

## **PRESS NOTE**

Chandigarh April 18, 2005 : Shri Chander Singh, State Election Commissioner, Haryana informed that the during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Panchayat General Elections 2005, elections for the offices of 60292 Panches and 6181 Sarpanches of Gram Panchayats, 2823 Members Panchayat Samitis and 384 Zila Parishads in the 119 blocks in the State were held successfully in two phases on 03.04.2005 and 09.04.2005. For these elections, 17773 Polling Stations were set up, 74844 Polling Personnels, 2198 Returning Officers and 6319 Assistant Returning Officers were appointed. 3,97,38,864 ballot papers were got printed for 95,75,630 voters out of which 80% had exercised their franchise during these elections. The polling was peaceful by and large except a few stray incidents, where repoll was conducted.

During the Municipal General Elections,2005 for 20 Municipal Councils and 27 Municipal Committees, the votes for the offices of 988 Members of these municipalities, the poll was held on 16.04.2005. For these elections 2416 Polling Stations were set up, total 31000 Polling Personnels including police personnel, 47 Returning Officers and 47 Assistant Returning Officers were appointed. 24,12,569 ballot papers were got printed and 22,49,272 voters had exercised their franchise. The polling was held peacefully except for repolling on two Polling Booths i.e. 13 and 15 of Ward No.3 of Municipal Council, Rohtak, Sh.Chander Singh added.

The State Election Commission, Haryana has appointed Commissioner rank officers as Election Observers and the Observers (Expenditure). All the observers were to see that election in all the wards was conducted in a free and fair manner without any favour and fear. The Observer (Expenditures) have also reached to their respective destinations to observe that no candidate should cross the expenditure limits prescribed by the State election Commission in this regard.

Moreover to maintain law & order position proper security arrangements were made by the District Authorities. The overall percentage of votes polled in the State for Panchayats and Municipal elections was between 75% and 80%.

Sh.Chander Singh, also stated that the poll process was initiated on 15.03.2005 with the announcement of election and was completed on 18.04.2005 with the declaration of all results. The model code of conduct which came into force on

15.03.2005 has ceased to be in operation with effect from 19.04.2005 except with in the Municipal Corporation area of Faridabad.

Section 176 of the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 provides that the validity of election of any elected candidate of Panchayati Raj Institutions may be brought in question by any person contesting the election or by any person qualified to vote at the election to which such question relates may at any time within 30 days after the date declaration of result of the election, present an Election Petition to the Civil Court having ordinary jurisdiction in the area within which the election has been or should have been held, for the determination of such question.

Similarly, Rule 75 of the Haryana Municipal Election Rules, 1978 provides that an Election Petition against the return of a candidate to an election or against the return of a President or Vice-President or against unsuccessful candidate with a view to his disqualification under Section 272 on the ground of corrupt practices or material irregularity in the procedure in writing, signed by a contesting candidate or elector may present an Election Petition to the Tribunal within 30 days after the day on which the result of election is declared by the Returning Officer, Sh.Chander Singh informed.

The District Administration and the concerned election staff had extended full cooperation to the Commission for the smooth completion of Panchayat and Municipal Elections, 2005, Sh.Chander Singh added. Election Commissioner thanked the voters of Haryana for their cooperation and participation in the elections with great interest and vigour.