

The Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Elections) Rules, 1995¹

(G.O.Ms.No.143, Rural Development, dated 7th August 1995)

In exercise of powers conferred by Section 242 read with Sections 11,20,32 and 57 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 (Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994), the Governor of Tamil Nadu hereby makes the following Rules, namely:-

PART – I

PRELEMINARY

1. Short title and commencement.- These Rules may be called the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Elections) Rules, 1995.

(2) They shall come into force with immediate effect.

2. Definitions.-(1) In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires.-

(i) **“Act”** means the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 (Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994) as amended from time to time;

(ii) **“Ballot box”** includes any box, bag or other receptacle used for the insertion of ballot paper or papers by electors;

(iii) **“Candidate”** means a person who has been or claims to have been nominated as a Candidate at any election under this Act;

(iv) **Casual Vacancy”** means a vacancy occurring otherwise than by efflux of time “casual election” means an election held to fill a casual vacancy;

(v) **“Chairperson”** means Chairman referred to in clause (3) of Section 2 of the Act;

(vi) **“contesting Candidate”** means a Candidate whose nomination has been duly accepted under sub-rule (8) of Rules 29 and who has not withdrawn his candidature;

(vii) **“corrupt practice”** means any of the practices specified in Section 260 of the Act ;

(viii) ²**“cost”** means all costs and expenses of, or incidental to, a trial of an election petition;

(ix) **“District Election Officer”** means the District Collector;

(x) **“Election Court”** means the Court of the District Judge under whose jurisdiction the Panchayat fall:

(xi) **“elector in relation to a Ward or Panchayat”** means a person whose name is entered in the electoral roll of that Ward or Panchayat for the time being in force;

(xii) "**electoral right**" means the right of a person to stand or not to stand as, or to withdraw or not to withdraw from being a Candidate, or to vote or refrain from voting at an election;

(xiii) "**electoral roll**" means the electoral roll of a Ward of a Village Panchayat or of a Panchayat Village or a Ward of a Panchayat Union or of a Territorial Ward of a District Panchayat as the case may be;

(xiv) "**electoral roll number of a person**" means and includes-

(a) the serial number of the entry in the electoral roll in respect of that person;

(b) the serial number of the Ward of the Village Panchayat in which such entry occurs;

(c) the name of the Panchayat Village to which the electoral roll relates; and

(d) The serial number of the Ward of the Panchayat Union and the name of the Panchayat Union in which the Village Panchayat Ward falls or the serial number of the Ward of the District Panchayat and the name of the District Panchayat in which the Village Panchayat Ward falls, as the case may be;

(xv) "**Form**" means a form appended to these rules and includes a translation thereof in the language or languages in which the electoral roll of the Village Panchayat is prepared;

(xvi) "**marked copy of the electoral roll**" means a copy of the electoral roll set apart for the purpose of marking the names of electors to whom ballot paper or ballot papers are issued at an election or elections;

(xvii) "**members of the meeting**" for the purposes of Part IX of these rules means the Chairmen of all the Panchayat Union Councils in the district in the case of a District Panchayat and the Presidents of all Village Panchayats in the Panchayat Union in the case of a Panchayat Union Council and does not mean and include the Vice-Chairman of a Panchayat Union Council or Vice-President of a Village Panchayat on whom the functions of the Chairman or president, as the case may be, stood devolved under Section 54 or 47 of the Act respectively;

(xviii) "**ordinary vacancy**" means a vacancy occurring by efflux of time and ordinary election" means an election held to fill an ordinary vacancy;

(xix) ³[***]

(xx) "**Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer**" means the Panchayat Union Commissioner designated as such by the Tamil Nadu State

Election Commission to prepare and publish electoral rolls under sub-Section (2) of Section 30 of the Act;

(xxi) **"person"** does not include a body of persons;

(xxii) **"Polling Officer"** means the officer appointed under Rule 12 of these Rules to assist the Presiding Officer in the performance of his duties;

(xxiii) **"polling station"** means a place fixed under Rule 11 of these Rules, for taking poll at an election or elections;

(xxiv) **"Presiding Officer"** means an officer appointed under Rule 12 for taking poll at a polling station;

(xxv) **"public holiday"** means any day which a public holiday for purposes of Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 (Central Act XXVI of 1881);

(xxvi) **"qualifying date"** in relation to the preparation of every electoral roll under these Rules means the first day of January of the year in which it is so prepared;

(xxvii) **"returned Candidate"** means a Candidate whose name has been published under Rules, ²[69, 89, 97 or 117] as duly elected;

(xxviii) **"Returning Officer"** means a person appointed under Rule 8, ⁴[73], by the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission or by the District Election Officer if so authorized for this purpose by the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission;

⁵(xxviii-a) **"State Election Commission"** means "The Tamil Nadu State Election Commission";

(xxix) **"State Election Officer"** means the officer appointed under sub-rule (1) of Rule 6 of these Rules;

(xxx) **"Ward"** means the Ward of a Village Panchayat or of a Panchayat Union or of a Territorial Ward of a District Panchayat, as divided and notified under Sections 12, 21 or 28 of the Act for the purposes of election of members of the respective Panchayat;

(xxxi) **"Ward member"**-

(a) in the case of election of a Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a District Panchayat, means the person elected under Section 26 of the Act from the Territorial Ward of the District Panchayat and does not include any other persons enlisted as members of the District Panchayat under clause (a), (b) and (c) of sub-section (1) of Section 25 of the Act;

(b) in the case of election of a Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a Panchayat Union Council, means the person elected under Section 19 of the Act from the Ward of the Panchayat Union and does not include any other persons enlisted as members of the Panchayat Union Council under clause (b), (c) and (d) of sub-section (1) of section 17 of the Act; and

(c) in the case of election of Vice-President of a Village Panchayat, means the person elected under Section 10 of the Act from a Ward of the Village Panchayat.

