

**HANDBOOK
FOR
PRESIDING OFFICERS
FOR
DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION
MANIPUR**

2015

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

ANNEXURE VIII

PRESIDING OFFICER'S DIARY

Given to the District Council of Arizona, my District
..... District Council Constituency.

Number & name of polling station:

No. of poll:

Number of polling officers received locally, if any:

Number of ballot boxes used:

Number of polling agents and the number who were:

No. of candidates who:

Number of ballot papers issued:

Number of electors who voted:

HANDBOOK FOR PRESIDING OFFICERS FOR DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

*(Prepared by adapting the Handbook for Presiding Officers for Election to the House of the
People and State Legislative Assemblies to suit District Council Elections)*

Number of each adjournment:

Number of votes cast:

8 a.m. to 12 a.m.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Number of slips issued at the closing hour of the poll:

Number of officers with details:

Number of votes of:

Number of votes of one hundred names of a polling station:

Number of voters:

Number of voters:

Number of voters and all persons:

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CHAPTER I

BROAD OUTLINES OF DUTIES

1. As a Presiding Officer, you have an important role to play in the conduct of poll. You enjoy full legal power to control the proceedings in the polling station under your charge. It is your primary duty and responsibility to ensure a free and fair poll at your polling station. It is necessary for this purpose to equip yourself fully with the law and procedure and the relevant instructions and directions of the Commission in relation to the conduct of elections so as to enable you to act strictly in accordance with them and give no room for any reasonable complaint.
2. The provisions of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils (Election of Members) Rules, 2009 which have a bearing on your duties as a Presiding Officer are reproduced in **Annexure I** of this Handbook. While detailed instructions for your guidance are contained in the various Chapters of this Handbook, some of the salient and important aspects of your duty are reproduced below:-
 - i) You must acquaint yourself with members of your polling party and keep contact with them right from your appointment as presiding officer.
 - ii) You must keep in ready possession all relevant instructions of the Returning Officer.
 - iii) You must have a clear idea of the location of your polling station and your itinerary to and from the polling station.
 - iv) You should attend all rehearsals and training classes without fail.
 - v) While collecting election materials, you should ensure that all items have been handed over to you. The most important items are ballot papers, ballot boxes, marked copy of electoral roll and other copy, arrow cross mark, rubber stamp for voting, distinguishing mark, statutory forms, sealing wax and indelible ink.
 - vi) On arrival at the polling station, you should have clear idea of the arrangements to be made for setting up a proper polling station especially to secure secrecy of voting, regulation of queue of voters, protection of poll proceedings free from outside interference etc.
 - vii) You are required to sign your name in full on the back of each ballot paper before issue (but not on the counterfoil of the ballot paper). To enable the commencement of poll at the appointed time, you should keep in advance some ballot papers signed.

- viii) You are also required to affix on the back of each ballot paper and its counterfoil distinguishing mark of your polling station with the rubber stamp given to you.
- ix) The identity of an elector should be properly verified by the First Polling Officer and the unofficial identity slips carried by an elector should not be accepted as a matter of routine and ballot paper issued on that basis.
- x) The instructions for establishing the identity of the elector should be followed carefully. The First Polling Officer is not required to check the left forefinger of the elector with a view to seeing whether there is any indelible ink mark, faint or, otherwise. This work will be done by the Second Polling Officer.
- xi) After an elector is identified with reference to his entry with particulars in the electoral roll, his left forefinger should be marked with the indelible ink. His signature or thumb impression should also be obtained on the counterfoil of the ballot paper and then only he should be issued with the ballot paper.
- xii) In order to ensure the indelible ink mark put on the voter's finger has properly dried up and developed into a distinct indelible ink mark it may be necessary that his left forefinger is again checked up by the last Polling Officer before the elector leaves the station. If the ink mark is not distinct or found removed, the elector's forefinger should again be marked with the indelible ink.
- xiii) After an elector has been identified in the marked copy of the electoral roll, the entry relating to the elector should be underlined; a tick mark (✓) will also be put in the case of a female elector. The serial number of the ballot paper should not be noted at all in the marked copy of the electoral roll against the elector's name. If an elector refuses to put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil, he should not be issued a ballot paper.
- xiv) The ballot papers need not be issued to electors in consecutive serial order as that would enable the polling agents to work out the serial number of ballot paper that is being issued to individual voters. At the same time, if the first three or four bundles of ballot papers (50 in number in a bundle) are shuffled and bundles used at random and not in consecutive serial order, then the object would be served. At the close of the poll, the numbers of the ballot papers issued to the electors should be in continuous and unbroken series to avoid confusion in drawing up the ballot paper account.

- xv) If an elector to whom a ballot paper issued refuses, even after warning given to him, to observe the procedure relating to the maintenance of secrecy of voting within the polling station, the ballot paper issued to him shall, whether he has recorded his vote or not, be taken from him by you or under your direction and thereafter cancelled.
- xvi) There are declarations to be made by you and signed by polling agents present in the polling station at the commencement and at the end of the poll.
- xvii) You have to go on recording the relevant events as and when they occur in the Presiding Officer's diary given to you.
- xviii) You have to regulate the proceedings in the polling station for peaceful and smooth conduct of poll. You require much tact but at the same time should be firm and impartial.
- xix) You are required to grant authenticated copies of ballot paper account to the polling agent of each candidate present at the close of the poll.
- xx) You should ensure that after the closing hour of poll, nobody is allowed to join the queue and for that purpose, you should distribute slips to all electors standing in the queue starting the operation from the end of the queue.
- xxi) You should follow carefully the instructions for sealing election papers in different covers so that no avoidable mistake is committed which cannot be rectified later.
- xxii) It is your responsibility to hand over the ballot boxes and other election materials after poll under proper receipt.

3. Your duties in brief at various stages are given in **ANNEXURE II** under five different heads for your convenience.

CHAPTER II

FORMATION OF POLLING PARTY AND REHEARSALS

Polling Party

1. Your party will consist of yourself, three Polling Officers and one Polling Peon. While appointing the polling party, your Returning Officer will authorize one of the Polling Officers in your party to perform the duties of Presiding Officer in case you are to be unavoidably absent from the polling station.

Contact with the other members of the polling parties.

2. Ascertain, as soon as it is practicable, who the other members of your polling party are going to be. It is necessary for you to have the residential addresses of all the Polling Officers appointed to work under you. You should go over with them as frequently as possible, and explain to them, the part to be taken at the poll by each member of the party. Unless there is team work, your task as Presiding Officer will be more difficult.

Polling rehearsals.

3.1 Attend as many polling rehearsals as you can. This is essential for obtaining a clear idea of the procedure to be followed and for understanding the provisions of the law.

3.2 You must take with you the Polling Officer authorized to perform your duties in your unavoidable absence to these rehearsals. It is very necessary that you and such authorized Polling Officer should do the various operations with the ballot box yourself/himself and should not be content with simply watching the demonstration.

3.3 You should also prepare a sample ballot paper account.

3.4 Even in case you had worked as a Presiding Officer or a Polling Officer in some earlier election, you must attend the training classes/rehearsals, as the election law and procedure are being amended from time to time and it is necessary that you should follow the revised procedure as otherwise the conduct of election may not be in accordance with the latest procedures or instructions. Further, it is always advantageous to refresh your memory even if there is no change in the law and procedure.

Application for postal ballot paper.

4. If you are an elector in any District Council Constituency and are unable to vote at the polling station where you are entitled to cast your vote by reason of your being on election duty, you are entitled to vote by post for which you should send an application for postal ballot paper in **Form 21** along with a copy of your appointment order as Presiding Officer to the Returning Officer so as to reach him at least 7 days or such shorter period as the Returning Officer may allow, before the date of poll.

CHAPTER III

COLLECTION OF POLLING MATERIALS

Polling materials

1. On the day previous to the poll or on the day of departure to the polling station you will be supplied with all the election materials, a list of which is set out in **ANNEXURE III**. Before leaving for your polling station make sure that you have received all the items. Check in particular that each of the ballot boxes is in working order, that there is sufficient quantity of indelible ink in each of the two phials supplied to you and that the stamp pads are not dry. Compare the two copies of the electoral rolls carefully and see that they are identical in every respect and that the relevant part given to you pertains to the area for which the polling station has been set up and that it is complete in all respects along with the supplements, in every copy.
2. Check also that the ballot papers supplied to you are for the constituency in which the polling station assigned to you is situated and that they are not defective in any respect. You should also check that the serial numbers tally with the details supplied to you. You must meticulously check each and every ballot paper and its counterfoil in every stitched bundle of ballot papers issued to you to ensure that the same serial number is correctly printed both on the ballot paper and the corresponding counterfoil. If you find that the numbers on the counterfoil and the ballot paper do not tally, you should cancel that ballot paper and should not issue it to the elector. Defective ballot papers cancelled by you at the polling station may also be kept in the cover containing cancelled ballot papers under rule 56 and mentioned in **Chapter XIX**. On the counterfoil of such ballot paper will be endorsed "Cancelled, defective ballot paper". It has to be accounted for in item 4(b) of ballot paper account in Part-I of **Form 29**.

CHAPTER IV

SET UP OF POLLING STATIONS

Itinerary

1. Have a clear idea of the routes and timings that you have to follow to reach your station or stations. Details of the itinerary including the means of transport for yourself and for the other members belonging to your party will be supplied to you in advance.

Arrival at the Polling Station

2. You should be at the polling station with your party at least 45 minutes before the poll is due to commence.

Absence of Polling Officer

3. If any Polling Officer appointed for your polling station is absent from the polling station, you have the power to appoint another on the spot in his place. Later you have to inform the Returning Officer of such appointment formally. Do not, however, appoint any person who is an active supporter of any of the candidates or an active opponent of any candidate.

Delegation of duties of Presiding Officer

- 4.1 If you yourself have to be absent from the polling station on account of illness or other unavoidable reason, the Polling Officer previously authorized in this behalf by the Returning Officer will act in your place. He will exercise all the powers and duties of the Presiding Officer.
- 4.2 You may also delegate any of your functions in the polling station to any Polling Officer working with you at the polling station. Such delegation, however, does not relieve you of your own responsibility as you are in overall charge of the entire polling station in any case.

Set up of Polling Stations

- 5.1 On your arrival at the place where the polling station is to be set up, inspect the building proposed for the purpose. A diagram of a model polling station showing the layout is set out in **ANNEXURE IV**. It is open to you to make minor modifications in the actual set up of the polling station, but make sure –

- (a) that there is enough space for the voters to wait outside the polling station;
- (b) that there is separate waiting space for men and women as far as practicable;
- (c) that there is separate entrance and exit for voters. Even if there is only one door to the room housing the polling station, separate entrance and exit can be provided with the help of bamboos and ropes in the middle of the doorway.
- (d) that there is easy flow of voters from the time they enter the polling station to the time they leave it and there is no criss-cross movement within the polling station;
- (e) that the polling agents should be seated in such a way that they can see the face of an elector as and when he enters the polling station and is identified by the first Polling Officer so that they can challenge the identity of the elector, if need be. But he should not in any event be seated in a place where he has the chance of seeing the voter actually marking ballot paper on the symbol of his choice.
- (f) that the seating arrangement of all the Polling Officers should be such that they are not in a position to see the voter actually marking the ballot paper;
- (g) that the inside of the voting compartments is sufficiently lighted. If necessary, arrange for a suitable light to be provided for each compartment.

5.2 If more polling stations than one are located in the same building you should satisfy yourself that necessary arrangements have been made for segregating the voters and making them wait in different parts of the space in front of each polling station without causing confusion.

5.3 If the polling station is located in a private building, the building and the area around it up to a radius of 200 metres should be under your control. No watch and ward or other personnel connected with owner, whether armed or unarmed, should be allowed to remain either at the polling station or within a radius of hundred metres around it. The security arrangements at the polling station and within the above area will be entirely the responsibility of the Police under your control.

- 5.4 No photos of leaders of political parties or slogans having a bearing on elections should be exhibited and if they are already there, you should take steps to remove them till poll is over.
- 5.5 No cooking or lighting of fire for any purpose should be allowed inside the polling station during the day of the poll.

Display of notice

- 6.1 Display prominently outside each polling station –
- (a) a notice specifying the polling area or the particulars of electors to be served by the polling station; and
 - (b) a copy of the list of contesting candidates in **Form 12** and wherever practicable the facsimile of the symbol of each candidate.
- 6.2 The language of the notice should be the same as for the list of contesting candidates and the order of the names should also be the same.

CHAPTER V

ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES TO POLLING OFFICERS

Voting procedure in polling station and duties of Polling Officers

1. For efficient and smooth conduct of poll at your polling station, you should be thoroughly conversant with the procedure that is to be followed from the time an elector comes into the polling station till he leaves it after casting his vote. Such voting procedure and the duties which each Polling Officer has to perform in this whole operation are explained below :

First Polling Officer

- 2.1 On entering the polling station the elector will proceed direct to the First Polling Officer who will be in-charge of the marked copy of the electoral roll and responsible for identification of the electors. Usually each voter comes in with an unofficial identity slip which he has received from a candidate. The slip should be on plain white paper and may contain the name of the elector, his serial number in the electoral roll, part number of the electoral roll and the number and name of the polling station where he is to cast his vote. The slip should not contain the name of the candidate and/or facsimile of symbol allotted to him. If the voter does not have any such identity slip, the Polling Officer will himself ascertain his name, house number etc., and will then locate his name from the electoral roll kept by him. The elector should not be compelled to bring an identity slip, nor should he be turned away solely because he has not brought such a slip. The Polling Officer should not treat the identity slip brought by an elector as a conclusive proof of his identity. The procedure in this regard has been explained in **Chapter XII**.

2.2 In case no identity slip is brought by the elector, the first polling officer will himself locate the name of the elector in the electoral roll and after checking it with the particulars in the relevant entry in the roll, will call out loudly the serial number and the name of the elector to the hearing of the polling agents and the polling officers.

2.3 In case an elector brings an identity slip, his identity is to be established under the procedure as explained in *Chapter XII*. Thereafter the identity slip brought by the elector should be torn into pieces and put in the Waste Paper Basket supplied.

2.4 Such torn slips should not be thrown on the floor. If there is no challenge as regards the identity of the voter, the Polling Officer will underline in every case the entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll with him and where the elector is a female, put a (V) mark also on the left hand side of the name of the female elector.

N.B. At the end of the day's polling he should count the number of men and women voters who have voted and record the result in the Presiding Officer's diary.

