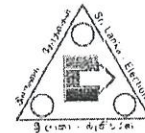




Election Commission



Parliamentary Election - 2020.08.05

Prevention of misuse of Public Property at Local Government Institutions

01. Official Vehicles assigned to Heads of Local Government Institutions:

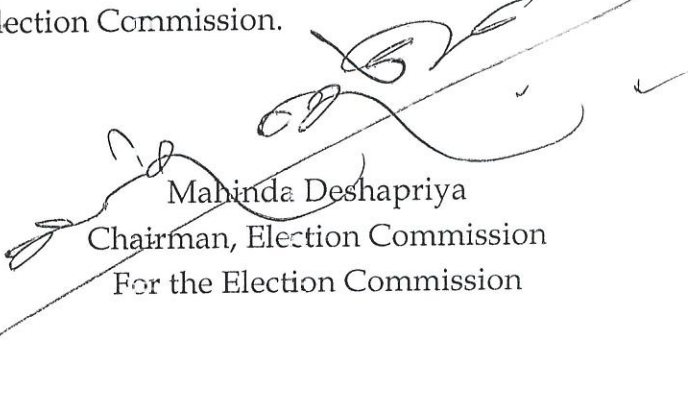
- 1.1 It has been reported that the official vehicles assigned to the Heads of Local Authorities to facilitate the execution of their duties are used by such Heads of Local Authorities for their political activities, in particular, to travel to political rallies held in areas outside their area of authority and also for propaganda purposes and for the delivery of posters and handbills as well as misusing their entitlement to use such vehicles for their personal use.
- 1.2 It is reiterated that it is prohibited to use the official vehicles assigned to the Heads of Local Authorities for political promotional activities or for traveling to and from to attend propaganda meetings.
- 1.3 It is further notified that the use of the official vehicle assigned to any Head of a Local Authority to attend propaganda meetings or for political purposes is deemed as a misuse of public property.

02. Use of Vehicles and other Equipment belonging to Local Authorities for Political Purposes:

- 2.1 It has been reported that the pool vehicles (or assigned official vehicles) belonging to Local Authorities are being used for the promotion of parties/candidates, transportation of posters, organization of rallies and for the transportation of goods for such rallies and on several such occasions, the vehicles/equipment involved in carrying out such illegal activities have been seized by the police. Therefore, the need to refrain from using any of these pool or assigned official vehicles for the purpose of promotion of a party/candidate is once again reiterated.
- 2.2 No public property including flag poles, stage decorations, etc. belonging to Local Government bodies can be used for political promotion purposes. Nevertheless, there is no barrier to renting out such flag poles, stage decorations, reception halls, playgrounds, etc. to political parties/candidates without discrimination, on the payment of the prescribed rentals.

- 2.3 The official residence of the Heads of Local Government Institutions cannot be used for public meetings or for media conferences to promote political parties / candidates. However, under normal circumstances, there will be no hindrance to conduct meetings of the members of their party / group or the discussions of the party politicians in the respective official residences. Provided no politician who arrives or leaves such discussions shall hold media briefings or give voice cuts to media, while attending or leaving such meetings. Further, such official residences should not be used as national or district or divisional campaign offices or for political meetings with the participation of party supporters and for press conferences for the purpose of promotion of a party / candidate. Also no offense specified in the election law or any act of corruption or any illegal act should be committed in the official residence or in its premises.
- 2.4 No officers, permanent employees or casual workers of the daily wage should be used for the promotion of a party / candidate. Complaints have been received from certain members of the staffs of Municipal Councils, Urban Councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas that Heads and administrative officers of Local government institutions deploy certain members of the staffs to engage in promotional activities such as decorating the meeting venues, compulsory attendance at meetings, wearing T-shirts / caps / hats and some members engage in such activities willingly whereas some others are forced into doing that. This is a grave offence. All Heads of Local Authorities and Officers charged with the administration are strongly advised to abstain from these activities and allow no one to do so.
03. **Need to abstain from violating laws pertaining to conducting rallies of parties / candidates, propaganda posters, walks, distribution of leaflets, etc.**
- 3.1 Heads of all Local Authorities are advised to abstain from committing the offense of promoting parties/candidates, displaying placards, banners, flags, etc. in public places and from committing the offense of conducting walks, bicycle, motorbike/vehicular parades, and to prevent their supporters from committing such offences.
- 3.2 The attention of the Heads of Local Authorities is invited to the need to abstain from committing any offence / wrongdoing specified in the Presidential Elections Act such as treating and undue influence and the need to prevent their supporters from committing such illegal acts.
04. It is hereby notified that if any complaint from any act aforesaid is received and proved, the Election Commission will take action against the Heads and the Officers charged with the administration of all Local Authorities treating such acts as a violation of the directives of the Election Commission.
05. All citizens, civil organizations and media institutions have been asked to lodge complaints of such malpractices and the police officers have been instructed to take prompt and swift action on such illegal practices.

06. Municipal Commissioners / Municipal Secretaries and Secretaries to Urban Councils / Pradeshiya Sabhas should take action to bring this to the attention of all Heads of Local Authorities.
07. A free and fair election is only possible, if all citizens, government officials and politicians comply with the laws, regulations, guidelines and ethics relating to the elections.
08. Further, your attention is also invited to the special Gazette Notifications No. 2178/29, dated 2020.06.06; No. 2178/24, dated 2020.06.03, and No. 2178/25, dated 2020.06.03 published by the Election Commission.



Mahinda Deshapriya
Chairman, Election Commission
For the Election Commission

Election Commission
Sarana Mawatha
Rajagiriya
2020.07.03