(2) Words and expressions used but not defined in these rules shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act. In the absence of such meaning, the Tamil Nadu General Clauses Act, 1891 (Tamil Nadu Act 1 of 1891) shall apply for the interpretation of these rules, as it applies for the interpretation of a Tamil Nadu Act.

3. Conduct of more than one election simultaneously.- A notified polling station can be used for the purpose of conducting elections either for a Member of Village Panchayat or President of a Village Panchayat or a Member of a Panchayat Union Council or a District Panchayat either individually or simultaneously. The Presiding Officers, Polling Officers and such other officers appointed for the purposes of conducting one election shall be deemed to have been appointed for the purposes of holding all other elections so held simultaneously at that polling station. Unless otherwise directed by the State Election Commission, the polling materials like ballot boxes, rubber stamps, distinguishing marks etc., as well as records like marked copy of the electoral roll, covers, etc., used for one election may be also be used for other such elections.

4. Signing of an instrument.- For the purposes of these rules, a person who is unable to write his name shall, unless otherwise expressly provided for in these rules, be deemed to have signed an instrument or other paper if-

(i) he has placed a mark on such instrument or other paper in the presence of the Returning Officer, Presiding Officer or such other officer as may be specified in this behalf by the State Election Commission; and

(ii) such officer, on being satisfied as to his identity, has attested the mark as being the mark of that person.

PART-II

ELECTION MACHINERY

5. Powers and functions of the State Election Commission.-

(1) The preparation of electoral roll and the conduct of all elections to the panchayats at all levels shall be held under the superintendence and control of the State Election Commission and for this purpose it shall have power to give such directions as it may deem necessary to the District Collector or any officer or servant of the Government/local bodies/Government undertakings/co-operative institutions, so as to ensure efficient conduct of the elections.

(2) The State Election Commission may, subject to control and revision, delegate its powers to such officers as it may deem necessary.

(3) The District Election Officer, Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer, Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer, Presiding Officer, Polling Officer and any other officer appointed under these rules, any police officer designated for the time being by the State Government for the conduct of any elections, shall be deemed to be on deputation to the State Election Commission for the period commencing on and from the date of preparation of electoral rolls till its completion and from the date of notification calling for such elections and ending with the date of completion of such elections and such officer shall, during that period, be subject to the control, superintendence and discipline of the State Election Commission.

(4) It shall be the duty of the District Election Officer to report the vacancies within a week to the State Election Commission.

6. State Election Officer and District Election Officer.-

(1) State Election Officer.- The State Election Commission may appoint the Director of Rural Development as the State Election Officer, subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission, the State Election Officer shall co-ordinate and supervise the preparation and publication of Panchayat electoral rolls and also the conduct of elections of the ⁶[offices of members] of Panchayats at different levels, Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Village Panchayats, ⁷[***] ⁸[and Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Panchayat Union Councils and District Panchayats]. ⁹[***] He shall also perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the State Election Commission from time to time.

(2) District Election Officer.- The District Collector shall be appointed as the District Election Officer, subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission, the District Election Officer shall co-ordinate

and supervise the preparation and publication of Panchayat electoral rolls and also the conduct of elections to the ⁶[offices of members] of Panchayats at different levels, Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Village Panchayats, ⁷[***] ⁸[and Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Panchayat Union Councils and District Panchayats]. ⁹[***]. He shall also perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the State Election Commission from time to time.

¹⁰**[6-A. Observers.-** (1) The Tamil Nadu State Election Commission may nominate an observer, who shall be an officer of the Government to watch the conduct of election or elections to the Panchayats or a part or a group thereof within a Revenue Division or a part of Revenue Division or a group of Revenue Divisions and to perform such other functions as may be entrusted to him by the State Election Commission.

(2) The Observer nominated under sub-rule (1) shall have the power to direct the Returning Officers concerned, to stop the counting of votes at any time before the declaration of the result or not to declare the result, if in the opinion of the Observer, booth capturing has taken place at a large number of polling stations or at places fixed for the poll or counting of votes or any ballot papers used at a polling station or at a place fixed for the poll are unlawfully taken out of the custody of the presiding Officer or the Returning Officer, or if at any time before the counting of the votes is completed, ballot papers used at a polling station are unlawfully taken out of the custody of the Returning Officer or are accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or are damaged or tampered with to such an extent that the result of the poll at that polling station or place cannot be ascertained.

(3) Where an observer has directed the Returning Officer under this rule to stop counting votes or not to declare the result, the Observer shall forthwith report the matter to the District Election Officer, State Election Officer and the State Election Commission and thereupon the District Election Officer shall, after taking all material circumstances into account, issue appropriate directions under Rule 57 of Rule 62.

Explanation.- For the purpose of sub-rules (2) and (3), 'Observer' shall include any Officer of the State Election Commission as has been assigned under this rule the duty of watching the conduct of election or elections to the Panchayats or a part or a group thereof within a Revenue Division or a part of Revenue Division or a group of Revenue Divisions by the State Election Commission].

7. Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer.- The Panchayat Union Commissioner shall be the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer under sub-section (2) of Section 30 of the Act for the purposes of preparing and publishing

Panchayat Electoral Rolls in respect of the Wards of the Panchayats in his jurisdiction.

8. Returning Officer.-

(1) **Conduct of election of members of District Panchayat.-** The State Election Commissioner or the District Election Officer specifically authorized in this connection, may appoint an Officer of the Government not below the rank of the *Chief Executive Officer to be the Returning Officer for the conduct of election of Territorial Ward members of the District Panchayat.

(2) **Conduct of election of members of Panchayat Union Council.-** The State Election Commissioner or the District Election Officer if so authorized by the State Election Commission in this behalf, shall appoint an officer of the Government not below the rank of the ¹¹[Assistant Director of Rural Development] to be the Returning Officer for the conduct of election of Ward members of the Panchayat Union Council.

(3) **Conduct of election of member or members and President of Village Panchayat.-** The State Election Commissioner or the District Election Officer, if so authorised by the State Election Commission in this behalf, shall appoint an officer not below the rank of a Block Development Officer to be the Returning Officer for the conduct of the election of President and members of any particular Village Panchayat or of all Village Panchayats comprising a Panchayat Union.