2.5 The voter will then move to the Second Polling Officer.

Second Polling Officer.

3.1 The Second Polling Officer will be in-charge of indelible ink. He will inspect the voter's left forefinger to see that it does not bear any sign or trace of indelible ink and then put a mark with the indelible ink above the root of the nail in such a way that the ink also spreads on the ridge between the skin and the root of the nail and a clear mark is left on the forefinger. Note that the voter need not be touched at the time of applying the indelible ink on his left forefinger. While applying excess ink should not be taken with the whole length of the rod. Only the tip of the rod should be dipped in the ink. This will avoid excess in-take of the ink. The glass (plastic) rod after dipping in the ink should be gently pressed on the finger and rotated so that a clear mark is left on the finger. It must be ensured that the voter's forefinger is perfectly in the horizontal position at the time of the application of the ink and for at least thirty-seconds immediately after the application of the ink so that the solvent gets evaporated. If the rod is only lightly touched or rubbed against the voter's finger, it will merely leave a smudge which is not sufficient. In case it is noticed that an elector has applied any oily or greasy substance on his finger in order to neutralize the indelible ink mark to be put on his finger, such oily or greasy substance should be removed by the polling officer with the help of the piece of cloth or rag supplied before putting indelible ink mark on the finger of the elector. The voter should not be allowed to rub off the mark for at least half a minute after it has been applied on the finger. If an elector has no left forefinger, then indelible ink should be applied on any such finger which he has on his left hand. If he does not have any finger on his left hand, the ink should be applied on his right forefinger, and if he has no right forefinger, on any other finger which he has on his right hand starting with his right forefinger. If he has no finger on either hand, the ink should be applied on such extremity (stump) of his left or right hand as he possesses.

3.2. At the time of fresh poll/countermanded poll/repoll, the marking with indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored and fresh marking with indelible ink should be put at the root of the nail of the voter's left middle finger in such a way that a portion of the ink also spreads on the ridge between the skin and the root of the nail and a clear mark is left:

3.3 The voter will then move to the Third Polling Officer.

Third Polling Officer

4 The Third Polling Officer will be in-charge of ballot papers. As the First Polling Officer reads aloud the serial number of the elector, the Third Polling Officer will record on the counterfoil of the ballot paper the electoral part number and serial number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll. He will then obtain the signature/thumb impression of the voter on the counterfoil of the ballot paper. For the purpose of obtaining the thumb impression the stamp pad of purple colour supplied to your polling station should be used and for obtaining signature the ball-point pen should be used. For the use of voters whose thumb impression has been taken on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, a wet piece of cloth may be kept on the table of this Polling Officer for removing the ink. The ballot paper will then be detached from the counterfoil with the help of a flat metal rule having a sharp edge on the lengthwise side. The ballot paper will thereafter be delivered to the voter and he will be directed to the Fourth Polling Officer. No ballot paper should be delivered to an elector unless he has put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of the ballot paper.

Fourth Polling Officer

5.1 The Fourth Polling Officer will be in-charge of the arrow cross mark rubber stamps for marking the ballot paper. He will take the ballot paper from the elector. He will first fold the ballot paper twice, first vertically and then horizontally, in such a way that the distinguishing mark is clearly visible at the top right hand corner on the back of the ballot paper. He will then unfold the ballot paper and hand it over to the elector. He will also give to the voter an inked rubber stamp and, if specifically requested by the voter, instruct him by making a mark with it on a piece of plain paper. The voter will then be asked to proceed to a voting compartment. After recording his vote, the elector will refold the ballot paper along the lines on which it was folded before it was issued to him, come out of the voting compartment and insert the ballot paper into the ballot box.

5.2 Before the voter leaves the polling station, the Fourth Polling Officer will examine the left forefinger of the elector and satisfy that the indelible ink mark is clearly impressed on the skin. If the voter has removed the mark or the mark is not clear, the voter should be marked again in such a way that the marking is clear and is not immediately removed.

CHAPTER VI

REGULATION OF ENTRY INTO AND SEATING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE POLLING STATION

Persons entitled to enter the Polling Stations

1.1 Apart from the electors assigned to your polling station, the following persons can be admitted into the Polling Station :-

- (a) Polling Officers;
- (b) Each candidate, his election agent and one polling agent of each candidate at a time;
- (c) Persons authorized by the Commission;
- (d) Public servants on duty in connection with election;
- (e) A child in arms accompanying an elector;
- (f) A person accompanying a blind or an infirm voter who cannot move without help; and
- (g) Such other persons as you may from time to time admit for the purpose of identifying voters or otherwise assisting you in taking the poll.

1.2 The Returning Officers have been asked to issue photo identity cards to the contesting candidates. In case a necessity arises, you may ask for its production. Similarly, the election agents of the candidates can be asked to produce the duplicate copy of their appointment letters, which is attested by the Returning Officer and also bears the photograph of the election agent.

1.3 You should note that the term "Public servant on duty in connection with election" does not normally include police officers. Such officers, whether in uniform or in plain clothes, should not, as a general rule, be allowed to enter inside the polling booth, unless you decide to call them in for the maintenance of law and order or some similar purpose.

1.4 Similarly, security personnel accompanying, if any, an elector or candidate or his election agent or polling agent should also not be allowed to enter the polling station.

1.5 You should also note that the above expression, "Public servant on duty in connection with election" does not include the Ministers, State Ministers and Deputy Ministers of the Union and the States.

1.6 Entry of persons should be strictly regulated as detailed above. Otherwise, the smooth and orderly conduct of poll may be vitiated. You should allow only three or four electors to enter the polling station at a time.

1.7 If you have a reasonable doubt about the presence of any person about whose credentials you have a reasonable suspicion in the polling booth, you can have him searched, if necessary, even though the person concerned may be in possession of a valid authority letter to enter the polling booth.

1.8 In the performance of your duties, you are only bound by the instructions of the State Election Commission. You are not to take orders from or show any favour to your official superiors or political leaders including Ministers. Even in the matter of requests for entry into the polling booth from these, you should allow them only if they are in possession of a valid authority letter issued by the State Election Commission.

1.9 A village officer or other officer or a woman attendant employed by you for helping you in the identification of electors or to assist you otherwise in the poll should normally be seated outside the entrance to the polling station. He/she should be admitted into the polling station only when he/she is required for identification of a particular voter or for assisting you for a particular purpose in connection with the taking of the poll. No one inside the polling station should be allowed to influence or try to influence the voters by words or gestures to vote in a particular way.

Attendance of polling agents

2.1 The polling agent of the candidates should be asked to reach the polling station at least 15 minutes before commencement of poll in order to be present when you are going through the preliminaries. If any part of these preliminaries had already been gone through, the proceedings need not be commenced de novo to accommodate any late comer.

2.2 The law does not specify any time limit for the appointment of polling agents and even if a polling agent turns up late at a polling station, he should be allowed to participate in the further proceedings at the polling station.

Production of appointment letters by polling agents

3. Every polling agent must produce before you the appointment letter in **Form 17** by which the candidate or his election agent has appointed him. Check that the appointment is for your polling station. The polling agent should then complete the document and sign the declaration therein in your presence and then deliver it to you before he can be admitted into the polling station. Preserve all such appointment letters and at the end of the poll send them in a cover to the Returning Officer along with other documents.

Passes for polling agents

4 Each candidate can appoint one polling agent and one relief polling agent at each polling station. However, only one polling agent of a candidate should be allowed inside the polling station at any given time. Give every polling agent who is admitted into the polling station a permit or pass on the authority of which he can come in and go out of the polling station as may be necessary.

Seating of polling agents.

5. Give the polling agents seats close behind the Polling Officers in-charge of marked copy of the electoral roll and ballot papers. Where this is not practicable because of the situation of the door for entrance, they may be given seats just opposite these polling officers. In any seating arrangement they should be provided opportunity of seeing the face of the electors and challenging their identity whenever necessary. They should not be allowed to move about in the polling station.

Smoking to be prohibited inside polling station

6. You should not allow smoking inside the polling station. If any of the polling agents desires to smoke, he may go out of the polling station without causing any dislocation to the polling.

Facilities to press representatives and photographers

7.1 Subject to the maintenance of peace and order there is no objection to any photographer taking photographs of a crowd of voters lining up outside the polling station.

7.2 Neither the District Election Officer nor the Returning Officer is empowered to authorize any person who is not an elector or who is not required to assist you in taking the poll, to enter a polling station. Any such person including publicity officials of the State Government should not be allowed inside a Polling Station without a letter of authority from the State Election Commission. In no circumstances will any photograph be allowed to be taken of a voter marking his ballot paper.

Wearing of badges etc. inside polling station.

8.1 No person should be allowed within the polling station or within 100 metres thereof wearing badges, emblems, etc. bearing the names of candidates or political leaders and / or their symbols or pictorial representation thereof.

8.2 The polling agents may, however, display on their person a badge showing the name of the candidate whose agents they are.

CHAPTER VII

PREPARATION OF BALLOT PAPERS FOR ISSUE

Preliminaries before the poll

1. In order that the poll is commenced at the hour fixed for the purpose, you should start making preliminary preparations, like the preparation of ballot papers for issue to electors, preparation of ballot box for reception of votes etc. at least 15 minutes before the time fixed for the commencement of poll.

Preparation of ballot papers for issue :

(a) *Affixing of distinguishing mark*

2.1 You will be supplied with ballot papers with counterfoils equal to the number of voters allotted to your polling station, rounded off to the next ten. The ballot papers will be ordinarily in bundles of 50 each and one or more bundles containing less than 50 ballot papers. Every ballot paper before issue to an elector is required to be affixed with a distinguishing mark on its back. The distinguishing mark has to be affixed at the top right hand corner both on the back of counterfoil and also on the back of the ballot paper. A rubber stamp containing the distinguishing mark for your polling station will be supplied to you. To facilitate the issue of ballot papers without interruption and to avoid the chance of any ballot paper being issued without the distinguishing mark you should have the distinguishing mark affixed the day before the poll or on the day of poll before the poll is commenced as directed by the Returning Officer. Where it is not found possible to rubber stamp the distinguishing mark on the ballot paper on the counterfoil on account of any unavoidable reasons, it would suffice if the distinguishing mark is noted by hand in ink on each ballot paper and its counterfoil but circle need not be drawn.

2.2 Where the number of contesting candidates exceeds 9, the ballot paper would have been printed in two or more columns and the manner of affixing the distinguishing mark on such ballot papers will be slightly different. In such case, the distinguishing mark may be put on the back of the ballot paper immediately on the top right side of the shaded line dividing the ballot paper vertically into two halves. Though such middle line will be printed only on the front side of the ballot paper, its impression on the back of the ballot paper will be visible through the ballot paper. The object of affixing the distinguishing mark in this way is that it should be clearly seen from outside after the ballot paper is folded for being put in the ballot box. The mark on the counterfoil will continue to be on the top right hand corner.

(b) *Presiding Officer's signature on ballot papers*

3.1 To remove all suspicion regarding the genuineness of ballot papers, the Presiding Officer of each polling station is required to sign his name in full on the back of each ballot paper before its issue to the voter. You should sign your name in full on the back of each ballot paper before it is issued to the voter, but you need not sign on the counterfoil.

3.2 You may sign about two bundles of 50 ballot papers each immediately before the commencement of the poll. This should be done a few minutes before the commencement of the poll. Usually it would take only about 5 minutes to sign 100 ballot papers and so the signing of the ballot papers should begin not more than 15 minutes before the commencement of the poll. You should sign the remaining ballot papers according to necessity as the poll progresses. You should ensure that only the exact number of ballot papers required for issue to electors is signed by you.

3.3 At the closing stages of the poll, it would be necessary for you to sign each ballot paper as and when a voter turns up for voting. This will ensure that no signed ballot paper is kept in the bundle of unused ballot papers after the poll.

Serial number of ballot paper to be used at Polling Station and shuffling of bundles

4.1 Before commencing the poll, you should allow the polling agents to see the bundles of ballot papers and note the first and last of serial numbers of the ballot papers which will be used at the polling station and also any ballot paper duly cancelled by you on account of its defective nature.

4.2 The polling agents should not, however, be permitted to take notes of the serial numbers of any ballot paper issued to any voter. Nor should they take any other notes which may enable one to work out these serial numbers as this would destroy the secrecy of the vote. You have the authority to prevent any one from taking any such notes as this amounts to misconduct as being an attempt to violate the secrecy of the vote. You are competent to seize and forfeit any document on which a polling agent may have taken any such note. If any polling agent persists in taking such notes in spite of warnings, you should not allow him to remain in the polling station.

4.3 In order to see that the polling agents are not able to note down the serial number of ballot papers issued to particular voters the ballot papers may not be issued in consecutive serial order but may be issued at random. As shuffling of individual ballot papers in stitched bundles will not be possible, you should do the shuffling in respect of the bundles by issuing the first three or four bundles of ballot papers at random to the Polling Officer in-charge of ballot papers and not in consecutive serial order. This process of shuffling of bundles of ballot papers should not, however, be repeated towards the close of the poll so that on the completion of the poll the serial numbers of ballot papers issued to voters are, as far as possible, in continuous unbroken series.

CHAPTER VIII

PREPARATION OF BALLOT BOX AND PROCEDURE FOR USE OF ADDITIONAL BALLOT BOX

Preparation of Ballot Box

1. You may begin preparing the ballot box for the poll at least 15 minutes before the hour fixed for the commencement of poll. The instructions for operating the ballot box are contained in ANNEXURE V. Allow the ballot box to be inspected by the polling agents and demonstrate to them that it is empty.

Identification of Ballot Box

- 2.1 Put inside the box a Label duly filled up with all the details for identification in case the necessity arises at the time of counting. Also firmly attach on the handle of the ballot box a Label showing all the details.
- 2.2 The Label will be in the following form :-

No. & name of DCC.....
Polling Station No.
Sl.No. of Ballot Box
Date of Poll

Signature of Presiding Officer

- 2.3 The Label inside the box will give the serial number and name of the constituency, serial number and name of the polling station and the date of the poll, but not the serial number of the ballot box.
- 2.4 The Label outside the ballot box will give the above particulars and in addition it will also show the serial number of the ballot box as indicated below :-
- 2.5 The serial number of ballot box should be a fractional number giving the serial number of the box as well as the total number of ballot boxes used. Thus if three ballot boxes have been used at a polling station, the serial number for a ballot box will be entered as follows:-
 - i) On the first ballot box - - - - - 1/3
 - ii) On the second ballot box - - - - - 2/3
 - iii) On the third ballot box - - - - - 3/3
- 2.6 The serial numbers on the ballot boxes should be given at the close of the poll.

