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Review Meeting for Bye-Elections

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Election Commission of India in their Press Release Dated 4th September 2020 have decided to conduct bye-elections to fill all the 64 vacancies in different State Assemblies of the country along with the General Elections to Bihar Assembly. The entire process is to be completed by 29th November 2020 as per the Press Release . Two Assembly Constituencies of Odisha namely 38-Balasore and 102- Tirtol(SC) have fallen vacant due to sad demise of their sitting MLAs. Hence these two ACs will also go for the Bye-Elections. In this context Chief Electoral Officer, Odisha Sri Sushil Kumar Lohanitook a review meeting with the Collectors and SPs of Balasore and Jagatsinghpur through a Video Conferencing. Bye-election may be declared by the Election Commission of India at any time during October-November 2020 and we have to conduct bye-election to the 102-Tirtol AC in Jagatsinghpur district and 38-Balasore AC which are lying vacant said Sri Lohani. CEO, Odisha further directed both the DEOs & Collectors to follow the instruction/guidelines on COVID-19 while making all arrangements for bye-election strictly till the completion of poll.

"Extensive awareness drive on mask wearing, hand sanitizing, social distancing and thermal screening of voters as well as polling personnel, appointment of Nodal Health Officer at district and constituency level, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic during bye-election would be given top priority", said the CEO Sri Lohani. He also said that special arrangement shall be made for the COVID-19 affected voters during election like isolation centre and those voters would be allowed to cast their franchise at the last hour of poll. As a measure of compliance to COVID-19 GUIDELINES for observing Social Distancing during voting the number of electors per booth have been limited to 1000 maximum. Accordingly polling stations where the number of voters were more than 1000 has been bifurcated and auxiliary polling stations have been created by both the District Election Officers in consultation with the political party representatives. All persons associated with the bye-elections must abide by the COVID-19

guidelines, use mask while coming to vote and follow the norms for hand sanitization and social distancing in the polling stations.

CEO took a detailed review on the preparatory activities for deployment and training programme of polling persons, vehicle arrangements, security arrangements, strong room, dispersal centre and counting hall etc. Among other Sri. B.P. Ray, Addl. CEO, Joint CEO, Sri SatrughnaKar, Collectors and SPs of Balasore and Jagatsinghpur were present in the meeting through Video Conferencing.

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