9. General duties of the Returning Officer.- Subject to the superintendence, direction and control of the State Election Commission and under the supervision and guidance of the District Election Officer, the Returning Officer shall be responsible for the proper conduct of the elections in the manner provided in the Act, the Rules thereunder and any other orders issued by the State Election Commission from time to time.

10. Assistant Returning Officer.- (1) The State Election Commissioner or the District Election Officer if so authorised by the State Election Commission in this behalf, may appoint one or more persons as Assistant Returning Officers to assist any Returning Officer in the performance of all or any of his duties and functions;

Provided that every such person shall be an officer of the Government not below the rank of an Assistant in the Ministerial Service.

(2) Every Assistant Returning Officer shall, subject to the control of the Returning Officer, be competent to perform all or any of the duties and functions of the Returning Officer as may be directed by the State Election Commissioner or the District Election Officer from time to time.

¹²[**11. Provision of Polling Stations.-** The Returning Officer shall, with the approval of the District Election Officer, provide sufficient number of Polling Stations for every Panchayat, in such manner as the State Election Commission may direct and shall, publish at such place or places and in such manner as the State Election Commission may direct, a list, in the language or languages in which the electoral roll of the area is prepared, showing the names of the Polling Stations so provided and the polling area of areas or group of voters for which they have respectively been provided].

12. Appointment of Presiding Officers and Polling Officers.- The Returning Officer shall appoint a Presiding Officer shall appoint a Presiding Officer and Polling Officers in accordance with the scale prescribed by the State Election Commission for each polling station;

Provided that ²[only officers and servants of the Government,] Local Authorities, Co-operative Institutions or Undertakings owned by the State or Central Government or aided schools may be appointed for this purpose.

13. General duties of the Presiding Officer and Polling Officers.-
(1) Subject to the provisions of these Rules, it shall be the general duty of the Presiding Officer at a Polling Station to keep order thereat, and to ensure that the poll is freely and fairly taken. It shall be the duty of the Polling Officers to assist the Presiding Officer in the performance of his functions.

(2) If the Presiding Officer, owing to illness or other unavoidable causes, is obliged to absent himself from the Polling Station, his duties and functions shall be performed by such Polling Office as has been specifically authorized by the Returning Officer.

PART – III

PREPARATION AND PUBLICATION OF PANCHAYAT ELECTORAL ROLL

14. Preparation of Panchayat Electoral Roll.- (1) The Electoral Roll of a Panchayat, hereinafter referred to as "the roll", shall be prepared by reference to the qualifying date, by the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer, by integrating the particulars in the various entries available in such part or ²[portion thereof of] the current electoral roll of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly and the various amendments issued to it from time to time, as they relate to the Ward of the Village Panchayat or a portion thereof of.

(2) The roll shall be divided into convenient parts which shall be numbered consecutively.

(3) There shall be a separate part or parts of the rolls for each Ward of a Village Panchayat.

(4) The number of electors included in any part of the roll shall not ordinarily exceed one thousand five hundred and in case, where it exceeds one thousand five hundred, it shall be prepared in more than one part in a convenient manner in accordance with the directions issued by the State Election Commission from time to time.

¹³[(5) The electoral roll shall be prepared before every ordinary or causal election.]

15. Electoral roll of a Village Panchayat.- For the purpose of election of President of Village Panchayat, the rolls of all Wards in the Panchayat Village prepared under Rule 14 and put together shall form the electoral roll of that Panchayat Village.

16. Electoral roll of a Ward of a Panchayat Union.- For the purpose of election of member of a Panchayat Union Council, the rolls of the Wards of Panchayat Villages comprising the Ward of the Panchayat Union, prepared under Rule 14 and put together shall form the electoral roll of that Ward of the Panchayat Union.

17. Electoral roll of a Ward of a District Panchayat.- For the purpose of election of member of a District Panchayat, the rolls of all wards of Panchayat Village comprising the Ward of the District Panchayat prepared under Rule 14 and put together shall form the roll of that Ward of the District Panchayat.

Explanation.- The electoral rolls for a Panchayat Village or Ward of a Panchayat Union or of a Ward of a District Panchayat as the case may be need not be prepared or amended separately when once the electoral rolls of all the constituent Wards of Panchayat Villages have been prepared or amended in accordance with these Rules.

18. Form and language of the roll.- (1) The roll shall be prepared in the format adopted in the roll of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Constituency. The title and other particulars shall be in accordance with the directions of the State Election Commission issued from time to time.

(2) The roll shall be prepared in such language or languages in which the roll of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Constituency within which the Ward of the Panchayat Village is situated, is prepared.

19. Order of names.- (1) The names of electors in each part of the roll shall be arranged according to house numbers.

(2) The names of electors in each part of the roll shall be numbered consecutively with separate serial numbers beginning with number one.

20. Publication of copies of rolls.- (1) As soon as the roll is prepared in accordance with the Rules 14 to 19, the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer shall make arrangements to print or cyclostyle or write in manuscript as many copies of the roll as may be directed by the State Election Commission from time to time. He shall then publish the roll along with a notice in **Form I** appended to these Rules by making copies thereof available for inspection by public and political parties:-

(a)	At his office	One copy of all parts of the roll relating to the Wards of Village Panchayats falling within his jurisdiction.
(b)	At the office of the Village Panchayat concerned.	One copy of all parts of the roll relating to all the Wards of the Village Panchayat, arranged Village Panchayat Ward-wise.
(c)	At the office of the Panchayat Union concerned.	One copy of all parts of the roll relating to all Wards of the Village Panchayats comprising the District Panchayat Union arranged District Panchayat Ward-wise.
(d)	At the Office of the District Panchayat.	One cop of all parts of the roll relating to all Wards of the Village Panchayats comprising the District Panchayat arranged District Panchayat Ward-wise.

