

Received an attested copy of the entries in the account of votes recorded (Part I of Form 24A)

Signature of polling agents

- 1 (of candidate.....)
- 2.....(of candidate.....)
- 3(of candidate.....)
- 4.....(of candidate.....)

The following polling agents who were present at the close of the poll declined to receive an attested copy of the Part I of Form 24A and to give a receipt there for and so an attested copy of that Form was not supplied to them:

Signature of polling agents

- 1 (of candidate.....)
- 2.....(of candidate.....)
- 3(of candidate.....)
- 4.....(of candidate.....)

Date

Time

Signature :

Name of Presiding Officer:.....

Form N-37

Receipt of subsequent Electronic Voting Machines during poll

Number & Name of Polling Station.....
Number & Name of Constituency of GP/Ward of Municipality.....
Number & Name of GP/Municipality.....
Number & Name of Block Panchayat.....
Number & Name of District Panchayat.....

Due to malfunctioning of Electronic Voting Machine supplied to the above polling station, a subsequent Electronic Voting Machine with the following details is received.

Control Unit No
DMM No
Ballot Unit No
Ballot Unit No
Ballot Unit No
Ballot Unit No

Signature
Name of Presiding Officer.....
Designation
Date
Time

(To be prepared in triplicate by Sectoral Officer and one copy each handed over to RO and PrO and the original retained by the Sectoral officer)