CHAPTER IX

COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLL

Commencement of the poll

1. Commence the poll at the stroke of the hour fixed for the purpose. Your preliminaries should be over by then. If unfortunately the preliminaries are not over, admit about half a dozen voters at the hour fixed for the commencement of the poll and let the Polling Officers deal with them in regard to their identification, etc. until the preliminaries by you are over. This sort of overlapping of preliminaries is very undesirable and every effort should be made to avoid it. Even if for any unforeseen reason you do not commence the poll at the appointed hour, you should not extend the appointed closing time except as provided in *Chapter XVIII*.

Warning about secrecy of voting.

2. Before commencing the poll, explain to all present their duty to maintain the secrecy of the voting.

Precautions for indelible ink.

3. Ask the Polling Officer in-charge of indelible ink to take adequate precautions to see that the phial containing the indelible ink is kept in such manner that it does not get tilted and the ink spilt during the poll. For that purpose take some sand or loose earth in a cup or an empty cigarette tin or some such broad-bottomed vessel, and push the phial down three quarters of its length into the centre of the vessel so that it is steadily embedded in the sand or earth. Also ensure that the plastic rod attached to the cork is left standing in the phial and not taken out except for the purpose of marking the voter's forefinger. The rod should always be held with its marking end pointing vertically downwards. Otherwise some of the ink will drip down the rod and spoil the fingers of the person using it.

Marked copy of the electoral roll

4. Before the commencement of poll, you should also show to the polling agents and others present at the polling station that the copy of electoral roll intended to be used as the marked copy does not contain any marks or entries other than the marks against the entries of those voters to whom postal ballot papers have been issued.

Entry of voters to Polling Station to be regulated

5. There should be separate queues for men and women voters. The person who enforces the queues will allow three or four voters into the polling station at a time as you direct. Other voters waiting to come in should be made to stand in queue outside. Infirm voters and women voters with babies in arms may be given precedence over other voters in the queue. Men and women voters should be admitted into the polling station in alternate batches. The formation of more than one queue for men voters or for women voters should not be allowed.

CHAPTER X

SAFE GUARDS FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTION

Declarations by Presiding Officer as safeguards for ensuring free and fair election

1. In order to ensure that you have duly carried out the instructions contained in the foregoing chapters which are necessary safeguards for ensuring free and fair elections, you are required to read out the declaration prescribed in Part I of **ANNEXURE VI** before the commencement of the poll. You should read out the declaration aloud to the hearing of all persons present in the polling station and sign the declaration and obtain thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents as are present and are willing to affix the same. If any polling agent declines to affix his signature on the declaration, the Presiding Officer should record the name of such polling agent in that declaration.
2. At the time of using subsequent ballot box(es), you should make another declaration in Part-II of **ANNEXURE-VI** in the same manner.
3. At the end of the poll also, you should record a further declaration in Part III of **ANNEXURE VI** in the same manner. The declaration will be put into a separate packet and delivered to the Returning Officer after the conclusion of the poll along with the ballot paper account.

CHAPTER XI

ENFORCEMENT OF ELECTION LAW IN AND AROUND POLLING STATION

Impartiality essential

1. Your tact, firmness and impartiality, particularly the last, are the most important safeguards against any breach of the peace. Treat all candidates equally and decide fairly and justly every disputed point. Needless to say, neither you nor any other officer at your polling station should do any act which could be interpreted as furthering the prospects of any candidates at the election.

Ban on canvassing

2. Canvassing for votes should not be allowed within one hundred metres of the polling station.

Candidates' election booths

3. No election booths of the candidates should be allowed to be set up as such booths pose many difficulties in the way of holding free, fair and smooth elections by creating obstructions to voters, confrontation among workers of various candidates and law and order problems. However, the candidates may provide one table and two chairs

for the use of their agents and workers for the distribution of un-official identity slips to voters beyond a distance of 200 metres from the polling station with an umbrella or a piece of tarpaulin over their head to protect them from the sun/rain. No crowd should be allowed to collect around such tables. If any instance of violation of the above instructions of the Commission is brought to your notice, you should report the matter to the Sector Magistrate or other officials responsible for maintenance of law and order around your polling station for necessary remedial action by them.

Removal of disorderly persons

4. Any person who misconducts himself or fails to obey your lawful directions during the poll may be removed from the polling station on your orders by any Police Officer or other persons authorized by you.

CHAPTER XII

VERIFICATION OF ELECTOR'S IDENTITY AND PROCEDURE IN CASE OF CHALLENGE

Verification of elector's identity

1.1 As has already been explained in *Chapter V* an elector on entering the polling station will proceed direct to the First Polling Officer who will be in-charge of the marked copy of the electoral roll and responsible for identification of electors. The Polling Officer should properly verify his identity with reference to the entry in the electoral roll.

1.2 Usually, each voter brings with him an unofficial identity slip which might have been issued to him by a candidate or his agents. This slip should be on a plain white paper and may contain the name of the elector, his serial number in the electoral roll, part number of the electoral roll and the number and name of the polling station where he is to cast his vote. This slip should not contain the name of the candidate and/or facsimile of symbol allotted to him. If any slip has been issued by a candidate or his agent in violation of these instructions and is brought to the polling station, it should be brought to the notice of the polling agent of the candidate concerned forthwith for putting an immediate end to such violation.

1.3 It should be noted that carrying of unofficial identity slip by an elector does not guarantee the identity of the voter, nor does it absolve the Polling Officer of his duty and responsibility of satisfying himself about the identity of such voter.

1.4 The First Polling Officer in-charge of the marked copy of the electoral roll and identification of electors should not treat the identity of an elector established by the mere production of an 'unofficial identity slip' which he brings to the polling station. Though

such a slip will help in locating the entries relating to an elector in the electoral roll, it cannot be automatically taken for granted that the person producing the slip is that particular voter. Further an illiterate voter cannot read the entries in the unofficial identity slip and satisfy himself that the slip held by him/her actually relates to him/her. Therefore, the First Polling Officer should simply take the slip and read out only the Serial Number of the entry of the elector in the electoral roll and not read out his/her name and other particulars from the slip. Thereafter, the Polling Officer should ask the person to announce his/her name loudly and if necessary other particulars relating to the entry so as to ensure that he/she is the genuine voter producing the identity slip. If full satisfaction is not obtained, the person may be directed to present himself before the Presiding Officer, who should make a further probe to satisfy himself about the identity of the elector. The Presiding Officer should not hesitate to hand over the elector to the police in case he is proved to be an impersonator.

1.5 Though normally a voter coming to a polling station is presumed to be the genuine voter, this presumption is not irrefutable. If from the surrounding circumstances like the difference in the age of the elector given in the electoral roll and the age of the person as ascertainable from his appearance, the Polling Officer entertains any doubt about the identity of the voter before him, he should satisfy himself about the real identity and the genuineness of the voter. In such a case he should not accept the identity of the voter on the mere production of the identity slip and should refer the matter to the Presiding Officer for his decision. Otherwise also, the Polling Officer should make test check of identity of voters with reference to unofficial identity slips brought by them.

List of dead, absent and allegedly bogus voter.

2. It is expected that polling agents may bring with them a copy of the list of the names of dead, absent and allegedly bogus voters. The candidate may supply similar list to you. If any person claims to be a voter whose name is mentioned in those lists, you should check that person's identity rigorously. This will not amount to a formal challenge.

Challenging a voter's identity

3. Every person whose name is entered in the electoral roll is entitled to vote at the election. Unless, there is a challenge by a candidate or his election or polling agents, or unless you are clearly satisfied that he is a bogus voter it should normally be presumed that the person claiming to be a voter and giving out the name and other details correctly is that voter. If there is a challenge or if you feel any reasonable doubt about the identity of the person from the surrounding circumstances, you should hold a summary inquiry and decide the question.

Challenge fee

4. You should not entertain any challenge by a candidate or his election/polling agent of a voter's identity until the challenger pays five rupees in cash. After the amount has been paid, furnish a receipt therefor to the challenger. Warn the person challenged about the penalty for personation, read the relevant entry in the electoral roll in full and ask him whether he is the person referred to in that entry, enter his name and address in the List of Challenged Votes (**Form 26**) and ask him to sign or affix his thumb impression thereon. If he refuses to do so, do not allow him to vote.

Summary inquiry

5. First ask the challenger to produce evidence to show that the person challenged is not the voter that he claims to be. If the challenger fails to adduce prima facie evidence in support of his challenge, disallow the challenge and allow the person challenged to vote. If the challenger succeeds in making out a prima facie case that the person is not the voter in question, you should call upon the latter to produce evidence to rebut the challenge i.e. to prove that he is the voter he claims to be. If he proves his claim by such evidence, allow him to vote. If he fails to do so, hold that the challenge has been established. In the course of the inquiry, you are free to ascertain the true fact from the village officer, the neighbours of the voter in question and any other person present. While taking evidence you may administer an oath to the person challenged or any other person offering to give evidence. In case the challenge has been established you should not allow the person to vote.

Return of forfeiture of challenge fee

6. Immediately after the inquiry is over return the challenge fee of five rupees to the person who made the challenge after taking his receipt in Column 9 of **Form 26** and on the counterfoil of the relevant receipt in the receipt book in every case except where you are of the opinion that the challenge was frivolous or was not made in good faith. In the later case forfeit the challenge fee to Government and do not return it to the challenger and enter the word "forfeited" in Column 9 of **Form 26** and the relevant counterfoil in the receipt book instead of taking the depositor's signature or thumb impression.

Clerical and printing errors in the roll to be overlooked

7. The particulars in respect of a voter as entered in the electoral roll are sometimes incorrectly printed or have become out of date e.g., regarding the exact age of the voter. You should overlook mere clerical and printing errors in any entry relating to a voter in the poll provided that you are otherwise satisfied about the identity of the person claiming to be the voter according to other particulars entered in electoral roll.

Eligibility of a voter not to be questioned

8. So long as the identity of a voter is established to your satisfaction he has the right to vote. No question can be raised at the polling station about the eligibility of such a person to be a voter. For instance you are not entitled to hold any inquiry into the question whether he is over 18 years of age or ordinarily resides in the constituency.

CHAPTER XIII

APPLICATION OF INDELIBLE INK AND OBTAINING SIGNATURE/THUMB IMPRESSION OF ELECTOR BEFORE ISSUE OF BALLOT PAPER

Inspection of voter's left forefinger and application of indelible ink before issue of ballot paper.

1.1 As soon as may be after the identity of an elector has been verified by the First Polling Officer and if there is no challenge as to the elector's identity, his left forefinger will be marked with indelible ink by the Second Polling Officer in the manner described in para 3.1 of *Chapter V*. If any elector refuses to allow his left forefinger to be inspected or marked with indelible ink or has already such a mark on his left forefinger or does any act with a view to removing the ink, he shall not be supplied with any ballot paper or allowed to vote.

1.2 In case it is noticed that an elector has applied any oily or greasy substance on his finger in order to neutralize the indelible ink mark to be put on his finger, such oily or greasy substance should be removed by the polling officer with the help of a piece of cloth or rag before putting indelible ink mark on the finger of that elector.

1.3 Further, before the elector leaves the polling station, his left forefinger should again be checked by the last polling officer and if the elector has removed the ink or the ink mark is indistinct, his left forefinger should again be marked with indelible ink.

Application of ink at Fresh Poll

2. At the time of fresh poll/countermanded poll/repoll, the marking with indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored and fresh marking with indelible ink should be put at the root of the nail of the voter's left middle finger in such a way that a portion of the ink also spreads on the ridge between the skin and the root of the nail and a clear mark is left.

Application of indelible ink when elector has no left forefinger

3. If an elector has no left forefinger, then indelible ink should be applied on any such finger which he has on his left hand. If he does not have any fingers on his half hand, the ink should be applied on his right forefinger and if he has no right forefinger, on any other finger which he has on his right hand starting with his right forefinger. If he has no finger on either hand, ink should be applied on such extremity (stump) of his left or right hand as he possesses.

Signature/thumb impression of elector before issue of ballot paper

4.1 After the left forefinger of the elector has been marked with indelible ink as aforesaid, the polling officer in-charge of ballot papers will obtain the signature or thumb impression of the elector on the counterfoil of the ballot paper which is to be issued to him and whereon his electoral roll number has been noted by the polling officer. If any elector refuses to put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, no ballot paper shall be issued to such elector.

4.2 The ballot paper on the counterfoil of which the electoral roll number of such elector refusing to sign has already been noted by the polling officer should be cancelled and both on the ballot paper and its counterfoil the words "cancelled: refused to sign" should be endorsed by the Presiding Officer. Such cancelled ballot paper should be kept in the cover containing other cancelled ballot papers mentioned in **Chapter XIX** and accounted for in item 4(b) of ballot paper account in **Form 29**.

Signature of elector on the counterfoil

5. A signature may be described as the writing of a person's name on a document with the intention of authenticating that document. A literate person, while signing a counterfoil of the ballot paper, will be required to write his name i.e. both his Christian name or names and his surnames in full or in any case his surname in full or Christian names either in full or by means of initials of that name or names. The preferable course in the case of a literate voter will be to request him to sign his name i.e. both his Christian name or names and his surname in full. If a literate person puts simply mark and insists that, that mark should be taken as a signature, while claiming to be a literate person, then, that mark cannot be taken to be his signature because as stated, signature means, in the case of a literate person, the writing of the name of that person by himself in authentication of a document on which he writes his name. In such a case, if he refuses to sign his name in full as indicated above, then his thumb impression should be taken. If he refuses to give his thumb impression also, then no ballot paper should be given to him and such ballot paper should be cancelled under the foregoing paragraph 3.

Thumb impression of elector on counterfoil

6.1 If an elector is unable to sign his name, the impression of his left thumb should be obtained on the counterfoil of the ballot paper.

6.2 If the left thumb of a voter is missing, then the impression of right thumb should be taken. If both thumbs are missing, the impression of one of the fingers of the left hand starting from the forefinger should be taken. If there are no fingers on the left hand, the impression of one of the fingers of the right hand starting from the forefinger should be taken. If no fingers are available, the voter being unable to mark his ballot paper will necessarily have to seek assistance of a companion under rule 55 of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils (Election of Members) Rules, 2009. In that case the signature or thumb impression of the companion may be taken on the counterfoil.