(2) The Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer shall also give further publicity to the roll so published as he may consider necessary.

¹²[(3) He shall supply, free of cost, if so directed by the State Election Commission, two copies of the roll to the recognized political parties as notified by the State Election Commission from time to time.]

(4) Upon such publication under this Rule, the roll shall be the electoral roll of the Ward of the Village Panchayat or the Village or Ward of the Panchayat Union or the Ward of the District Panchayat as the case maybe and shall remain in force till a fresh electoral roll is prepared and published.

21. Procedure for lodging claims and objections.- All omissions of names in any part of the roll or objections to any entry in the roll, at any point of time after its publication under Rule 20, shall be settled by first getting amended suitably the relevant portion of the electoral roll of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Constituency based on which the Panchayat Roll was prepared. Anybody wishing to raise a claim for inclusion of any name in the roll or any objection in respect of any entry in the roll so published, shall submit a proper claim or objection under the provisions of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 to the Electoral Registration Officer of the concerned Legislative Assembly Constituency. Subject to the provisions in Section 30 of the Act and based on the

orders of the Electoral Registration Officer of the Assembly Constituency on such claims and objections, the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer shall amend the relevant portion of the Panchayat Electoral Roll, incorporating the changes by issuing an amendment to the relevant part of the Panchayat Electoral Roll. In case of any clerical or printing error or both and when the entries deviate from the particulars of Assembly Roll, the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer may cause such errors, omissions and commissions rectified so as to bring it in conformity with the particulars of the Assembly Roll concerned. In other words, the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer, will not resort to *suo motu* revision of the rolls by way of deletions or additions or modifications.

22. Special provision for preparation of rolls on changes in jurisdiction and no consequential re-delimitation of Wards.- (1) If there is any change in the jurisdiction of a Panchayat and/or if the Ward of the Panchayat is delimited as new in accordance with law and if it is necessary to prepare the rolls urgently, the State Election Commission may direct that the rolls shall be prepared-

(a) by putting together the rolls of the existing Wards comprising the new wards so formed; and

(b) by making appropriate alteration in the arrangements, serial numbering and headings of the rolls so compiled.

(2) The roll so prepared shall be published in the manner specified in rule 20 and on such publication, it shall be the roll for the newly created Panchayat or delimited Ward.

23. Sale of Electoral Rolls and custody of Rolls.- (1) Copies of the Rolls, including the updated Rolls may be sold to the public at the prices determined by the State Election commission, from time to time, and the proceeds thereof shall be remitted to State Funds.

(2) One copy of the roll relating to all Wards of the Panchayat Villages arranged Panchayat Union Ward-wise in respect of that Panchayat Union duly authenticated by the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer shall be kept in his office for a period of six years from the date of its final publication or till a new roll is published whichever is earlier.

PART – IV

NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION AND NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

24. Notification of programme of election.- (1) For the purposes of filling up of ordinary and casual vacancies in the offices of Ward members of

Panchayats or Presidents of Village Panchayats as the case may be, the State Election Commission, in pursuance of and in consonance with the Constitutional provisions in this behalf, shall in consultation with the Government, by one or more notifications published in the manner prescribed, call upon the electors of such Wards and Panchayats to elect Ward members of the respective Panchayats, and / or Presidents of Village Panchayats, as the case may be, on such date or dates as may be specified therein.

(2) The notifications referred to in sub-rule (1) shall specify-

(i) the date on which the public notice of election shall be published;

(ii) the last date for making nominations, which shall be the seventh day after the publication of the public notice referred to in clause (i) or if that day is a public holiday, the next succeeding day which is not a public holiday, the hours between which the nomination can be made being 11-00 a.m. and 3-00 p.m. on each day;

(iii) the time and date for taking up the scrutiny of nominations, which shall be 11-00 a.m. of the date immediately following the last date for making nominations or, if that date is a public holiday, the next succeeding day which is not a public holiday;

(iv) the hour and date upto which the withdrawal of candidatures can be made, which shall be 3-00 p.m. on the second day after the date for the scrutiny of nominations or, if that day is a public holiday, the next succeeding day which is not a public holiday;

(v) the date or dates on which a poll shall, if necessary, be taken which or the first of which shall be a date not earlier than the seventh day after the last date for the withdrawal of Candidatures;

(vi) the date before which the election shall be completed; and

(vii) the date on which the meeting of the newly elected Ward members of the Panchayat shall be held for the election of Vice-President or Chairperson or Vice-chairperson as the cases may be.

(3) The notifications referred to in sub-rule (1) shall be published-

(i) in the case of both ordinary and causal election of members of District Panchayats, in the *Tamil Nadu Government Gazette* and in the respective *District Gazette*;

(ii) in the case both ordinary and causal election of members of the Panchayat Union Councils, in the respective *District Gazettes*; and

(iii) in the case of both ordinary and causal elections of the Presidents of Village Panchayats and / or members of Village Panchayats, in the concerned *District Gazette*.

(4) the State Election Commission may also arrange to publish the notifications at such other places as it deems fit, to give further publicity to the notification.

25. Notice of Election.- (1) Election of member or members of District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Councils.- In pursuance of the notifications of the State Election Commission under Rule 24, the Returning Officer shall cause to be published on the appointed date, a notice of election in Tamil in **Form 2A** and also in any other language or languages in which the electoral roll is published, by affixing it at his office and also at the offices of the District Panchayat, Panchayat Unions, Village Panchayats and such other place or places as decided by the State Election Commission.

