

ECI organizes knowledge transfer conference of Chief Electoral Officers

By TIOL News Service

NEW DELHI, AUG 11, 2022: THE

Election Commission of India yesterday organized a conference with the Chief Electoral Officers of poll-gone and poll-going States/UTs at India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management, New Delhi. CEOs from other States/UT joined the conference via video-conferencing. The conference was organised to share experiences and learnings from recently held State Assembly Elections in 2021 and 2022, along with thematic discussions on election planning, expenditure monitoring, electoral roll, IT Applications, data management, EVM/VVPAT, SVEEP strategy, media and communication.

During his address, CEC Rajiv Kumar, complimented CEOs of the poll-gone states for successfully conducting elections in testing times. He emphasised that initiatives and innovations by states need to be scrupulously replicated without compromising the integrity of the election processes. He added that individual initiatives and innovations by CEOs for use of IT in election management need to be comprehensively analysed with implementable features standardised and integrated with ECI IT systems/Apps to avoid duplication of efforts. Rajiv Kumar also mentioned the need for scientific management of election materials for optimal utilisation as well as a digital portal for easy access of all outreach content developed by States and ECI. CEOs were directed to ensure that representatives from the National & State Disaster Response Force team are also called for coordination meetings. With changing connectivity and technological landscape, he highlighted that polling stations need to be geo-tagged and route charts need to be revised by district administration.Â

During the discussions on Voter Outreach campaigns, CEC stressed that SVEEP strategy needs to engage with grassroot level with emphasis on analysis of low voter turn-out polling stations and focussed targeted interventions. He urged CEOs to provide regular feedback to the ECI for systemic improvements and improvising voter facilitation.

Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey highlighted the need to brainstorm ideas and best practices being implemented in poll-gone states which can be emulated in other states. He added some of the best practices implemented by certain states in previous elections like integration of road maps by Tamil Nadu, Chatbot by Goa, Learning Management System by Assam, special initiatives for Divyangs by Uttarakhand, Meghdoot postcard for awareness in association with postal department, mobile app ANUBHAV for facilitating PwDs by West Bengal. Pandey stressed that CEO teams should remain vigilant to ensure that integrity of election processes are maintained and strict action is taken as per law against any violations.

On the recent drive by the Commission for voluntary collection of AADHAAR, Pandey stressed on the need for strict adherence to ECI guidelines on collection of details. He complimented CEOs that since the launch of the drive w.e.f August 1, 2022, over 2.5 crores AADHAR have been collected voluntarily.

During the conference, the Commission also felicitated officials from Ministry of Home Affairs, Central Armed Police Forces and Ministry of Railways for their significant contribution in the conduct of elections in free, fair, peaceful and transparent manner during the Assembly Elections held in 2022. The forces had to move through difficult terrains and had also travelled long distances from one state to another as part of their election duty to ensure smooth conduct of elections. CEC Rajiv Kumar complimented them for their meticulous planning and time bound movement of election personnel during assembly elections in 2022.Â The Commission has also extended the grant of honorarium to ad-hoc Commandants/Commandants of Forces deployed on election duty for all elections conducted by the Election Commission of India.

On this occasion, the Commission also released the latest edition of A-WEB India Journal of Elections. It's a prestigious international publication containing researched articles, papers & contributions from across the A-WEB community. A-WEB is the largest association of World Election Management Bodies.

CEOs of the poll-gone states gave detailed presentations about their experiences, learnings and innovative practices they adopted during the recently held state assembly elections. CEOs from the poll going states also presented their status of preparation for conduct of elections, ongoing SSR activities, focussed activities being undertaken to improve the health of electoral roll at each Assembly Constituency.

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