

ELECTION COMMISSION OF PAKISTAN

NOTIFICATION

Islamabad, the 28th January, 2013

No.F.2(1)/2013-Cord.— WHEREAS, for the purpose of effective and meaningful consultation with the political parties as required under Article 18 of the Political Parties Order 2002, the draft Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates for General Elections 2013 was shared with the major political parties inviting their suggestions.

AND WHEREAS the suggestions received from the political parties were incorporated and the amended draft Code was further shared with the Senate's Special Committee on Electoral Issues on the 7th January, 2013 and the draft code was then placed before the Election Commission in its meeting held on the 10th January, 2013 along with the suggestions given by the Senate's Special Committee.

AND WHEREAS after due consideration of all the suggestions received from political parties and the Special Committee of the Senate, the Election Commission has approved the Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates for General Elections 2013.

NOW THEREFORE, in pursuance of Article 218(3) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan read with Article 6 of the Election Commission Order 2002 (Chief Executive's Order No.1 of 2002), Article 18 of the Political Parties Order, 2002 (Chief Executive's Order No.18 of 2002), the directions of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in Workers' Party Pakistan's case (C.P.No.87/ 2011) and all other powers enabling it in that behalf, the Election Commission is pleased to issue the following Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates for the forthcoming General Elections 2013 and all subsequent bye-elections:

1. **General Conduct:**

- (1) The political parties and candidates shall not propagate any opinion, or act in any manner prejudicial to the ideology of Pakistan, or the sovereignty, integrity or security of Pakistan, or the integrity or independence of the judiciary of Pakistan, or which defames or brings into ridicule the judiciary or the Armed Forces of Pakistan, as provided under Article 63 of the Constitution.
- (2) The parties and candidates shall abide by all the laws, rules, regulations and directions issued by the Commission, from time to time, relating to smooth conduct of elections and the maintenance of public order
- (3) The political parties and candidates shall at all times uphold the rights and freedom of the people of Pakistan as guaranteed by the Constitution and law.
- (4) All contesting candidates and their supporters shall avoid scrupulously all activities which are offences under the election laws, such as bribing of voters, intimidation and personation, canvassing within 400 yards of a polling station including setting up of camps, and holding public meetings during the period of 48 hours ending at midnight following the conclusion of the poll for an election in the constituency, etc.
- (5) Canvassing for votes, soliciting of votes, persuading any elector not to vote at the election or for a particular candidate is prohibited within a radius of 400 yards of the polling station.
- (6) Exhibiting, except with the permission of the Returning Officer and at a place reserved for the candidate or his election agent beyond the radius of 100 yards of the polling station, any notice, sign, banner or flag designed to

- encourage the electors to vote or discourage the electors from voting for any contesting candidate, is prohibited.
- (7) Incitement to violence or resort to violence during meetings, processions, or during polling hours shall be strictly avoided by contesting candidates and their supporters. They shall publicly condemn violence and intimidation and not use language that might lead to violence or resort to violence during meetings, processions, or during polling hours. No person shall in any manner cause injury to any person or damage to any property.
 - (8) Contesting candidates and their supporters shall not procure the support or assistance of any person in the service of Pakistan to promote or hinder the election of a contesting candidate.
 - (9) Contesting candidates shall dissuade their workers or sympathizers from destroying any ballot paper or any official mark on the ballot paper.
 - (10) No person or political party or a contesting candidate and their supporters shall hoist or fix party flags on any public property or at any public place, except with the permission in writing from local government or authorities and on payment of such fee or charges as may be chargeable. .
 - (11) Wall chalking as part of an election campaign shall be prohibited in all forms. Similarly use of loudspeaker shall not be allowed for election campaign except at the election meetings.
 - (12) No person or a political party shall affix posters, hoardings or banners larger than the sizes prescribed by the Election Commission as under:
 - (a) Posters 2-feet x 3-feet
 - (b) Hoardings 3-feet x 5-feet
 - (c) Banners 3-feet x 9-feet
 - (d) Leaflets/Handbills 9-inches x 6 inches

The Head of district administration / Political Agent and the District Returning Officer shall be responsible for the effective implementation of this provision.