Such notice of election shall contain the following particulars, namely:-

- (i) the Ward or Wards for which elections are to be held;
- (ii) Whether the Ward is reserved or not; if reserved, whether it is reserved for Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes or ¹⁴[***] for women;
- (iii) the dates on which, the place or places at which and the hours between which nomination papers shall be presented;
- (iv) the person or persons by whom the nomination papers will be received;
- (v) the date on which and hours at which and the place at which the nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny;
- (vi) the last date on which and the hours upto which the nomination papers can be withdrawn;
- (vii) the date on which and the place or places at which the votes of the electors will be taken at the poll, should there be a poll, and the hours during which the poll will be open, being not less than ten hours between 7.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.
- (viii) the date on which and the place or places and hour at which the Returning Officer will commence the counting of votes;
- (ix) the date before which the election shall be completed; and
- (x) the date on which the meeting of the newly elected Ward members shall be held for the election of Chairman / or Vice-Chairman.

(2) Election of President of Village Panchayat.- (a) In pursuance of the notification of the State Election Commission under Rule 24, the Returning Officer shall prepare and publish on the appointed date, a notice in **Form 2B** in Tamil and also in any other language or languages in which the electoral roll of the Panchayat is publishing stating.-

(i) Whether the office of the President of the Village Panchayat is reserved or not and if reserved, whether it is reserved for person belonging to Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes or ¹⁴[***] for women;

(ii) the date or dates on which, the place at which and the hours between which the nomination papers shall be presented;

(iii) the person or person by whom the nomination papers will be received;

(iv) the date on which, the hours at which and the place at which the nomination papers shall be taken up for scrutiny;

(v) the date on which and the hours upto which the nomination papers shall be withdrawn;

(vi) the date on which and the place or places at which the votes of the electors will be taken at the poll, should there be a poll; and the hours during which the poll will be open, being not less than ten hours between 7.00 a.m. and the 5.30 p.m.;

(vii) the date on which, and the place and hour at which the Returning Officer will commence the counting of the votes;

(viii) the date before which the election shall be completed;
and

(ix) the date on which the meeting of the newly elected members shall be held for the election of Vice-President.

(b) The notice shall be published by affixing it at the office of the Village Panchayat concerned and such other place or places as directed by the State Election Commission. It shall also be announced by beat of tom-tom in the Panchayat Village area.

(3) Election of Member or Members of Village Panchayat.- (a) In pursuance of the notification of the State Election Commission under Rule 24, the Returning Officer shall prepare and publish a notice in **Form 2B** in Tamil and also in any other language or languages in which the electoral roll is published stating-

(i) the Ward or wards for which elections are to be held;

(ii) the number of persons to be elected in each Ward;

(iii) the number of seats, if any, reserved for the persons belonging to the Scheduled castes or Scheduled Tribes or ¹⁴[***] for women in each Ward;

(iv) the date or dates on which, the place at which and the hours between which nomination papers shall be presented;

(v) the person or persons by whom the nominated papers will be received;

(vi) the date on which and the hours at which the nomination papers shall be taken up for scrutiny;

(vii) the date on which and the hours upto which the nomination papers shall be withdrawn;

(viii) the date on which and the place or places at which the votes of the electors will be taken at the poll, should there be a poll, and the hours during which the poll will be open, being not less than ten hours between 7.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.;

(ix) the date on which and the place and hour at which the Returning Officer will commence the counting of the votes;

(x) the date before which the election shall be completed;
and

(xi) the date on which the meeting of the newly elected members shall be held for the election of the Vice-President.

(b) The notice shall be published by affixing it at the office of the Village Panchayat concerned and such other place or places as directed by the State Election Commission. It shall also be announced by beat of tom-tom in the Ward or Wards of the Village Panchayat.

26. Presentation of nomination paper.- (1) The nomination of every Candidate shall be made by means of a nomination paper in **Form 3**. Copies of the Form can be had from the offices specified in the notice of election on any working day.

(2) On the date or dates specified in the election notice for the presentation of nomination papers, each Candidate qualified to contest the election as per Section 33 of the Act shall, either in person or by his proposer, deliver to the Returning Officer at the place and during the hours specified in that behalf, a nomination paper completed in **Form 3** and signed by the Candidate and by a proposer who shall be an elector-

(a) in the respective Ward of Village Panchayat in the elections of member or members of Village Panchayat;

(b) in the Village Panchayat in the election of President;

(c) in the Ward of the Panchayat Union in the election of member of the Panchayat Union; and

(d) in the Ward of the District Panchayat in the election of member of District Panchayat;

Provided that no nomination paper for election shall be delivered to the Returning Officer on a day which is public holiday.

(3) If the seat is reserved for Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, ¹⁴[***] a Candidate shall furnish a declaration, in the nomination form made by him specifying the particular caste or tribe of which he is a member and the area in relation to which the caste or tribe is notified as a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe ¹⁴[***] of the State.

(4) On the presentation of a nomination paper, the Returning Officer shall satisfy himself that the names and electoral roll numbers of the Candidate and his prosper as entered in the nomination paper are the same as those entered in the electoral roll;

Provided that the Returning Office shall permit any misnomer or inaccurate description or clerical or printing error in the nomination paper in regard to the said names or numbers to be corrected or to bring them in conformity with the corresponding entries in the electoral roll and wherever necessary, direct that any clerical or printing error in the said entries shall be overlooked.

(5) Nothing contained in this Rule shall prevent any Candidate from being nominated by more than one nomination paper for any one election;

Provided that not more than four nomination papers shall be presented by or on behalf of any Candidate for any one election.

(6) An elector who wishes to stand as a Candidate for an election, excepting for the election of a member in a multi-member Ward of Village Panchayats, shall not sign any nomination paper as a prosper for that election.

(7) In the case of election of members of a Panchayat or President of a Village Panchayat, an elector can sign as many nomination papers as there are vacancies to be filled, but not more. An elector who wishes to stand as a Candidate in an election to a single member Ward of a Village Panchayat, or a member of Panchayat Union Council or of a District Panchayat or President of a Village Panchayat, shall not sign any nomination as proposer. An elector who wishes to stand as a Candidate in a multi-member Ward of a Village Panchayat,

may propose other candidates, provided, the maximum number of nomination papers signed by him as proposer shall be one less than number of members to be elected to that Ward.

