



# Press Release

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## Subject: Enquiry report on Bhind (MP) Episode

Special Enquiry team led by Shri Bhanwar Lal, Chief Electoral Officer, Andhra Pradesh has submitted its report to the Commission. The team has found **no anomaly or tampering** in EVM and VVPAT used during demonstration in Ater (Bhind) on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2017. The enquiry was instituted by Election Commission of India to enquire into all aspects of various allegations raised in the media and by the political parties.

2. The technical examination of the Ballot Unit (BU), Control Unit (CU) and VVPAT of 31<sup>st</sup> March demonstration, oral examination of the officials present during the demonstration, data retrieved from the CU have conclusively established that during the demonstration, 4 buttons of BU were pressed in the following order:

Button No.	Symbol	Name of Candidate
03	Handpump	Raju Pal
04	Lotus	SatyaDev Pachori
03	Handpump	Raju Pal
01	Hand	Ambuj Shukla

Therefore it is clear that on pressing of various buttons on EVMS during the demonstration, corresponding symbols were displayed.

3. The team in its report concluded that it is completely false to say that at multiple times slips of lotus were printed on pressing different buttons during the demonstration on 31<sup>st</sup> March as alleged.

4. The lapse related to non-deletion of the pre-loaded data of Govind Nagar AC of Kanpur Nagar from where VVPATs (not EVMs) were received and reloading with the symbols/data of dummy candidate before demonstration as per the laid down protocol of the Commission, necessitate appropriate action by the Commission.

The conclusion of the enquiry committee on the allegations are as follows:

1. The EVMs used in the demo in Bhind was not brought from UP. However, the VVPAT used in the demonstration was brought from UP. Since the VVPATs are limited in number and had been used by all the poll going states during the last 5 states elections, the distribution of VVPATs for 10 states bye-elections was made by the Commission by allocating VVPATs from different poll-gone states to different poll-going states. In this case, the VVPAT was allocated from UP and brought from Govind Nagar AC of Kanpur Nagar, UP.

2. Bringing the VVPAT from UP is not in violation of law. As per the law, only the EVMs used in the Poll and the VVPAT slips contained in the box are required to be preserved for the period of 45 days in a secured manner for the purpose of Election Petition, if any. There is no bar on the movement of VVPATs machines as the same are not required to be preserved for Election Petitions **as the paper slips printed through the VVPAT and contained in the Box are required to be preserved separately**. In this case, however, further precaution was taken to move only the reserve VVPATs used as substitutes during poll on which no restriction applies.

### The Committee has recommended that the enquiry conclusively establishes that

1. The accuracy of the functioning of the EVMs and VVPATs including the said EVM/VVPAT is beyond doubt.
2. Commission may like to fix responsibility on DEO and RO for the lapses brought out in the enquiry reports.
3. Commission may like to prescribe check list for handling each activity relating to EVM/VVPAT which should be mandatorily adhered to by the electoral authorities and the same should be monitored through MIS online by the Commission. The existing instructions issued from time to time may be compiled in the form of these checklists. The said revised checklists laid down by the Election Commission of India regarding handling of various activities on EVMs/VVPATs, must be rigorously followed by the entire electoral machinery from the level of Presiding Officer to the CEO.
4. Commission may like to reiterate that there should be no room for casualness in handling the electoral matters, least of all, such unwarranted remarks, as the sanctity of electoral process forms the foundation of India's democracy.

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**(DhirendraOjha)**

**Director**

**RM**

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