6.3 It is necessary that the thumb impression on the counterfoil should be a clear thumb impression. The thumb of the voter should not be inked so lightly from the stamping pad that it gives only a faint or undecipherable impression on the counterfoil. Nor should the thumb be inked so heavily that it gives a smudge impression instead of a clear thumb impression on the counterfoil. While taking the thumb impression it should also be ensured that no part of such impression extends beyond the counterfoil and on to the actual ballot paper.

6.4 After taking the thumb impression, the ink on the elector's thumb should be wiped off with the help of wet piece of cloth.

Signature/Thumb impression on counterfoil of ballot paper by blind or infirm or leper voters.

7. Thumb impression of a blind voter or a voter suffering from leprosy should be obtained on the counterfoil of ballot paper. In case any such voter is literate, he may be allowed to put his signature in place of thumb impression. In case of infirm voter who cannot use either of his hands his companion can put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of ballot paper. A note may be made on such counterfoil of ballot paper regarding signature or thumb impression of the companion.

CHAPTER XIV

ISSUE OF BALLOT PAPERS AND INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS REGARDING VOTING PROCEDURE

Precaution against ballot papers sticking together

1. Take care to see that two or more ballot papers do not stick together and as a result more ballot papers than one are issued to a voter. The best way to check this is for the polling officer in-charge of ballot papers to take out the ballot paper meant for a voter while the voter's identity is being checked and to see that the serial number of the ballot paper left at the top of the bundle is next to the serial number of the ballot paper taken out for issue.

Defective ballot papers

2. While issuing ballot papers, if any ballot paper is found defective, it should not be issued to any voter, but should be cancelled by you. Such defective ballot papers cancelled by you in the polling station may also be kept in the cover containing cancelled ballot papers. The counterfoil of such ballot paper will remain in the bundle with an endorsement "Cancelled; defective ballot paper". It has to be accounted for in item 4(b) of **Form 29- Ballot Paper Account**.

Prefolding of ballot paper

3.1 When a ballot paper is handed over to an elector for marking his vote thereon, the last polling officer in-charge of rubber stamps will first fold the ballot paper twice, first vertically and then horizontally, in such a way that the distinguishing mark affixed on the back of the ballot paper is clearly visible at the top right hand corner. He will then unfold the ballot paper and hand it over to the elector.

3.2 Where the number of contesting candidates exceeds 9(nine), the ballot papers will be printed in two (two) or more columns. The mode of folding these ballot papers will be different. The ballot paper may be folded vertically first in the middle of each of the two halves and thereafter the third fold may be along the shaded vertical line dividing the two halves. It should then be folded horizontally in such manner that the distinguishing mark affixed on its back is clearly visible. It should thereafter be unfolded and handed over to the elector.

Instructions as to how the ballot paper is to be marked.

4.1 The polling officer in-charge of the rubber stamps will instruct the voter :-
(a) to go inside a voting compartment;

(b) to record there his vote by making a mark on the symbol of the candidate for whom he wishes to vote with the inked rubber stamp given to him but no demonstration should be made by affixing the rubber stamp on any particular symbol on a specimen ballot paper or any other paper. If any assistance is required by any voter, the procedure for marking should be explained by affixing the stamp on a piece of plain paper without any symbols;

(c) not to stamp the ballot paper more than once;

(d) to refold the ballot paper along the prefolded lines;

(e) to bring it out of the voting compartment thereafter; and

(f) to insert the folded ballot paper into the ballot box.

4.2 This officer should ensure that the arrow-cross mark rubber stamp is adequately inked, but not over inked before it is handed over to the voter. He should check from time to time that the pad is not dry and the rubber of the arrow-cross mark rubber stamp is intact and in position. He should also ensure that the self inking pad is not kept inside the voting compartment at any stage. He should also see, particularly in the case of illiterate voter, that they have understood how the stamp is to be used for marking. He may ask such a voter to make a mark with the stamp on a sheet of plain paper, if necessary.

Voter to vote without undue delay

5. See that a voter does not stay in the compartment unduly long. No other voter should be allowed to go into a compartment when another voter is inside. When the voter comes out, the polling officer will take the rubber stamp from him and ask him to insert the ballot paper into the ballot box.

Precaution to ensure correct voting

6. If you notice that the voter has erroneously marked the ballot paper on the back or suspect that the voter has not marked the ballot paper at all you may ask the voter whether he has marked the ballot paper and if so, on the correct side and if not, instruct him to go back into voting compartment and to make the mark. If the voter comes to you with the ballot paper unfolded or folded in the wrong way, you should rectify the defect, maintaining the secrecy of the vote as soon as practicable. Ensure also that the voter puts into the box only the ballot paper given to him by checking the distinguishing mark on the back whenever necessary.

CHAPTER XV

PRECAUTIONS FOR MAINTAINING SECRECY

Violation of secrecy of voting

1. If an elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued, refuses after warning given by you to observe the procedure as laid down in rule 54 of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils (Election of Members) Rules, 2009 and outlined in **Chapter XIV**, the ballot paper issued to him shall, whether he has recorded his vote or not, be taken back from him by you or a Polling Officer under your direction. After the ballot paper has been taken back, you shall record on its back and on the counterfoil of such ballot paper, the words "Cancelled: Voting Procedure Violated" and put your signature below those words. All such cancelled ballot papers are to be kept in a separate cover which shall bear on its face the words "Ballot Papers Cancelled: Voting Procedure Violated" and accounted for in item 4(a) of ballot paper account in Part-I of **Form 29 (ANNEXURE I)**.

Voting by blind or infirm voters

2.1. If you are satisfied that owing to blindness or other physical infirmity a voter is unable to recognize the symbols on the ballot paper or make a mark thereon without assistance you should permit the voter to take with him a companion of not less than 18 years of age to the voting compartment for recording the vote on the ballot paper on his behalf and in accordance with his wishes and for folding the ballot paper so as to conceal the vote and for inserting it into the ballot box. But you should ensure that no person is permitted to act as the companion of more than one elector at any polling station on the same day and that he makes a declaration to the effect that he will keep secret the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector at any polling station on that day. The declaration may be taken in the **Form 27-A (ANNEXURE I)** You should also keep a record of all such cases in **Form 27 (ANNEXURE I)** and send this form along with declaration in a separate cover to the Returning Officer. Voters with obviously defective eye-sight should be questioned in order to find out whether they can distinguish the symbols on the ballot paper and mark properly.

2.2 Note that illiteracy of the voter is not a sufficient reason for giving him the assistance of a companion to mark the ballot paper on his behalf. There should be no objection to a candidate or an election agent accompanying a blind or infirm voter as such companion subject to fulfillment of the above requirement. A polling agent can act as companion of blind or infirm elector for not more than one elector at any polling station on the same day provided he is not less than 18 years of age. You or any Polling Officer should not accompany any blind or infirm voter inside the voting compartment.

CHAPTER XVI

TENDERED BALLOT PAPERS AND CANCELLATION OF BALLOT PAPERS

Tendered votes

1.1 It may happen that a person representing himself to be a particular elector comes forward to vote after another person has already voted as such elector. In that case you should put such questions to him as you may think necessary to satisfy yourself about his identity. If you are satisfied about his identity, you should get his left forefinger marked with indelible ink. You will then make necessary entry in the list of tendered votes (**Form 28**) of **ANNEXURE I** and obtain the signature or the thumb impression of the voter therein.

1.2 He shall then be supplied with an ordinary ballot paper which shall be just like any other ballot paper used at the polling station except that (1) it shall be serially the last in the bundle of ballot papers supplied to you, and (2) that the words "tendered ballot paper" are written on the back of such ballot paper and its counterfoil by the Presiding Officer in his own hand and signed by him. The voter shall then mark the tendered ballot paper in the voting compartment and fold it. He will then hand over the ballot paper to you and not put it into the ballot box. You should keep all the tendered ballot papers and the list in **Form 28** in a cover specially kept for the purpose and seal it at the close of poll.

1.3. A proper account of such tendered ballot papers should be kept in item 4(c) of ballot paper account in Part I of **Form 29 (ANNEXURE I)**.

Progress of poll not to be interrupted.

2. Deal with all cases of challenged votes or tendered votes yourself. Otherwise polling will be held up resulting in inconvenience and delay for the other voters who are waiting.

Cancellation of ballot paper

3. If a voter after receiving the ballot paper does not wish to vote, he may return it to you without marking it. The ballot paper and the counterfoil of such ballot paper should be cancelled by writing on it the words "Returned: Cancelled". Such cancelled ballot paper should be kept in the cover for cancelled ballot papers and accounted for in item 4(b) of ballot paper account in Part I of **Form 29**.

Spoilt ballot papers

4. If any elector has marked a ballot paper wrongly or has spoilt it and returned it to you, he may be given another ballot paper. In every such case the voter should satisfy you of his inadvertence. The ballot paper so returned and the counterfoils of such ballot paper shall be marked "Spoilt: cancelled". Keep a record of all such concealed ballot papers in item 4(b) of the ballot paper account in Part I of **Form 29** and put them in a separate cover which should be sealed at the close of the poll.

CHAPTER XVII

ADJOURNMENT / STOPPAGE OF POLL FOR RIOT, BOOTH CAPTURING, ETC.

Adjournment of Poll for Riot, etc.

1.1 Under rule 63 of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils (Election of Members) Rules, 2009 the Presiding Officer of a polling station is empowered to adjourn the poll if the proceedings at that polling station are interrupted or obstructed by any riot or open violence or if it is not possible to take the poll at that polling station on account of any natural calamity or any other sufficient cause.

1.2 If there is a riot or any attempt of open violence, use the police to control the same. If, however, it cannot be controlled and it is impossible to continue the poll, you should adjourn the poll. The poll should also be adjourned if the taking of the poll is rendered impossible on account of any natural calamity or other sufficient cause. A passing shower of rain or strong wind would not be a sufficient cause for adjournment of poll. The discretion given to you to adjourn the poll should be exercised most sparingly and only in cases where it has become physically impossible to take the poll.

1.3 In every case of adjournment of poll, report immediately the full facts to the Returning Officer. Whenever a poll is adjourned, announce formally to all present that the poll will be taken on a day to be notified subsequently by the State Election Commission.

1.4 Seal and secure ballot box (es) used, ballot papers yet to be used, counterfoils of used ballot papers and all election papers in the presence of the polling agents as if the poll has come to a close in the normal way.

Completion of adjourned poll

2.1 Where the poll has been adjourned at a polling station, the adjourned poll will recommence on the date and time fixed by the State Election Commission from the stage at which it was left immediately before the adjournment, i.e. the electors who have not already voted before the poll was adjourned will alone be permitted to vote at the adjourned poll. The Returning Officer will provide the Presiding Officer of the polling station, at which such adjourned poll is taken, with the sealed packet containing the marked copy of the electoral roll which was earlier used at that polling station and a new ballot box.

2.2 Before the re-commencement of the adjourned poll, the sealed packet containing the marked copy of the Electoral roll shall be reopened by the Presiding Officer in the presence of the candidates or their agents who may be present at the polling station and this very marked copy of the electoral roll shall be used for adjourned poll.

2.3 The Returning Officer will also supply to the Presiding Officer the packet containing counterfoils of the ballot papers used at the polling station before the poll was adjourned. These packets should not be opened unless it becomes absolutely necessary when a person comes to the polling station claiming to be an elector in whose place somebody else has already voted and a tendered ballot paper is to be issued to the aforesaid person for which purpose the serial number of the ballot paper already issued to the person who voted in his place by impersonation is required to be mentioned in **Form 28**.

2.4 The provisions of rules 45 to 62 will apply to the conduct of an adjourned poll as they apply to the poll before it was so adjourned.

Fresh poll in case of destruction of ballot box etc.

3.1.1 Under rule 65 of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils (Election of Members) Rules 2009 the State Election Commission is competent to declare the poll at a polling station to be void and direct a fresh poll if—

- (a) any ballot box used at that polling station has been unlawfully taken away by any unauthorized person or accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or damaged or tempered with and the result of the poll cannot be ascertained for that reason; or
- (b) any error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll has been committed at that polling station.

- 3.1.2 Further under rule 66 of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils(Election of Members) Rules, 2009 the State Election Commission is competent to declare the poll at a polling station to be void and direct a fresh poll if booth capturing has taken place at that polling station in such a manner that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained.
- 3.2 If any such thing happens at your polling station, you should report full facts forthwith to the Returning Officer to enable him to report the matter to the State Election Commission for its directions.
- 3.3 After considering all material circumstances, if the Commission directs fresh poll, to be taken at a polling station, such fresh poll shall be taken in the same manner as the original poll.
- 3.4 All electors entitled to vote at the polling station in question will be entitled to vote again at the fresh poll. The marks of the indelible ink made at the original poll should be ignored at the fresh poll. To distinguish the marks to be made at the fresh poll from those already made at the original poll, the mark of the indelible ink should be put on the voter's left *middle* finger at the fresh poll.

CHAPTER XVIII

CLOSE OF POLL

Voting by persons present at Polling Station at Closing Hour

- 1.1 The poll should be closed at the hour fixed for the purpose, even if for certain unavoidable reason it commenced somewhat later than the hour appointed for the commencement of poll. However, all voters present at the polling station at the hour appointed for close of poll should be permitted to cast their votes even if the poll has to be continued for sometime beyond the appointed closing hour.
- 1.2 A few minutes before the appointed closing hour of the poll, announce to all those within the limits of the polling station who are waiting to vote that they will be allowed to record their votes in turn. Distribute to all such electors, slips signed by you in full which should be serially numbered from serial No.1 onwards according to the number of electors standing in the queue at that hour. Continue the poll even beyond the closing hour until all these electors have cast their votes. Depute police or other staff to watch that no one is allowed to joint queue after the appointed closing hour. This can be effectively ensured if the distribution of slips to all such electors is commenced from the tail of the queue and proceeded backwards towards its head.

Closing of poll

2. After all the electors present at the polling station at the appointed closing hour have voted as provided in the preceding para, you should formally declare the poll as closed and should not permit any person to vote thereafter in any circumstance.