¹⁵[(8) If a person presents nomination papers in violation of sub-rule (1) of Rule 30, the Returning Officer shall pending scrutiny and orders and also subject to the provisions contained in sub-rule (3) of Rule 30 shall receive them.]

27. Deposits.- (1) A Candidate shall not be deemed to be duly nominated for election unless at the time of delivery of nomination paper he deposits or causes to be deposited with the Returning Officer in cash, or enclosed with the nomination paper a receipt showing that the said sum has been deposited by him or on his behalf in the respective Panchayat-

¹⁵ [(a)	for election of member of Village Panchayat	Rs.200.00
(b)	For election of President of Village Panchayat	Rs.600.00
(c)	For election of Member of a Panchayat Union	Rs.600.00
(d)	For election of Member of a District Panchayat	Rs.1,000.00

Where the Candidate is member of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe-

(a)	for election of member of Village Panchayat	Rs.100.00
(b)	For election of President of Village Panchayat	Rs.300.00
(c)	For election of Member of a Panchayat Union	Rs.300.00
(d)	For election of Member of a District Panchayat	Rs.500.00]:

Provided that where a Candidate has been nominated by more than one nomination paper for a seat, or office not more than one deposit shall be required of him under this sub-rule.

(2) (a) The deposit made under sub-rule (1) shall, unless forfeited under sub-rule (3) or (4), be returned as soon as practicable after the result of the election is declared.

Provided that where a Candidate is not shown in the list of contesting candidates or dies before the commencement of the poll, the deposit shall be returned as soon as practicable after the publications of the list or after his death, as the case may be.

(b) The deposit shall be returned to the Candidate, his legal representative, or a person authorized by him on his behalf.

(3) If a Candidate is not elected and the number of valid votes polled by him does not exceed one-sixth of the total number of valid votes polled by all the Candidates in the Ward or Panchayat divided by the number of persons to be elected from that Ward or Panchayat, the deposit made by him or on his behalf, shall be forfeited to the Government.

(4) The Returning Officer shall maintain, in such form as may be laid down by the State Election Commission, an account of the deposits made.

28. Notice of nominations and the time and place for their Scrutiny.-

(1) The Returning Officer shall on receiving a nomination paper under these Rules, inform the person delivering the same, of the date, time and place fixed for the scrutiny of nominations and shall enter on the nomination paper its serial number and shall sign thereon a certificate stating the date on which and the hour at which the nomination papers have been delivered to him.

(2) As soon as may be, after the close of the time fixed for receiving nomination papers on each day, the Returning Officer shall cause to be affixed in some conspicuous place in his office a notice in **Form 4** of all the nomination papers delivered to him on that day.

(3) On the last day, after the expiry of the hour fixed for receipt of Nomination papers, the Returning Officer shall cause to be affixed in some conspicuous place in his office a consolidated notice in **Form 5** of all the nomination papers delivered to him within the time furnishing the date, time and place fixed for the scrutiny of nominations.

(4) If a Candidate considers that his name is incorrectly spelt or is otherwise incorrectly shown in his nomination paper or is different from the name by which he is popularly known, he may, at any time before the list of contesting Candidates is prepared, furnish in writing to the Returning Officer, the proper form and spelling of his name and the Returning Officer, the proper form and spelling of his name and the Returning Officer shall, on being satisfied as to the genuineness of the request, make necessary correction or alteration in the list in **Form 5** and adopt that form and spelling in the list of contesting Candidates.

29. Scrutiny of nomination.- (1) On the date and hour notified, the Returning Officer shall take up the scrutiny of nominations at such place fixed for scrutiny. The Candidate, one of his proposers and one other person duly authorised by him, but no other person, may attend the scrutiny. The Returning Officer shall give them all reasonable facilities for examining the nomination papers of all the Candidates which have been specified in the list in **Form 5**.

(2) If any person objects to any nomination, he shall do so either orally or in writing.

3) The Returning Officer shall then examine the nomination papers and decide one by one and Ward by Ward, all objections which may be raised to any nomination paper and may either on such objection or on his own motion after such summary inquiry, as he thinks necessary, reject any nomination on any of the following grounds-

(a) that on the last date for filing of nomination papers, the Candidate either was not qualified or was disqualified for being elected to fill the vacancy under any of the provisions of the Act; or

(b) that there has been a failure to comply with any of the provisions in Rule 26 or 27; or

(c) that the signature of the Candidate or the proposer on the nomination paper is not genuine; or

(d) that, where election is solely for a seat or seats reserved for Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes ¹⁴[***] or women, Candidate does not belong to such category.

(4) Nothing contained in clause (b) or (c) of sub-rule (3) shall be deemed to authorise the rejection of the nomination of any Candidate on the ground of any defect in respect of a nomination paper, if the Candidate has been duly nominated by means of another nomination paper in respect of which no defect has been noticed.

(5) The Returning Officer shall not reject any nomination paper on the ground of any defect which is not of a substantial character.

Explanation.- For the purpose of this sub-rule, failure to complete or any defect in completing the declaration as to symbols in a nomination paper relating to election of ¹⁶[***] members of Panchayat Union Councils or of District Panchayats shall not be a defect of a substantial character.

¹⁵[(5-A) If a person files nomination papers in violation of sub-rule (3) of Rule 30, the Returning Officer shall scrutinize the nomination papers and accept the nominations, if they are otherwise in order, subject to the provisions of sub-rule (3) of Rule 30.]

(6) Where a person has signed as prosper more nomination papers than there are vacancies to be filled up, such of the nomination papers so signed which have been first received upto the number of vacancies to be filled, shall be accepted if they are otherwise valid and the others rejected.

(7) The Returning Officer shall hold the scrutiny on the date and time notified in this behalf in the election notice and shall not allow any adjournment

of the proceedings except when such proceedings are interrupted or obstructed by riot or open violence or by causes beyond his control:

Provided that if an objection is raised by the Returning Officer or is made by any other persons, the Candidate concerned may be allowed time to rebut it not later than 11.00 a.m. on the next day but one following date fixed for scrutiny. The Returning Officer shall give his decision on that nomination on the adjourned date.