- (13) The political parties, contesting candidates and their supporters shall not indulge in offering gifts or gratifications or inducements to any person to stand or not to stand as a candidate, or to withdraw or not to withdraw his candidature.
- (14) Political parties, contesting candidates and their supporters may announce their overall development programme, but after the announcement of the election schedule till the day of polling, no candidate or any person on his behalf shall, openly or in secret, give any subscription or donation, or make promise for giving such subscription or donation, to any institution of their respective constituency or to any other institution.
- (15) Contesting candidates and their supporters shall refrain from speeches calculated to arouse parochial and sectarian feelings and controversy of conflicts between genders, sects, communities and linguistic groups.
- (16) The political parties, contesting candidates and their supporters shall refrain from deliberate dissemination of false and malicious information and shall not indulge in forgeries and disinformation to defame other political parties / leaders. The use of abusive language against the leaders and candidates shall be avoided at all costs.
- (17) Criticism of other political parties and opponent candidates shall be confined to their policies and programmes, past record and work. Parties and candidates shall refrain from criticism of any aspect of private life, not connected with the public activities of the leaders or workers of other

- parties. Criticism based on unverified allegations and distortion of facts shall be avoided.
- (18) Political parties, contesting candidates and their supporters shall not use any vehicle to transport to or from the polling station any elector except himself and members of his immediate family.
 - (19) Political parties contesting candidates and their supporters shall not propagate against the participation of any person in the elections on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion or caste.
 - (20) The political parties, contesting candidates and their supporters or other persons shall not encourage or enter into formal or informal agreement / arrangement / understanding debarring WOMEN from becoming candidate for an election or exercising their right of vote in an election. The Political Parties shall encourage the women to participate in election process.
 - (21) No transaction towards the election expenses shall be made through an account other than the account opened for the purpose.
 - (22) All transactions relating to the election expenses shall be entered into with GST registered firms / persons, wherever it is possible.
 - (23) The political parties, contesting candidates and their supporters shall extend all necessary help to law enforcement agencies for purposes of ensuring the safety and security of election materials, election officials and polling agents on polling day.
 - (24) The Political Parties shall endeavor to provide equal opportunity to its qualified members both men and women to participate in electoral process.
 - (25) Issuing of advertisements at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media and misuse of official mass media during the election period for partisan coverage of political news and publicity by the Federal, Provincial and Local governments shall be prohibited.
 - (26) The right of every individual for peaceful and undisturbed domestic life shall be respected, irrespective of any resentment that a political party or a candidate may have against such individual for his political opinion or activities. Organizing demonstrations or picketing before the house of such individual with a view to protest against his political opinion or activities shall be prohibited under all circumstances.
 - (27) No political party or candidate shall permit its / his followers to make use of any individual's land, building, compound wall etc. without his permission for erecting flag-staffs, suspending banners, pasting notices, writing slogans etc.
 - (28) The Political Parties and candidates shall firmly restrain their workers from exerting undue pressure against the print and electronic media, including newspaper offices and printing presses, or resorting to violence of any kind against the media.
 - (29) There will be a complete ban on carriage and display of all kinds of weapons and fire arms in public meetings and processions as well as on the polling day and till twenty four hours after the consolidation of official results by the Returning Officer and official regulations in respect thereof shall be strictly observed. Aerial firing, use of crackers and other explosives at public meetings and at or near the polling stations by any person shall not be allowed.
 - (30) The President, Prime Minister, Chairman / Deputy Chairman Senate, Speaker / Deputy Speaker of an Assembly, , Federal Ministers, Ministers of State, Governors, Chief Ministers, Provincial Ministers and Advisors to the

Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers, and other public office holders shall not participate in election campaign in any manner whatsoever. This provision will also be applicable to the Caretaker setup.