CHAPTER XIX

CLOSING AND SEALING OF BALLOT BOXES AND ELECTION PAPERS

Closing and sealing of ballot boxes

1. After completion of poll, close the slit of the ballot box and secure it in the presence of the polling agents in accordance with the instructions given in **ANNEXURE V**. Then run a ribbon or tape on the four sides of the box lengthwise and breadth-wise crossing each other on the lid passing under the handle and tie the knot firmly and seal the knot on a piece of thick paper or cardboard with your seal. The polling agents present should also be asked to affix their seals or their signatures, if they so desire. After this, the ballot box should be wrapped with a new cloth which shall be sewn and the seams sealed by you. The polling agents present should also be asked to affix their seals, if they so desire. Thereafter a Label duly filled up should be attached firmly on the handle of the ballot box (es)

Verification of number of ballot papers issued to voters

2. At the end of the day's poll, the Polling Officers *in-charge* of marked copy of electoral roll and ballot papers should check that the total number of electors to whom ballot papers have been issued by them according to the marked copy of electoral roll and the total number of tendered ballot papers as entered in the list of tendered votes and total number of ballot papers issued in lieu of spoiled ballot papers tallies with the number of ballot papers actually issued to voters and they should record it in Presiding Officer's diary with their signatures. The first polling officer should also be required to find out the number of women voters and put it in the record.

Preparation of ballot paper account

- 3.1 At the close of the poll, you should prepare a complete and accurate account of all ballot papers supplied to you and used at the polling station i.e. ballot papers (i) actually issued to voters (ii) used as tendered ballot papers (iii) cancelled for one reason or the other and (iv) being returned as unused. Such ballot paper account should be prepared in Part I of **Form 29** and signed by you.

3.2 You should not forget that in the ballot paper account, the total number of ballot papers received by you must be equal to the sum total of –

1. Ballot papers unused:

- (a) with the signature of Presiding Officer, if any,
- (b) without the signature of Presiding Officer ;

2. Ballot papers issued to voters (other than those cancelled on any account or used as tendered ballot papers);

3. Ballot papers cancelled:

- (a) for violation of the voting procedure under rule 54 and
- (b) for any other reasons ; and

4. Ballot papers used as tendered ballot papers.

3.3. This account must be accurate; otherwise it will lead to serious difficulties at the time of counting of votes. It is, therefore, necessary that due care and caution is taken by you while preparing the Ballot Paper Account.

3.4 A simple method of checking the correctness of the entries made in **Form 29** is to see that the total number of ballot papers used at the polling station as shown in item number 3 is equal to the total number of ballot papers received by you as shown in item 1 *minus* the total number of ballot papers unused, as shown in item 2. In simple words, item 3 is equal to item 1 *minus* item 2 , but it is inclusive of item 4. The total number of ballot papers actually issued to voters and which they ought to insert in the ballot box(es) shall be equal to item 3 *minus* item 4 and such number shall be shown by you in item 5. A sample of **Form 29** duly filled in which would make the above the position clear is given at **ANNEXURE VII**.

Furnishing of copy of ballot paper account to polling agents

4.1 You should note that you are required by rule 60 to furnish to every polling agent present at the close of poll an attested true copy of the ballot paper account prepared by you in Part I of **Form 29**, after obtaining a receipt thereof from the agent. You should, therefore, furnish to every polling agent (but only one polling agent of each candidate) present at the close of poll an attested true copy of ballot paper account without their asking for it. Obtain their full signatures in token of receipt of such copy on

the form declaration prescribed in **ANNEXURE VI, Part II** which declaration you have to make in order to ensure that you have complied with this requirement.

4.2 To enable you to make the required number of copies of ballot paper account, you will be supplied with as many copies of the printed form (**Form 29**) as the number of contesting candidates *plus* one or two more for the original account. If possible, you should prepare the required number of copies with the help of carbon paper, while filling in the entries in the original account itself so that all such copies supplied to polling agents and the original account are identical in every respect.

Sealing of election papers

5.1 After the close of poll, seal all the election papers in separate packets as required by rule 61 (**ANNEXURE I**). All the packets so sealed except the covers containing (i) Marked Copy of the Electoral Roll, (ii) Ballot Paper Account, (iii) Declarations by the Presiding Officer and (iv) Presiding Officer's Diary, should be put in four large packets as explained in paragraph 6, and sent to the Returning Officer. The covers containing (i) Marked Copy of the Electoral Roll, (ii) Ballot Paper Account, (iii) Declarations by Presiding Officer and (iv) Presiding Officer's Diary should, however, be sent separately to the receiving centre for election papers.

5.2 You should allow each candidate or his election agent or his polling agent who may be present at the polling station to affix their seals on the envelopes and packets containing the following documents:

- (i) the marked copy of the electoral roll ;
- (ii) the counterfoils of used ballot papers (At the end of the poll, if the last bundle of ballot papers used for the poll contains some unused ballot papers, the counterfoils of used ballot papers in that bundle should be separated from that bundle and kept in this envelope. The counterfoils so separated should be tagged properly);
- (iii) the signed but unused ballot papers with counterfoils, if any ;
- (iv) the other unused ballot papers with counterfoils;
- (v) the ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure;
- (vi) the returned and other cancelled ballot papers;
- (vii) the tendered ballot papers and the list of tendered votes in **Form 28**;
- (viii) the list of challenged votes;
- (ix) any other papers that the Returning Officer has directed to be kept in a sealed packet.

Packing of 'Statutory covers' and 'non-statutory covers' and election materials.

6. In order to avoid delay and inconvenience of waiting at the place for depositing sealed boxes, election papers and all other materials, you are advised to pack the covers and other materials in four separate packets, as explained below, and hand them over at the place appointed for receipt thereof.

7.1 The first packet should contain the sealed covers mentioned below and should be superscribed as "STATUTORY COVERS" :-

- (i) the sealed cover containing counterfoils of used ballot papers including counterfoils of tendered ballot papers;
- (ii) the sealed cover containing the signed but unused ballot papers, with counterfoils;
- (iii) the sealed cover containing other unused ballot papers with counterfoils;
- (iv) the sealed cover containing the tendered ballot papers and list in **Form 28**;
- (v) the sealed cover containing the ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure; and
- (vi) the sealed cover containing other cancelled ballot papers.

7.2 Even if a statement or record to be put in any cover mentioned above is nil, a slip noting on it that the statement or record is "Nil" may be put in the cover and the total number of seven covers made ready so that no necessity arises for the receiving official at the receiving centre to enquire about the non-production of any of the sealed covers to be received by him.

8. The second packet should contain the following covers and should be superscribed as "NON-STATUTORY COVERS":-

- (i) the cover containing the other copy of electoral roll (other than the marked copy);
- (ii) the cover containing the appointment letters of polling agents in **Form 17**;
- (iii) the sealed cover containing the list of challenged votes in **Form 26**;
- (iv) the cover containing the list of blind and infirm electors in **Form 27** and the declaration of the companion in **Form 27-A**;
- (v) cover containing the receipt book and cash, if any, in respect of challenged votes.

9. The third packet should contain the following items:

- (i) the Handbook for Presiding Officers;
- (ii) pusher for ballot box and metal strip for detaching the ballot papers from counterfoils;

- (iii) indelible ink set (with stopper having been secured on each phial effectively with molten candle or wax applied thereon to prevent leakage or evaporation);
 - (iv) self-inking pads;
 - (v) the metal seal of the Presiding Officer;
 - (vi) the rubber stamp bearing the distinguishing mark of the polling station; and
 - (vii) the arrow cross-mark rubber stamps for marking ballot papers.
10. All the other items, if any, should be packed into the fourth packet.

CHAPTER XX

PREPARATION OF THE DIARY AND DELIVERY OF BALLOT BOXES AND ELECTION PAPERS AT COLLECTION CENTRES

Preparation of the diary

- 1.1 You should draw up the proceedings connected with the taking of the poll in the polling station in the diary to be maintained for the purpose. The proforma of diary is reproduced at **ANNEXURE VIII**.
- 1.2 You must go on recording the relevant events as and when they occur. You should mention therein all important events in the relevant columns.
- 1.3 It has been observed in many cases that the Presiding Officers do not make the entries in the relevant columns of the diary at regular intervals or from time to time as envisaged, and fill in all entries and complete the diary at the end of the poll. This is highly objectionable. It should be noted that any lapse on your part in the proper maintenance of diary at all points of time during the process of poll will be very seriously viewed by the Commission.

Transmission of Ballot Boxes and Election Papers to the Returning Officer.

- 2.1 After the ballot boxes and all election papers have been sealed and secured by you after the close of poll in the manner explained in **Chapter XIX**, you have to deliver them or cause them to be delivered at such place as the Returning Officer may direct and in accordance with such arrangements as the Returning Officer may make.

2.2 The ballot boxes and the election papers should be delivered or caused to be delivered at the collection centre with zero delay. Any delay in this behalf will be viewed by the Commission with utmost concern and will invite severe disciplinary action against all concerned.

Delivery and Checking of Election Records and Materials at the Collecting Centre.

3.1 You will handover to the official-in charge of the collecting centre the following items of election records and materials and obtain a receipt:-

- (i) sealed ballot boxes;
- (ii) unused ballot box(es), if any;
- (iii) sealed cover containing marked copy of electoral roll;
- (iv) sealed cover containing ballot paper account
- (v) sealed cover containing Declarations of the Presiding Officer;
- (vi) sealed cover containing Presiding Officer's Diary;
- (vii) first packet superscribed "Statutory Covers" containing six sealed covers ;
- (viii) second packet superscribed "Non-Statutory Covers" containing five covers;
- (ix) third packet containing seven items of election materials etc ;
- (x) fourth packet containing all other items, if any.

3.2 All the above items excluding the items contained in the fourth packet referred to at (x) above will be checked by the receiving officials at the collecting centre in your presence and thereafter you will be relieved.

ANNEXURE-I

EXTRACTS FROM THE MANIPUR AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS (ELECTION OF MEMBERS) RULES, 2009

11. Appointment of presiding officers for polling stations.-(1) The district election officer shall appoint a presiding officer for each polling station and such polling officers as he thinks necessary, but he shall not appoint any person who has been employed by or on behalf of, or has been otherwise working for, a candidate in or about the election:

Provided that if a polling officer is absent from the polling station, the presiding officer may appoint any person who is present at the polling station other than a person who has been employed by or on behalf of, or has been otherwise working for, a candidate in or about the election, to be the polling officer during the absence of the former officer, and inform the district election officer accordingly.

(2) A polling officer shall, if so directed by the presiding officer, perform all or any of the functions of a presiding officer under these rules or orders made thereunder.

(3) If the presiding officer, owing to illness or other unavoidable cause, is obliged to absent himself from the polling station, his functions shall be performed by such polling officer as has been previously authorized by the district election officer to perform such functions during any such absence.

(4) References in these rules to the presiding officer shall, unless the context otherwise requires, be deemed to include any person performing any function which he is authorized to perform under sub-rule (2) or sub-rule (3), as the case may be.

12. General duty of the presiding officer.-It shall be the general duty of the presiding officer at a polling station to keep order thereat and to see that the poll is fairly taken.

13. Duties of a polling officer. -It shall be the duty of the polling officers at a polling station to assist the presiding officer for such station in the performance of his functions.

29. Polling agents.-(1) A contesting candidate or his election agent may appoint one agent and two relief agents at each polling station.

(2) Every such appointment shall be made in Form 17 and shall be made over to the polling agent for production at the polling station.

(3) No polling agent shall be admitted into the polling station unless he has delivered to the presiding officer the instrument of his appointment under sub-rule (2) after duly completing and signing before the presiding officer the declaration contained therein.

(4) Any revocation of the appointment of a polling agent shall be in Form 18 and lodged with the presiding officer.

(5) In the event of such a revocation or of the death of a polling agent before the close of the poll, the candidate or his election agent may appoint another polling agent in the above manner at any time before the poll is closed.

31. Functions of polling agents and counting agents.-(1) A polling agent may perform such functions in connection with the poll as are authorized by or under these rules to be performed by a polling agent.

(2) A counting agent may perform such functions in connection with the counting of votes as are authorized by or under these rules to be performed by a counting agent.

32. Attendance of contesting candidate or his election agent at polling stations, and performance by him of the function of a polling agent or counting agent.-(1) At every election where a poll is taken, each contesting candidate at such election and his election agent shall have a right to be present at any polling station provided under rule 10 for the taking of the poll.

(2) A contesting candidate or his election agent may himself do any act or thing which any polling agent or the counting agent of such contesting candidate, if appointed, would have been authorized by or under these rules to do, or may assist any polling agent or the counting agent of such contesting candidate in doing any such act or thing.

33. Non-attendance of polling or counting agents. -Where any act or thing is required or authorized by or under these rules to be done in the presence of the polling or counting agents, the non-attendance of any such agents at the time and place appointed for the purpose shall not, if the act or thing is otherwise duly done, invalidate the act or thing done.

34. Right to vote.-Every person who is, for the time being entered in the electoral roll of any constituency shall be entitled to vote in that constituency:

Provided that no person shall vote at a general election in more than one constituency and if a person votes in more than one constituency, his votes in all such constituencies shall be void:

Provided further that no person shall at any election vote in the same constituency more than once, notwithstanding that his name may have been registered in the electoral roll for that constituency more than once, and if he does so vote, all his votes in that constituency shall be void.

35. Voting normally to be in person.-Subject to the provisions of rule 36, all electors voting at an election shall do so in person at the polling station provided for them under rule 10.

36. Persons entitled to vote by post.-The following persons shall, subject to their fulfilling the requirements hereinafter specified, be entitled to vote by post, namely:-

- (i) voters on election duty; and
- (ii) electors subjected to preventive detention;

37. Intimation by voter on election duty.-[(1)] A voter on election duty who wishes to vote by post at an election shall send an application in Form 21 to the returning officer so as to reach him at least seven days or such shorter period as the returning officer may allow before the date of poll; and if the returning officer is satisfied that the applicant is a voter on election duty, he shall issue a postal ballot paper to him.

45. Arrangements at polling stations.-(1) Outside each polling station there shall be displayed prominently-

- (a) a notice specifying the polling area the electors of which are entitled to vote at the polling station and when the polling area has more than one polling station, the particulars of the electors so entitled; and
- (b) a copy of the list of contesting candidates.

(2) At each polling station, there shall be set up one or more voting compartments in which electors can record their votes screened from observation.

(3) The returning officer shall provide at each polling station a sufficient number of ballot boxes, copies of the relevant part of the electoral roll, ballot papers, instruments for stamping the distinguishing mark on ballot papers and articles necessary for electors to mark the ballot papers.