(8) The Returning Officer shall endorse on each nomination paper his decision accepting or rejecting the same. If the nomination paper is rejected, he shall record in writing, a brief statement of his reasons for such rejection. A copy of the same may be furnished to the Candidate concerned, if any application in this behalf has been made to him.

(9) Immediately after all the nomination papers have been scrutinized and decisions accepting or rejecting the same have been recorded, the Returning Officer shall prepare a list of ¹¹[validly] nominated Candidates in **Form 6** and publish a copy of thereof at the place notified for receipt of nominations. The list of Candidates should be drawn up in the order of Tamil alphabet.

30. Prohibition on contesting more than one seat and withdrawal of Candidature.- (1) (a) Under Section 10 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, no person shall be eligible to be elected as a member of more than one Village Panchayat.

(b) No member of a Village Panchayat or no person who stands for election as a member of a Village Panchayat shall be eligible to stand for election as a President of a Village Panchayat, or a member of a Panchayat Union Council or a member of a District Panchayat.

(c) No member of a Panchayat Union Council or no person who stands for election as a member of a Panchayat Union Council shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat, or President of a Village Panchayat or a member of a District Panchayat.

(d) No member of a District Panchayat or no person who stands for election as a member of a District Panchayat shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat, or President of a Village Panchayat or a member of a Panchayat Union Council.

(e) No President or no person who stands for election ²[as a President of a Village Panchayat] shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat, or member of a Panchayat Union Council or a member of a District Panchayat.

(2) (a) Any Candidate may withdraw his Candidature by a notice in **Form 7** and subscribed by him and delivered to the Returning Officer before the time fixed for the purpose. The notice may be delivered either by such Candidate in person or by his proposer, who has been authorized in this behalf in writing, by such Candidate.

(b) On receipt of such notice, the Returning Officer shall note thereon the date and time at which it was delivered to him.

(c) No person who has given notice of withdrawal of his Candidature shall be allowed to cancel the notice.

(d) The Returning Officer shall, on being satisfied as to the genuineness of the notice of withdrawal and the identity of the person delivering it, cause a notice showing the list of Candidates who have withdrawn their Candidature in **Form 8** to be affixed in the notice board of his office.

¹⁵[(3) If a person who has filed nomination in violation of sub-rule (1) fails or refuses to withdraw nomination for all other elections filed in violation before the time fixed for withdrawal of Candidature, the Returning Officer shall, immediately after the expiry of such time determine by lot drawn in the presence of the available Candidates, the election to which such person shall contest. The Returning Officer shall include the name of such persons in the list of contesting Candidates for the election determined by lot and his nominations shall be deemed to have been withdrawn in respect of other elections].

31. Preparation of list of contesting Candidates.- (1) Immediately after the expiry of the period within which Candidature may be withdrawn under sub-rule (2) of Rule 30, the Returning Officer shall prepare in **Form 9**, a list of contesting Candidates, that is to say, Candidates who were included in the list of validly nominated Candidates and who have not withdrawn their Candidature within the said period ⁴[and whose nominations were not deemed to have been withdrawn under sub-rule (3) of Rule 30 of these Rules].

(2) The said list shall contain the names in the order of Tamil alphabet and the addresses of the contesting Candidates as given in the nomination papers as got corrected under the proviso to sub-rule (4) of Rule 28 of these Rules together with other particulars set out in the said form.

32. Procedure in contested and un-contested election.- The Returning Officer shall immediately after the preparation of the list of contesting Candidates referred to in rule 31 of these Rules, adopt the procedure specified hereunder and determine the seat or seats in respect of which a poll is necessary and the Candidate among whom the said seat or seats have to be filled.

(1) In the case of election of member of District Panchayat or Panchayat Council or of the President of Village Panchayat-

(a) if there is only one contesting Candidate, the Returning Officer shall cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in the notice board in his office and after such affixation declare such Candidate to be duly elected;

(b) if the number of contesting Candidates exceeds one, a poll shall be taken; and

(c) if there is no contesting Candidate, a report shall be sent to the State Election Commission and the District Election Officer, for starting the election proceedings afresh in all respects as if for a new election to fill up the seat.

(2) In the case of election of member of a Village Panchayat Ward where only one member is to be returned from that Ward-

(a) if there is only one contesting Candidate, the Returning Officer shall cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in his office and after such affixation, declare such Candidate to be duly elected from such Ward;

(b) if the number of contesting Candidates exceeds one, a poll shall be taken; and

(c) if here is no contesting Candidate, a report shall be sent to the State Election Commission and the District Election Officer for starting the election proceedings afresh in all respects as if for a new election to fill-up the seat.

(3) In the case of election of members of a Village Panchayat Ward where two or more members are to be returned and where there are no reservation of seats-

(a) if the number of contesting Candidates is equal to the number of seats to be filled, the Returning Officer shall cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in his office and after such affixation, declare all such Candidates to be ²[duly elected] to fill-up those seats;

(b) if the number of such Candidates is less than the number of seats to be filled, the Returning Officer shall, after the date and time fixed for withdrawal of Candidature is over, cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in his office and after such affixation declare all such Candidates to be duly elected. The Returning Officer shall send a report to the State Election Commission and the District Election Officer for starting the

election proceedings afresh in all respects in respect of the remaining seat or seats;

(c) If the number of such Candidates is more than the number of seats to be filled, a poll shall be taken.