- (31) All Governments' functionaries / representatives, including local governments' functionaries / representatives shall not announce any development scheme or do anything which tends to influence the results of an election in favor of or against a particular candidate or political party.
- (32) The political parties shall endeavour to take necessary steps to instill discipline within the party, its candidates, employees and supporters and guide them to follow this Code, comply with laws and regulations, commit no election irregularities and adhere to election regulations.
- (33) Posters, hoardings and banners affixed by one party shall neither be removed nor distribution of handbills and leaflets be prevented by workers of another party.

2. **Meetings / Processions / Rallies:**

- (34) The Political Parties and candidates shall hold public rallies and processions only at the place or places through the routes specified for the purpose. Such places and routes shall be pre-determined in every city and town by district / local administration in consultation with respective candidates or their authorized representatives and be notified for public information.
- (35) The political parties and candidates shall convey their schedule of public rallies / processions / public jalsas at least three days in advance. District / Local Administration shall be responsible for making appropriate security arrangements and regulating such public rallies / processions / public jalsas in such a manner that equal opportunities are provided to those interested in holding public rallies / processions / public jalsas.
- (36) The District Administration shall ensure that no public rallies / processions shall be taken out by one party along places at which meetings are being held by another party.
- (37) The political parties and candidates may hold corner meetings.
- (38) Car rallies are not allowed to travel long distances except if the political parties, candidates or their supporters have pre-arranged corner meetings at specific designated places.
- (39) The organizers in consultation with the District administration shall take steps in advance to arrange for passage of the procession so that there is no blockage of or hindrance to traffic. If the procession is very long, it shall be organized in segments of suitable lengths, so that at convenient intervals, especially at points where the procession has to pass road junctions, the passage of held up traffic could be allowed by stages thus avoiding heavy traffic congestion and inconvenience of the general public.

3. **Polling Day:**

- (40) The Political Parties and candidates shall:
 - (a) Co-operate with the officers on election duty to ensure peaceful and orderly polling and complete freedom to the voters to exercise their franchise without being subjected to any annoyance or obstructions; and
 - (b) Supply to their authorized polling agents badges or identity cards; and
 - (c) Such authorized agents shall also carry their original NICs.
- (41) No candidate or any of his supporters or a polling agent shall interfere or create hindrance in any manner in official functioning of a presiding officer, assistant presiding officer, polling officer or security personnel appointed to perform duty at a polling station

- (42) No candidate or any of his supporters or a polling agent shall resort to violence in any form or manner against a presiding officer, assistant presiding officer, polling officer or security officials or any other person officially deputed to work at a polling station.
- (43) The Political Parties should carry out a comprehensive plan for voters' education regarding marking the ballot paper, casting of vote and while doing so voters shall be informed that the secrecy of ballot shall be maintained.
- (44) In no case the political parties, candidates or their supporters shall establish camps near the polling station on the polling day. However, the Election Commission will provide the SMS facility to the voters through which each voter can get the information regarding his serial number at the voters' list and name and location of the polling station.
- (45) Except the voters, candidates or duly authorized election agents, no one without a valid pass from the Election Commission or Provincial Election Commissioner, District Returning Officer or Returning officer concerned shall enter the polling station or a booth. Foreign / domestic observers and representatives of accredited bodies will also be provided access to witness the election process on production of the identification cards / passes issued to them by the aforesaid Election Commission authorities.
- (46) The District Returning Officer and Returning Officer shall be responsible to ensure implementation of the Code of Conduct, in their capacity as Magistrate First Class, through District / Local administration, district police or other law enforcing agencies, in the area of their jurisdictions, and violation thereof by any candidate or political party shall tantamount to malpractices as per law and rules and shall entail legal action as per law and rules including disqualification of the candidate.

By Order of the Election Commission of Pakistan.

(Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan)
Secretary
Election Commission of Pakistan