46. Admission to polling stations.- The presiding officer shall regulate the number of electors, to be admitted at any one time inside the polling station and shall exclude therefrom all persons other than-

- (a) polling officers;
- (b) public servants on duty in connection with the election;
- (c) persons authorised by the Commission;
- (d) candidate, their election agents and subject to the provisions of rule 28, one polling agent of each candidate;
- (e) a child in arms accompanying an elector;
- (f) a person accompanying a blind or infirm elector who cannot move without help; and
- (g) such other persons as the returning officer or the presiding officer may employ under **sub-rule (2) of rule 49 or sub-rule (1) of rule 50.**

47. Preparation of ballot boxes for poll.-(1) Where a paper seal is used for securing a ballot box, the presiding officer shall affix his own signature on the paper seal and obtain thereon the signatures of such of the polling agents present as are desirous of affixing the same.

(2) The presiding officer shall thereafter fix the paper seal so signed in the space meant therefore in the ballot box and shall then secure and seal the box in such manner that the slit for the insertion of ballot paper thereinto remains open.

(3) The seals used for securing a ballot box shall be affixed in such manner that after the box has been closed it is not possible to open it without breaking the seals.

(4) Where it is not necessary to use paper seals for securing the ballot boxes, the presiding officer shall secure and seal the ballot box in such manner that the slit for the insertion of ballot papers remains open and shall allow the polling agents present to affix, if they so desire, their seals.

(5) Every ballot box used at a polling station shall bear labels, both inside and outside, marked with-

- (a) the serial number, if any, and name of the constituency;
- (b) the serial number and name of the polling station;
- (c) the serial number of the ballot box (to be filled in at the end of the poll on the label outside the ballot box only); and
- (d) the date of poll.

(6) Immediately before the commencement of the poll, the presiding officer shall demonstrate to the polling agents and other persons present that the ballot box is empty and bears the labels referred to in sub-rule (5).

(7) The ballot box shall then be closed, sealed and secured and placed in full view of the presiding officer and the polling agents.

48. Marked copy of electoral roll.- Immediately before the commencement of the poll the presiding officer shall also demonstrate to the polling agents and others present that the marked copy of the electoral roll to be used during the poll does not contain any mark other than the mark made in pursuance of clause (b) of sub-rule (2) of rule 40.

49. Facilities for women electors.- (1) Where a polling station is for both men and women electors, the presiding officer may direct that they shall be admitted into the polling station alternately in separate batches.

(2) The returning officer or the presiding officer may appoint a woman to serve as an attendant at any polling station to assist women electors and also to assist the presiding officer generally in taking the poll in respect of women electors, and, in particular, to help in searching any women elector in case it becomes necessary.

50. Identification of electors.- (1) The presiding officer may employ at the polling station such persons as he thinks fit to help in the identification of the electors or to assist him otherwise in taking the poll.

(2) As each elector enters the polling station, the presiding officer or the polling officer authorized by him in this behalf shall check the elector's name and other particulars with the relevant entry in the electoral roll and then call out the serial number, name and other particulars of the elector.

(3) In deciding the right of a person to obtain a ballot paper, the presiding officer or the polling officer, as the case may be, shall overlook merely clerical or printing errors in an entry in the electoral roll, if he is satisfied that such person is identical with the elector to whom such entry relates.

51. Challenging of identity.- (1) Any polling agent may challenge the identity of a person claiming to be a particular elector by first depositing a sum of two rupees in cash with the presiding officer for each such challenge.

(2) On such deposit being made, the presiding officer shall-

(a) warn the person challenged of the penalty of personation;

(b) read the relevant entry in the electoral roll in full and ask him whether he is the person referred to in that entry;

(c) enter his name and address in the list of challenged votes in Form 26; and

(d) require him to affix his signature in the said list.

(3) The presiding officer shall thereafter hold a summary inquiry into the challenge and may for that purpose-

- (a) require the challenger to adduce evidence in proof of the challenge and the person challenged to adduce evidence in proof of his identity;
- (b) put to the person challenged any questions necessary for the purpose of establishing his identity and require him to answer them on oath; and
- (c) administer an oath to the person challenged and any other person offering to give evidence.

(4) If, after the inquiry, the presiding officer considers that the challenge has not been established he shall allow the person challenged to vote; and if he considers that the challenge has been established, he shall debar the person challenged from voting.

(5) If the presiding officer is of the opinion that the challenge is frivolous or has not been made in good faith, he shall direct that the deposit made under sub-rule (1) be forfeited to Government, and in any other case, he shall return it to the challenger at the conclusion of the inquiry.

52. Safeguards against personation.- (1) Every elector about whose identity the presiding officer or the polling officer, as the case may be, is satisfied, shall allow his left forefinger to be inspected by the presiding officer or polling officer and an indelible ink mark to be put on it.

(2) If any elector refuses to allow his left forefinger to be inspected or marked in accordance with sub-rule (1) or has already such a mark on his left forefinger or does any act with a view to removing the ink mark, he shall not be supplied with any ballot paper or allowed to vote.

(3) Any reference in this rule to the left forefinger of an elector shall, in the case where the elector has his left forefinger missing, be construed as a reference to any other finger of his left hand, and shall, in the case where all the fingers of his left hand are missing, be construed as a reference to the forefinger or any other finger of his right hand and shall in the case where all his fingers of both the hands are missing be construed as a reference to such extremity of his left or right arm as he possesses.

53. Issue of ballot papers to electors.- (1) Every ballot paper before it is issued to an elector, and the counterfoil attached thereto shall be stamped on the back with such distinguishing mark as the Commission may direct, and every ballot paper, before it is issued, shall be signed in full on its back by the presiding officer.

(2) At the time of issuing a ballot paper to an elector, the polling officer shall-

- (a) record on its counterfoil the electoral roll number of the elector as entered in the marked copy of the electoral roll;
- (b) obtain the signature or thumb impression of that elector on the said counterfoil; and
- (c) mark the name of the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll to indicate that a ballot has been issued to him, without however recording therein the serial number of the ballot paper issued to that elector:

Provided that no ballot paper shall be delivered to an elector unless he has put his signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of that ballot paper.

(3) No person in the polling station shall note down the serial numbers of the ballot papers issued to particular electors.

54. Maintenance of secrecy of voting by electors within polling station and voting procedure.-

(1) Every elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued under rule 53 or under any other provision of these rules, shall maintain secrecy of voting within the polling station and for that purpose observe the voting procedure hereinafter laid down.

(2) The elector on receiving the ballot paper shall forthwith-

- (a) proceed to one of the voting compartments;
- (b) there make a mark on the ballot paper with the instrument supplied for the purpose on or near the symbol of the candidate for whom he intends to vote;
- (c) fold the ballot paper so as to conceal his vote;
- (d) if required, show to the presiding officer the distinguishing mark on the ballot paper;
- (e) insert the folded ballot paper into the ballot box; and
- (f) quit the polling station.

(3) Every elector shall vote without undue delay.

(4) No elector shall be allowed to enter a voting compartment when another elector is inside it.

(5) If an elector to whom a ballot paper has been issued, refuses, after warning given by the presiding officer, to observe the procedure as laid down in sub-rule (2), the ballot paper issued to him shall, whether he has recorded his vote thereon or not, be taken back from him by the presiding officer or a polling officer under the direction of the presiding officer.

(6) After the ballot paper has been taken back, the presiding officer shall record on its back the words "Cancelled: voting procedure violated" and put his signature below those words.

(7) All the ballot papers on which the words "Cancelled: voting procedure violated" are recorded, shall be kept in a separate cover which shall bear on its face the words "Ballot papers: voting procedure violated".

(8) Without prejudice to any other penalty to which an elector, from whom a ballot paper has been taken back under sub-rule (5), may be liable, the vote, if any, recorded on such ballot paper shall not be counted.

55. Recording of votes of blind or infirm electors.- (1) If the presiding officer is satisfied that owing to blindness or other physical infirmity an elector is unable to recognize the symbols on the ballot paper or to make a mark thereon without assistance, the presiding officer shall permit the elector to take with him a companion of not less than eighteen years of age to the voting compartment for recording the vote on the ballot paper on his behalf and in accordance with his wishes, and, if necessary, for folding the ballot paper so as to conceal the vote and inserting it into ballot box:

Provided that no person shall be permitted to act as the companion of more than one elector at any polling station on the same day:

Provided further that before any person is permitted to act as the companion of an elector on any day under this rule, the person shall be required to declare that he will keep secret the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector and that he has not already acted as the companion of any other elector at any polling station on that day.

(2) The presiding officer shall keep a record in Form 27 of all cases under this rule.

56. Spoilt and returned ballot papers.- (1) An elector who has inadvertently dealt with his ballot paper in such manner that it cannot be conveniently used as a ballot may, on returning it to the presiding officer and on satisfying him of the inadvertence, be given another ballot paper, and the ballot paper so returned and the counterfoil of such ballot paper shall be marked "Spoilt: cancelled" by the presiding officer.

(2) If an elector after obtaining a ballot paper decides not to use it, he shall return it to the presiding officer, and the ballot paper so returned and the counterfoil of such ballot paper shall be marked as "Returned: cancelled" by the presiding officer.

(3) All ballot papers cancelled under sub-rule (1) or sub-rule (2) shall be kept in a separate packet.

57. Tendered votes.- (1) If a person representing himself to be a particular elector applies for a ballot paper after another person has already voted as such elector, he shall, on satisfactorily answering such questions relating to his identity as the presiding officer may ask, be entitled, subject to the following provisions of this rule, to mark a ballot paper (hereinafter in these rule referred to as a "tendered ballot paper") in the same manner as any other elector.

(2) Every such person shall, before being supplied with a tendered ballot paper, sign his name against the entry relating to him in a list in Form 28.

(3) A tendered ballot paper shall be the same as the other ballot papers used at the polling except that-

(a) such tendered ballot paper shall be serially the last in the bundle of ballot papers issued for use at the polling station; and

(b) such tendered ballot paper and its counterfoil shall be endorsed on the back with the words "tendered ballot paper" by the presiding officer in his own hand and signed by him.

(4) The elector, after marking a tendered ballot paper in the voting compartment and folding it, shall, instead of putting it into the ballot box, give it to the presiding officer, who shall place it in a cover specially kept for the purpose.

58. Closing of poll.- (1) The presiding officer shall close a polling station at the hour fixed in that behalf under rule 16 and shall not thereafter admit any elector into the polling station:

Provided that all elector present at the polling station before it is closed shall be allowed to cast their votes.

(2) If any question arises whether an elector was present at the polling station before it was closed, it shall be decided by the presiding officer and his decision shall be final.

59. Sealing of ballot boxes after poll.- (1) As soon as practicable after the closing of the poll, the presiding officer shall close the slit of the ballot box, and where the box does not contain any mechanical device for closing the slit, he shall seal up the slit and also allow any polling agent present to affix his seal.

(2) The ballot box shall thereafter be sealed and secured.

(3) Where it becomes necessary to use a second ballot box by reason of the first ballot box getting full, the first box shall be closed, sealed and secured as provided in sub-rules (1) and (2) before another ballot box is put into use.

60. Account of ballot papers,- (1) The presiding officer shall at the close of the poll prepare a ballot paper account in Form 29 and enclose it in a separate cover with the words "Ballot Paper Account" super-scribed thereon.

(2) The presiding officer shall furnish to every polling agent present at the close of the poll a true copy of the entries made in the ballot paper account after obtaining a receipt from the said polling agent therefor and shall also attest it as a true copy.

61. Sealing of other packets- (1) The presiding officer shall then make into separate packets-

- (a) the marked copy of the electoral roll;
- (b) the counterfoils of the used ballot papers;
- (c) the ballot papers signed in full by the presiding officer under sub-rule (1) of rule 53 but not issued to the voters;
- (d) any other ballot papers not issued to the voters;
- (e) the ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure under rule 54;
- (f) any other cancelled ballot papers;
- (g) the cover containing the tendered ballot papers and the list in Form 28;
- (h) list of the challenged votes; and
- (i) any other paper directed by the Commission to be kept in a sealed packet.

(2) Each such packet shall be sealed with the seal of the presiding officer and with the seals either of the candidate or of his election agent or of his polling agent who may be present at the polling station and may desire to affix his seals thereon.

62. Transmission of ballot boxes etc. to the returning officer.- (1) The presiding officer shall then deliver or cause to be delivered to the returning officer at such place as the returning officer may direct-

- (a) the ballot boxes;
- (b) the ballot paper account;
- (c) the sealed packets referred to in rule 61; and
- (d) all other papers used at the poll.

(2) The returning officer shall make adequate arrangements for the safe transport of all ballot boxes, packets and other papers and for their safe custody until the commencement of the counting of votes.

63. Adjournment of poll in emergencies.- (1) If at an election the proceedings at any polling station are interrupted or obstructed by any riot or open violence, or if at an election it is not possible to take the poll at any polling station on account of any natural calamity, or any other sufficient cause, the presiding officer for such polling station or the returning officer presiding over such place, as the case may be, shall announce an

adjournment of the poll to a date to be notified later, and where the poll is so adjourned by a presiding officer, he shall forthwith inform the returning officer concerned.

(2) Whenever a poll is adjourned under sub-rule (1), the returning officer shall immediately report the circumstances to the Commission and district election officer and shall, as soon as may be, with the previous approval of the Commission, appoint the day on which the poll shall recommence, and fix the polling station at which and the hours during which the poll will be taken and shall not count the votes cast at such election until such adjourned poll shall have been completed.

(3) In every such case as aforesaid, the returning officer shall notify in such manner as the Commission may direct the date, place and hours of polling fixed under sub-rule (2).

64. Procedure on adjournment of poll- (1) If the poll at any polling station is adjourned under sub-rule (1) of rule 63 the provisions of rules 59 to 62 shall, as far as practicable, apply as if the poll was closed at the hour fixed in that behalf under rule 16.

(2) When an adjourned poll is recommenced under sub-rule (2) of rule 63, the electors who have already voted at the poll so adjourned shall not be allowed to vote again.

(3) The returning officer shall provide the presiding officer of the polling station at which such adjourned poll is held, with the sealed packet containing the marked copy of the electoral roll and a new ballot box.

(4) The presiding officer shall open the sealed packet in the presence of the polling agents present and use the marked copy of the electoral roll for marking the names of the electors to whom the ballot papers are issued at the adjourned poll, without however recording therein the serial number thereof.

(5) The provisions of rules 45 to 62 shall apply in relation to the conduct of an adjourned poll as they apply in relation to the poll before it was so adjourned.

65. Fresh poll in the case of destruction, etc. of ballot boxes – (1) If at any election-

(a) any ballot box used at a polling station is unlawfully taken out of the custody of the presiding officer or the returning officer, or is accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost, or is damaged or tampered with, to such an extent that the result of the poll at that polling station or place cannot be ascertained; or

(b) any such error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll is committed at a polling station, the returning officer shall forthwith report the matter to the Commission and the district election officer.

