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OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT OF GOA GAZETTE



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GOVERNMENT OF GOA

Department of Elections
Goa State Election Commission

Notification

No. 4/21/GMCNSE/SEC-2020/53

Read: Notification No-4/21/GMCNSE/SEC-2019/
/1059 dated:- 17-08-2020.

The Commission vide above referred notification had postponed the General elections to the 11 Municipal Councils namely, Bicholim, Cuncolim, Curchorem-Cacora, Canacona, Mapusa, Margao, Mormugao, Pernem, Quepem, Sanguem and Valpoi in the State fixed on 18th October, 2020 for a period of three months, which is due to expire on 18th January, 2021.

With respect to the elections to the City Corporation of Panaji-2021, the five years term of the City Corporation of Panaji (CCP) is going to expire on 14th March, 2021. The Commission had proposed to hold the election to the CCP on 28th February, 2021 in accordance with the sub-rule 1 of Rule 4 of the CCP (Election) Rules, 2004 vide our letter No. 6/16/GECCP/2020-SEC/1030 dated 5th August, 2020.

The Government vide letter No. 10/847/Election/ /CCP/DMA/2020/1571 dated 22nd September, 2020 had advised the Commission that the said elections may be postponed and could be decided only after normalization of Covid-19 pandemic. Subsequently, the Commission is in receipt of a second letter from department of Urban Development vide No. 10/821-2019-DMA/Election to 11 MC/4761

dated 12th January, 2020 specifying the concern of congregation of crowds during the campaign period, which may have implications on management of Covid-19 and requested to reconsider the date for holding the elections to 11 Municipal Councils and CCP Elections 2021. Government has also requested to hold the elections to 11 Municipal Councils and City Corporation of Panaji together, in order to avoid prolonged period of Code of Conduct which would result in halting of development works and allied activities.

The Commission has given a thoughtful consideration to the concerns shown by the Government regarding the congregation of crowds during the campaign period and holding all the Elections together. The election process involves holding of public meetings/rallies/processions during the campaign period and enforcing the health protocols and regulating the number of participants in the gatherings, restricted as per the Government instructions will be a serious issue. The Commission recently conducted General Elections to Zilla Panchayats in the State on 12th December, 2020 as the entire pre poll election process till the election campaigning was completed prior to the spread of Covid-19 and only the polling was to be held.

The Commission is also conscious of the fact that the officers responsible for conduct of the elections like ROs and AROs are going to be from amongst the officers who are presently working as the Deputy Collectors and Mamlatdars respectively. And also the fact that these officers will be engaged in the management of Covid Vaccination throughout the State which will be held in the

month of January-February, 2021. it would not be appropriate to burden them with additional responsibility of conducting elections in this phase.

The Commission under the prevailing circumstances is of the firm opinion that the current situation certainly presents exceptional circumstances before it and appreciates very well that there are going to be genuine difficulties in holding free and fair general elections to the 11 Municipal Councils and City Corporation of Panaji at this juncture. The Commission is also of the opinion that the General Elections to the 11 Municipal Councils, City Corporation of Panaji 2021, Bye elections to wards of different Village Panchayats and the election to the ZP Constituency 16-Navelim shall be conducted together for better management and to avoid prolonged period of Code of Conduct if elections are taken on different dates.

Now therefore, after giving a careful consideration to all the circumstances as aforesaid and in exercise of powers conferred under Article 243K and 243ZA of the Constitution of India, the State Election Commission, hereby order that the General Elections to the 11 Municipal Councils, City Corporation of Panaji 2021, Bye elections to different wards of different Village Panchayats in the State and the election to the ZP Constituency 16-Navelim in South Goa are postponed for a further period of three months i.e. till April 2021 or the election date which may be determined by the Commission.

Chokha Ram Garg, IAS, State Election Commissioner Goa.

Panaji, 14th January, 2021.

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