

NO VOTER SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND

Welcome to the Learning Module for
Media Personnel

Session 1

Role of Media in Elections

Disclaimer:

This training material is for use in training of election officials. It should not be referred as guidelines of ECI. In case of any variance in this training material and ECI instructions/guidelines/ rules/ laws, the ECI instructions/guidelines/ rules/ laws shall prevail.

Learning Objectives of the Module

Sr. No.	Learning Objectives
1	To be able to explain the role of Media during elections in brief

Preamble

- Evolving socio-economic background and information habits of Indian society have indicated significant media penetration and consumption.
- The level of awareness amongst voters has increased due to entrenchment of voters in Social Media, Print and Digital Media
- Hence, it has become increasingly apparent that Media plays an important role in shaping the opinions and judgement of the general populous and hence needs to be sensitized towards its role in elections

Relevant provisions governing role of Media in Elections

Section 126 A, RP Act 1951

- It prohibits conduct of exit poll and dissemination of their results during the period mentioned therein.

Section 126(1) (b), RP Act 1951

- It prohibits displaying any election matter by means of cinematograph, on television or similar apparatus, during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for conclusion of Poll.

Relevant provisions governing role of Media in Elections

Section 127 A, RP Act 1951

- The printing and publication of election pamphlets, posters etc. is governed by its provisions, which makes it mandatory to bear on its face the names and addresses of the printer and the publisher.

Section 171 (h), IPC

- Prohibits incurring of expenditure on, inter-alia, advertisement without the authority of the contesting candidate.

Role of Media in Elections

- Information Dissemination
- Enforcement of Model Code of Conduct and other Laws
- Voter Education and Electoral Participation

Information Dissemination

Information dissemination is an important element of the role of Media.

Starting from announcement of elections, nominations, scrutiny, campaign, polling, counting, declaration of results etc. all these require widest circulation.

Newspapers and News Channels have made use of information relating to financial, educational and criminal antecedents of candidates contained in the affidavit filed by candidate along with their nomination paper which is uploaded on ECI website.

Enforcement of MCC and other laws

Role of a watch-dog.

Highlight incidents of use of muscle, money by political parties or candidates.

Educate voters on ethical and inducement free voting practices.

Expose MCC violations

- (divisive hate speech or unverified allegations in campaigns aimed at influencing electors)

Can sensitize political functionaries and candidates regarding MCC and relevant laws

Voter Education and Participation

This is one of the most promising areas of ECI-Media relationship.

The media can play important role in voter education and Electoral participation in the following areas:

- Registration as voter
- Electors Photo Identity Card (EPIC) / ID proof
- Polling Station Locations (PSLs)
- Use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)
- Timings of Poll
- Use of money/muscle power by candidates etc.

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Thank You