- (2) Thereupon the Commission shall, after taking all material circumstances into account either-
- (a) declare the poll at that polling station to be void, appoint a day, and fix the hours, for taking a fresh poll at the polling station and notify the day so appointed and the hours so fixed in such manner as it may deem fit, or
 - (b) if satisfied that the result of a fresh poll at that polling station will not, in any way, affect the result of the election or that the error or irregularity in procedure is not material, issue such directions to the returning officer as it may deem proper for the further conduct and completion of the election.
- (3) The provisions of these Rules or orders made thereunder shall apply to every such fresh poll as they apply to the original poll.

66. Adjournment of poll or countermanding of election on the ground of booth capturing - (1) If at any election-

- (a) booth capturing has taken place at a polling station in such a manner that the result of the poll at that polling station cannot be ascertained; or
- (b) booth capturing takes place in any place for counting of votes in such a manner that the result of the counting at that place cannot be ascertained,

the returning officer shall forthwith report the matter to the Commission and the district election officer.

- (2) The Commission shall, on the receipt of a report from the returning officer under sub-rule (1) and after taking all material circumstances into account, either-

- (a) declare the poll at that polling station to be void, appoint a day and fix the hours for taking fresh poll at that polling station and notify the date so appointed and hours so fixed in such manner as it may deem fit; or
- (b) if satisfied that in view of the large number of polling stations involved in booth capturing the result of the election is likely to be affected, or that booth capturing had affected counting of votes in such a manner as to affect the result of the election, countermand the election in that constituency.

Explanation. -For the purposes of this rule "booth capturing" includes, among other things, all or any of following activities, namely:-

- (a) seizure of a polling station by any person or persons, making polling authorities surrender the ballot papers and doing of any other act which affects the orderly conduct of elections;

(b) taking possession of a polling station by any person or persons and allowing only his or their own supporters to exercise their right to vote and preventing others from free exercise of their right to vote ;

(c) coercing or intimidating or threatening directly or indirectly any elector and preventing him from going to the polling station to cast his vote;

(d) seizure of a place for counting of votes by any person or persons, making the counting authorities surrender the ballot papers and the doing of anything which affects orderly counting of votes;

(e) doing by any person in the service of the Government, of all or any of the aforesaid activities or aiding or conniving at, any such activity in the furtherance of the prospects of the election of a candidate.

FORM 17

[See rule 29(2)]

***APPOINTMENT OF POLLING AGENT**

**Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency**

I, a candidate/the election agent
of
who is a candidate at the above election do hereby appoint of
..... as a polling agent for polling station No.

Place

Date

Signature of candidate/election agent

I agree to act as such polling agent.

Place

Date

Signature of polling agent

Declaration of polling agent to be signed before Presiding Officer

I hereby declare that at the above election I will maintain, and aid in maintaining, the secrecy of the voting and will not (except for some purpose authorized by or under any law) communicate to any person any information calculated to violate such secrecy.

Date

Signature of polling agent

Signed before me. .

Date

Presiding Officer

* To be handed over to the polling agent for production at the polling station.

FORM 18

[See rule 29(4)]

REVOCATION OF APPOINTMENT OF POLLING AGENT

Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency

To

The returning Officer,

I, a candidate/the election agent
of

who is a candidate at the above election hereby revoke the appointment of
my/his polling agent for polling station No.

Place

Date

Signature of candidate/election agent

Declaration of polling agent to be signed before Presiding Officer

I hereby declare that at the above election I will maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of the
voting and will not (except for some purpose authorized by or under any law) communicate to any person
any information calculated to violate such secrecy.

Signature of polling agent

Signed before me

Presiding Officer

* To be handed over to the polling agent for production at the polling station.

FORM 21
[See rule 37(1)]

LETTER OF INTIMATION TO RETURNING OFFICER

To

The Returning Officer,

..... District Council Constituency.

Sir,

I am an elector on election duty/ under preventive detention and I intend to cast my vote by post at the ensuing election to the District Council of Autonomous District from the District Council Constituency.

My name is and it is entered at Sl.No..... in Part No..... of the electoral roll for..... District Council Constituency.

The ballot paper may be sent to me at the following address :-

.....
.....
.....

Place

Date

Yours faithfully,

.....

Date

Signature of Presiding Officer

FORM 26
[See rule 51(2)(c)]

LIST OF CHALLENGED VOTES

Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency

No. & name of polling station

Serial number of entry	Name of elector	Part No. & serial number of the elector	Signature or thumb impression of the person challenged
1.	2.	3.	4.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Address of the person challenged	Name of identifier, if any	Name of challenger	Order of Presiding Officer	Signature of challenger on receiving refund of deposit.
5.	6.	7.	8.	9.

Date

Signature of Presiding Officer

FORM 27

[See rule 55(2)]

LIST OF BLIND AND INFIRM VOTERS

**Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency**

No. & name of polling station

Part No. & Sl. No. of elector	Full name of elector	Full name of companion	Address of companion	Signature of companion
-------------------------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------

Date

Signature of Presiding Officer

F O R M -27(A)

[See Rule 55(1)]

DECLARATION BY THE COMPANION OF BLIND/INFIRM ELECTOR

Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency

Number & Name of Polling Station

I, son of aged resident of
* hereby declare that -

(a) I have not acted as companion of any other elector at any polling station today,
the

(b) I will keep secret the vote recorded by me on behalf of

Signature of Companion

Signature of Presiding Officer

Date

FORM 28
[See rule 57(2)]

LIST OF TENDERED VOTES

Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency

No. & name of polling station

Part number, Sl. No. and name of elector	Address of elector	Serial number of tendered ballot paper	Serial number of ballot paper issued to person who has already voted	Signature or the thumb impression of person tendering vote.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

II. Rejected Ballot Papers

III. Total

Whether the total number of ballot papers
shown against Item No. 1 of Part I
with the total number of votes
Part I or any discrepancy between
these two totals

NOT INSERTED INTO THE BALLOT BOX

(a) No. of ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure under rule 57(2)
(b) No. of ballot papers cancelled for other reasons
(c) No. of ballot papers used as tendered ballot papers

Total: (a+b+c)

Place

Date

Signature of the Presiding Officer

Date

Signature of Presiding Officer

Signature of the Presiding Officer

Date

F O R M 29
[See rule 60(1)]

PART I – Ballot Paper Account

Election to the District Council of Autonomous District
from the District Council Constituency

No. & name of polling station

1. No. of ballot papers received (Sl Nos. to)
2. No. of ballot papers unused (i.e. not issued to voters) –		
a) With the signature of Presiding Officer (Sl Nos. to)
b) Without the signature of Presiding Officer (Sl Nos. to)

Total :- (a + b)

3. No. of ballot papers used at the polling station (1-2=3)

4. No. of ballot papers used at the polling station but
NOT INSERTED INTO THE BALLOT BOX:

a) No. of ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure under rule

b) No. of ballot papers cancelled for other reasons.

c) No. of ballot papers used as tendered ballot papers

Total:- (a+b+c)

5. No. of ballot papers to be found in the ballot box (3-4=5)

Date

Signature of the Presiding Officer.

PART II - Result of Counting

I.	Name of candidate	Number of valid votes cast
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
etc.		

II. Rejected Ballot Papers

III. TOTAL

Whether the total number of ballot papers shown against item No. III above tallies with the total shown against item No. 5 of Part I or any discrepancy noticed between these two totals.

Place
Date

Signature of the Counting Supervisor

Place
Date

Signature of the Returning Officer

ANNEXURE II

OUTLINES OF FUNCTIONS TO BE PERFORMED BY PRESIDING OFFICER AT VARIOUS STAGES

- I. On appointment.
- II. On the day previous to the day of poll.
- III. On arrival at the polling station on the day of poll.
- IV. During the hours of poll.
- V. After the completion of poll.

I. On appointment

- 1.1. When you receive your appointment order, please check up carefully and examine:-

- (a) the name and number of your polling station;
- (b) the name of the Constituency within which the polling station is situated; and
- (c) the exact location of your polling station.

This information will be found in your appointment order. You will also find the names of your Polling Officers in the order. Try to contact them and keep their residential and office addresses with you and give your residential and office address to them.

Attend as many training classes as you can. Never rely on your memory and past experience as they may betray you. The instructions are being changed considerably from time to time.

- 1.2. Read the following pamphlets and booklets very carefully :-

- (a) Handbook for Presiding officers; and
- (b) letters of the Returning Officer to Presiding Officers giving important instructions.

- 1.3. Familiarise yourself with the items of polling material given in **Annexure III**.

- 1.4. Study carefully the manner and the method in which the ballot boxes can be closed and opened.

- 1.5. Read carefully the different forms, statutory and non-statutory, as given in in the Handbook.

1.6. Read very carefully the relevant rules of the Manipur Autonomous District Councils (Election of Members) Rules, 2009 given in **ANNEXURE I**. If you have any doubt, approach your Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer and get your doubt clarified. Never be in a confused mind.

II. On the day previous to the day of poll

2.1 On the day previous to the day of poll or on the day of departure for the polling station, as the case may be, you will be asked to collect the materials for use at the polling station. Please ensure that:-

- (a) Ballot boxes given to you can be operated smoothly
- (b) All the items mentioned in **ANNEXURE III** have been given to you.
- (c) Please count the ballot papers given to you very carefully and ensure that they are of the constituency in which your polling station is included and their serial numbers also tally. Any missing number, or ballot paper with duplicate number should be brought to the notice of the Returning Officer. Also compare the serial number on the ballot paper with the serial number on its counterfoil. You will be given ballot papers in bundles of **50** each and one or more bundles containing less than **50** ballot papers.
- (d) Ensure that the electoral roll given to you is for your polling station and that you are given the supplements to the roll, if any.
- (e) Check the copy of the list of contesting candidates given to you. The names and symbols of the candidates given in the list must tally and should be in the same serial order in which they appear on the ballot papers.
- (f) Check up that the phial of indelible ink supplied to you contains sufficient quantity of indelible ink and that its cap is perfectly sealed; if not re-seal with candle/wax.
- (g) check up the distinguishing mark rubber stamp and all the three arrow cross mark rubber stamps and your metal seal. Ensure that all the arrow cross mark rubber stamps have seals affixed on both the sides and that the stamp pads are not dry.

If you have any doubt about your movement programme, route to be followed to reach the polling station, get them cleared and make sure of the time, the place of departure and mode of transport for reaching the polling station.

2.2. (a) Reach your polling station latest by **4:00 p.m.** on the day preceding the day of poll and ensure that-

- (i) there is enough space for the voters to wait outside the polling station and for separate queues for male and female voters;
- (ii) there are separate passages for entry for entry and exit of voters;
- (iii) there are one or more voting compartments for voters to mark the ballot papers and that they are well lighted;
- (iv) a notice showing the polling area and details about voters is prominently kept;
- (v) the copy of the list of contesting candidates is prominently displayed.

(b) Stamp the distinguishing mark rubber stamp on the counterfoil and at the top right hand corner on the back of the ballot paper. Ensure that no smudges appear.

- (c) Appoint persons whom you will require to assist in identifying the voters including female assistant.
- (d) Decide the place where you, your Polling Officer and Polling Agents of the candidates will sit and the ballot box would be placed.
- (e) Remove any photograph of any leader belonging to any political party hung in the polling station or cover them fully.

2.3 The ballot papers and the polling materials delivered to you should remain in your custody throughout, till the poll is completed and the materials are handed over by you. Either you or one of the Polling Officers selected by you should remain in the polling station in charge of the materials from the moment you arrive there. The polling materials should not be left in the custody of the Police Guard on duty at the polling station or any person other than yourself or a Polling Officer selected by you.

III. On arrival at the Polling Station on the day of poll

3.1 Ensure that you and other members of your polling party reach the polling station 45 minutes before the hour fixed for starting the poll. On arrival open the room and check the articles.

3.2. Check up the appointment letters of polling agents. Assign them seats and issue them entry passes for their movements. Read out the declaration as referred to in **Chapter X** of the Handbook.

3.3. Make arrangements to appoint a Polling Officer if one from your party has not turned up.

3.4. Start preparing the ballot box in presence of the polling agents present.

3.5. Place the phial of indelible ink in such a way that the ink does not spill out.

3.6. Sign in full two bundles of **50** ballot papers. Ensure that you sign on the back of the ballot paper and not of the counterfoil. Your signature should only be on the back of the ballot papers and should not even partly extend to counterfoil.

IV During the hours of poll

4.1. Ensure that the polling starts sharp at the appointed time. Even if all formalities have not been completed, admit some voters in the polling station at the appointed time.

4.2. While poll is in progress, unusual complex cases are likely to crop up. Deal with them yourself leaving the polling officers to carry on their normal duties. Such cases will be :-

- (a) Voting by blind or infirm voters
- (b) Challenge to a voter
- (c) Tendered Votes
- (d) Breach in secrecy of voting.
- (e) Disorderly conduct at the booth and removal of disorderly persons (f) Adjournment of poll because of riot or any other cause.

4.3. Close the poll at the appointed hour even if it has started a few minutes late. Give slips with your signature to those persons who are in queue at this hour. Ensure that no additional person joins the queue after the appointed hour.

V. After the completion of poll

5.1. Close the ballot boxes as per the instructions given in Chapter XIX of the Handbook.

5.2. Ascertain the number of male and female voters who have voted.

5.3. Complete **Form 29**. Furnish to every polling agent present at the close of the poll, an attested true copy of **Form 29** after obtaining from him a receipt for it on the declaration form referred to in **Chapter X** of the Handbook. Then complete the declaration in other respects.

5.4. Complete your diary.

5.5. Prepare the four packets referred to in paras **6 to 10** of Chapter XIX of the Handbook.

5.6. Follow the programme of return journey to the Collection Centre for depositing the sealed ballot boxes and packets. It is your personal responsibility to deliver the items of election records and materials referred in para 3.1 of Chapter XX of the Handbook to the Officer-in-charge of the Collection Centre intact and obtain a receipt.

ANNEXURE - III

LIST OF POLLING MATERIALS FOR A POLLING PARTY

1.	Ballot Box	1 or 2
2.	Ballot papers	1
3.	List of Contesting Candidates	1
4.	Marked copy of electoral roll	1
5.	Other copy of electoral roll	1

SIGNS & BADGES

6.	Sign for POLLING AREA	1
7.	Sign for ENTRANCE	1
8.	Sign for EXIT	1
9.	Sign for VOTING COMPARTMENT	2
10.	Label for Ballot Box	4
11.	Badge for Presiding Officer	1
12.	Badges for Polling Officer	4
13.	Badges for Polling Agent	20

FORMS

14.	Appointment of Poling Agent (Form 17)	10
15.	Revocation of appointment of Polling Agent (Form 18)	3
16.	List of Challenged Votes (Form-26)	2
17.	List of Blind/ Infirm Voter (Form-27)	2
18.	Declaration by companion of Blind/Infirm Voter[Form-27(A)]	5
19.	List of Tendered Votes (Form-28)	2
20.	Ballot Paper Account (Form-29)	10
21.	Form of Declaration by Presiding Officer before the commencement, and at the end, of poll	2
22.	Form of Presiding Officer's Diary.	2
23.	Receipt Book for challenge fee	1

COVERS

22.	Cover superscribed "MARKED COPY OF ELECTORAL ROLL"	1
23.	- do - "OTHER COPY OF ELECTORAL ROLL"	1
24.	- do - "COUNTERFOILS OF USED BALLOT PAPERS"-	1
25.	- do - "UNUSED BALLOT PAPERS WITH PRESIDING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE"	1
26.	- do - "UNUSED BALLOT PAPERS WITHOUT PRESIDING OFFICER'S SIGNATURE"	1
27.	- do - "BALLOT PAPERS CANCELLED FOR VIOLATION OF VOTING PROCEDURE UNDER RULE 54"	1
28..	- do - "OTHER CANCELLED BALLOT PAPERS"	1
29.	- do - "LIST OF CHALLENGED VOTES"	1
30.	- do - "LIST OF BLIND & INFIRM VOTERS AND DECLARATIONS BY THEIR COMPANIONS"	1
31.	- do - "TENDERED BALLOT PAPERS AND LIST OF TENDERED VOTES"	1
32.	- do - "BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT"	1
33.	- do - "DECLARATIONS BY PRESIDING OFFICER BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT, AND AT THE END, OF POLL"	1
34.	- do - "PRESIDING OFFICER'S DIARY"	1
35.	- do - "RECEIPT BOOK AND CASH FORFEITED"	1
36.	BLANK COVER	5
37.	Duplicating paper	10
38.	Carbon paper	4
39.	Metal rules for detaching ballot papers from counterfoil.	1
40.	Pusher	1

41.	Metal seal for Presiding Officer	1
42.	Rubber Stamp bearing distinguishing mark of polling station	1
43.	Arrow cross- mark rubber stamp for marking ballot papers	3
44.	Self-inking pad (purple)	2
45.	Indelible Ink	2
46.	Ball pen	3
47.	Pencil	1
48.	Gum paste tube	1
49.	Sealing Wax	1 pkt
50.	Candle	1 pkt
51.	Match box	1
52.	Blade	1
53.	Alpine	20 pieces
54.	Flexible wire	3 pieces
55.	Disposable glass for setting indelible ink bottle	1
56.	Thread ball with needle	1

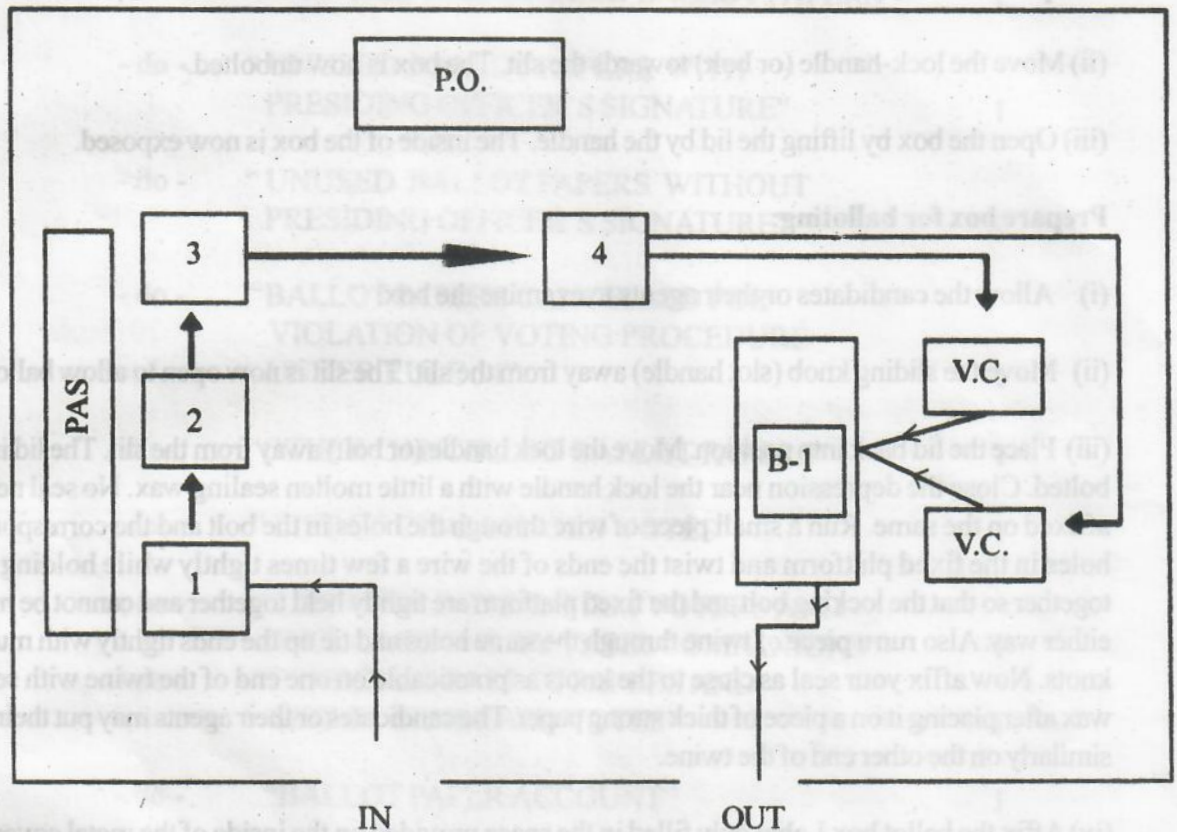
57.	Cloth for wrapping ballot box	2 pieces
58.	Tape for securing ballot box	2 pieces
59.	Sutli	250 gms
60.	Rag	1 piece

61.	File cover with folders (for items at Sl.Nos. 3 to 40 & 65)	1
62.	Polythene bag (for item at Sl.No. 2 i.e. ballot papers)	1
63.	Polythene bag (for items at Sl.Nos. 41 to 56)	1
64.	Cloth bag (for items at Sl.Nos. 57 to 63)	1
65.	List of polling materials.	1

36.	BLANK COVER	2
37.	Duplicating paper	10
38.	Carbon paper	4
39.	Metal rules for detaching ballot papers from counterfoil	1
40.	Paper	1

ANNEXURE IV

Model Layout of Polling Station



P.O.	-	Presiding Officer
1,2,3 & 4	-	Polling Officers
PAS	-	Polling Agents
B-1	-	Ballot Box
V.C.	-	Voting Compartment

ANNEXURE V

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPERATING BALLOT BOX (BUNGO TYPE)

1. **To open the box:** (i) Lift the metal seal cover.

(ii) Move the lock-handle (or bolt) towards the slit. The box is now unbolted.

(iii) Open the box by lifting the lid by the handle. The inside of the box is now exposed.

2. **Prepare box for balloting:**

(i) Allow the candidates or their agents to examine the box.

(ii) Move the sliding knob (slot handle) away from the slit. The slit is now open to allow balloting.

(iii) Place the lid back into position. Move the lock handle (or bolt) away from the slit. The lid is now bolted. Close the depression near the lock handle with a little molten sealing wax. No seal need be affixed on the same. Run a small piece of wire through the holes in the bolt and the corresponding holes in the fixed platform and twist the ends of the wire a few times tightly while holding them together so that the locking bolt and the fixed platform are tightly held together and cannot be moved either way. Also run a piece of twine through the same holes and tie up the ends tightly with multiple knots. Now affix your seal as close to the knots as practicable on one end of the twine with sealing wax after placing it on a piece of thick strong paper. The candidates or their agents may put their seals similarly on the other end of the twine.

(iv) Affix the ballot box Label duly filled in the space provided on the inside of the metal cover.

(v) Now close the metal seal cover taking care to see that all the seals remain safe inside the cover. Secure the cover to the fixed platform by passing a piece of wire through the holes and twist the ends of the wire together tightly a few times to prevent any one from opening the outer cover during the poll. Also run a piece of twine through the holes and then tie up its ends tightly with multiple knots. Seal the ends of the twine with your own seal near the knots after placing the ends on a thick piece of paper.

To close the slit after the poll:

(i) After the end of the poll, open the metal seal cover after breaking the seal and cutting the twine. See if your seal is intact. Even if it is not, it is enough if the inner seals inside the seal cover are intact. Show the polling agents that they are intact.

(ii) Push the sliding knob (slot-handle) towards the slit until it clicks. The slit is now locked. Check that the sliding knob (slot-handle) cannot be moved either way. Now close and seal the metal cover again as in item (iii) of paragraph 2.

(iii) After closing and securing the ballot box, run a ribbon or tape on the four sides of the box lengthwise and breadth wise crossing each other on the lid passing under the handle and tie the knot firmly and seal the knot on a piece of thick paper or card-board with your seal. The polling agents should also be asked to affix their seals or their signatures, if they so desire. After this, the ballot box should be wrapped with a new cloth which shall be sewn and the seams sealed by you. The polling agents present should be asked to affix their seals, if they so desire. Then write the Polling Station No. and the Serial No. of ballot box on the cloth cover with a sketch pen. The box is now ready for dispatch to the Returning Officer.

4. At the counting of votes :

(i) Remove wire and twine with seals of the metal seal cover. (Damage to this seal is not vital and does not by itself prove tampering).

(ii) Open the metal seal cover and check that all the seals inside the seal cover are authentic and intact. Also check that the slit is closed.

(iii) Then remove wire and piece of twine with seals and open the box as explained in para 1 above.

ANNEXURE VI

Election toDistrict Council
FromDistrict Council Constituency
Sl No. & name of Polling Station
Date of Poll

PART I

DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLL

I hereby declare :

- (1) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and other persons present that the ballot box to be used for the poll is empty;
- (2) that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and other persons present that the marked copy of the electoral roll to be used during the poll does not contain any marks other than those used for issuing postal ballot papers; and
- 3) that I have shown the polling agents bundles of ballot papers which will be used at the polling station and allowed them to note the first and the last of the serial numbers of the ballot papers.

Signature of Presiding Officer

Signatures of polling agents

Names of polling agents who declined to affix signature on this declaration, if any

PART-II
DECLARATION AT THE TIME OF USE OF SECOND BALLOT BOX

I hereby declare that I have demonstrated to the polling agents and other persons present that the second ballot box to be used for the poll is empty.

Signature of Presiding Officer

Signatures of polling agents

Names of polling agents who declined to affix signature on this declaration, if any

PART-III

DECLARATION AT THE END OF POLL

I have furnished to the polling agents, who were present at the polling station at the close of the poll and whose signatures are affixed below, an attested copy of the ballot paper account in Form-29.

Signature of Presiding Officer

Signatures of polling agents

Names of polling agents who declined to receive an attested copy of the ballot paper account, if any

ANNEXURE- VII

FORM 29

[See rule 60(1)]

PART I – Ballot Paper Account

**Election to the District Council of Churachandpur Autonomous District
from the 8-New Lamka District Council Constituency**

No. & name of polling station

1. No. of ballot papers received
(Sl Nos 2321 to 2770) 450

2. No. of ballot papers unused (i.e. not issued to voters) –

- a) With the signature of Presiding Officer
(Sl Nos. 2711 to 2713) 3
- b) Without the signature of Presiding Officer
(Sl Nos. 2714 to 2768) 55

Total :- (a + b) 58

3. No. of ballot papers used at the polling station (1-2=3) 392

4. No. of ballot papers used at the polling station but
NOT INSERTED INTO THE BALLOT BOX:

- a) No. of ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure
under rule 54 (Sl.Nos 2735) 1
- b) No. of ballot papers cancelled for other reasons.
(Sl.Nos...2610, 2615) 2
- c) No. of ballot papers used as tendered ballot papers
(Sl.Nos...2769,2770) 2

Total:- (a+b+c) 5

5. No. of ballot papers to be found in the ballot box (3-4=5) 387

Date

Signature of the Presiding Officer.

ANNEXURE VIII

PRESIDING OFFICER'S DIARY

Election to the District Council ofAutonomous District
fromDistrict Council Constituency.

1. Number & name of polling station :
2. Date of poll :
3. Number of polling officers recruited locally, if any:
4. Number of ballot boxes used:
5. Number of polling agents and the number who arrived late:
6. Number of candidates who had appointed polling agents at the polling stations
7. Number of ballot papers issued at the polling station:
8. Number of electors who voted-
 - Men
 - Women
 - Total
9. Challenged votes -
 - Number allowed
 - Number rejected
 - Amount forfeited
10. Number of electors who voted with the help of companions:
11. Number of tendered votes:
12. Whether it was necessary to adjourn the poll and if so, the reasons for such adjournment;
13. Numbers of votes cast -
 - from 8 a.m. to 12 a.m.
 - from 12 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 - from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
14. Number of slips issued at the closing hour of the poll:
15. Electoral offences with details:
 - Number of cases of -
 - (a) canvassing within one hundred metres of a polling station :
 - (b) impersonation of voters :
 - (c) bribing of voters:
 - (d) intimidation of voters and other persons :

16. Was the poll interrupted or obstructed by-

- (1) riot :
- (2) open violence :
- (3) natural calamity :
- (4) any other cause :

Please give details of the above.

17. Was the poll vitiated by -

- (1) any ballot box used at the polling station having been unlawfully taken out of the custody of the Presiding Officer -
 - (a) accidentally or intentionally lost or destroyed :
 - (b) damaged or tampered with :
- (2) the ballot papers having been unlawfully marked by any person and deposited in the ballot box :

Please give details.

18. Serious complaints, if any, made by the candidates :

19. Number of cases of breach of law and order :

20. Report of mistakes and irregularities committed, if any, at the polling station :

21. Whether the declarations have been made before the commencement of the poll and if necessary during the course of poll when a new ballot box is placed for reception of marked ballot papers and at the end of poll as necessary:

Place :

Date :

Presiding Officer
Polling Station No.