(4) In the case of election of members of Village Panchayats from Wards where two or more members are to be returned and where reservation of seats have been made, the Returning Officer shall consider the position separately in respect of such reserved seats which have to be filled in the election-

(a) in respect of reserved seats, if the number of contesting Candidates qualified to be chosen to fill them is not ³¹[larger than] the number of vacancies, the Returning Officer shall cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in some conspicuous place in his office and shall then declare the Candidate or all such Candidates as the case may be, duly elected;

(b) if the number of contesting Candidates qualified to be chosen for the reserved seats exceeds the number of seats reserved, while the total number of all contesting Candidates for election in the said Ward is less than or equal to the total number of seats to be filled at the election, the Returning Officer shall, after notice to the Candidates concerned, decide by drawing lots, which of the Candidates so qualified to fill the reserved seats shall be declared elected to the reserved seats and which of them to the non-reserved seats. Thereafter, he shall cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in his office and shall then declare all such Candidates duly elected;

(c) if all the vacancies in the reserved seats to be filled at the election have been filled under clause (a) or (b) and if the number of contesting Candidates remaining after the exclusion of the Candidates so declared elected under the said sub-rule is not larger than the number of non-reserved seats to be filled at the election, the Returning Officer shall cause a copy of the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** to be affixed in his office and after such affixation shall declare them duly elected to the non-reserved seats;

(d) in respect of vacancies not filled under clauses (a), (b) and (c) or where the number of contesting Candidates is more than the number of seats to be filled, a poll shall be held for election from among the Candidates remaining after excluding those declared elected under the said sub-rules;

(e) if there are any seats remaining to be filled after following the procedure prescribed in clause (a), (b), (c) and (d), the Returning Officer shall send a report to the State Election Commission and the District Election Officer for starting election procedure afresh in all respects.

33. Recognition of political parties.- Every political party recognized by the Election Commission of India as a National party or as a State party in the State of Tamil Nadu under Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 shall be a recognized political party for the purpose of election to Panchayat Bodies.

34. Publication of a list of recognized parties and symbols.- For the purpose of these Rules, the State Election Commission shall publish, by notification a list of recognized political parties and their symbols and a list of free symbols.

35. Assignment of symbols and publication of list of contesting Candidates.- (1) After the expiry of the period within which Candidature maybe withdrawn, if a poll is found to be necessary, the Returning Officer shall, subjects to such directions as may be issued by the State Election Commission in that behalf, assign a distinctive symbol to each contesting Candidate within a reasonable time. Every Candidate or his proposer may, thereafter, be informed of the symbol allotted to the Candidate in such manner as the State Election Commission may direct and also be supplied with a specimen thereof.

(2) The allotment by the Returning Officer of any symbol to a Candidate shall be final except where it is inconsistent with any direction issued by State Election Commission under sub-rule (1). In such cases, the State Election Commission may, after examining all the facts, revise the allotment in such manner as it thinks fit.

(3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-rule(1), the State Election Commission may, by order, rescind, revoke, amend or vary the direction issued under the said sub-rule for the assignment of symbols to the contesting Candidates, at any stage before the date fixed for receipt of nominations.

(4) The Returning Officer shall then complete the list of contesting Candidates in **Form 9** and publish-

(i) in the case of election of members of District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council at the offices of the Returning Officer, and the District Panchayat or the Panchayat Union and two or more conspicuous places which the Returning Officer considers necessary; and

(ii) in the case of election of President and members of Village Panchayat, on the ¹⁵[Notice Board of the Village Panchayat].

⁴[(5) The list shall contain the names of the contesting Candidates arranged and written in the order of Tamil alphabet in the case of election of members of District Panchayats or Panchayat Union Councils and in the order in which the symbols appear in the lists issued by the State Election Commission

under sub-rule (1) of this Rule in the case of election of Presidents and members of the Village Panchayat].

¹²[**36. Death of Candidate before poll.-** If a Candidate, set up by a recognized political party-

(a) dies at any time after 11.00 a.m. on the last date for making nominations and his nomination is found valid on scrutiny under Rule 29; or

(b) whose nomination has been found valid on scrutiny under sub-rule (8) of Rule 29, and who has not withdrawn his Candidature under Rule 30, dies and in either case, a report of his death is received at anytime before the publication of the list of contesting Candidates under sub-rule (4) of Rule 35; or

(c) dies as a contesting Candidate and a report of his death is received before the commencement of the Poll,

the Returning Officer shall, upon being satisfied about the fact of the death of the Candidate, by order adjourn the Poll and report the fact to the State Election Commission, State Election Officer an District Election Officer and all proceedings with reference to the election shall be commenced afresh in all respects, by the State Election Commission as if for a new election;

Provided that no order for the adjourning the Poll shall be made in a case referred to in clause (a) except after the scrutiny of all nominations including the nomination of the deceased candidates:

Provided further that all Candidates who have filed nominations including those who have withdrawn their nominations before the adjournment of the Poll shall be eligible to file a nomination in the fresh election:

Provided also that no fresh nomination shall be necessary in case of a person who was a contesting Candidate at the time of the adjournment of the Poll].

PART – V

POLL

37. Polling Personnel to be appointed before poll.- (1) If a poll has to be taken, the Returning Office shall appoint, for each polling station, one Presiding Officer, as many Polling Officers as may be authorized by the State Election Commission and such other persons to assist the Presiding Officers.

(2) The Presiding Officer shall ensure that votes are recorded at the polling station with absolute secrecy and he shall regulate the number of electors to be admitted at one time and shall exclude all other persons except-

(a) the contesting Candidates, their election Agents and one polling Agent at a time for each contesting Candidate;

(b) a child in arms accompanying an elector;

(c) a person accompanying a blind or infirm elector who cannot move without help;

(d) such other persons as the Returning Officer or the Presiding Officer may admit for the purpose of helping in the identification of the electors or in searching women electors or assisting him otherwise in taking the poll;

(e) public servants on duty in connection with elections; and

(f) such other persons as may be authorized by the State Election Commission or the District Election Officer.

38. Appointment of Election Agents.- A Candidate at an election may appoint any one person to be his election Agent. Such an appointment may be made by the Candidate by giving notice in **Form 10** by forwarding the same in duplicate to the Returning Officer, who shall return one copy thereof after affixing thereon his seal and signature in token of his approval of the appointment.

39. Functions of Election Agent.- An election Agent may perform such functions in connection with the election as are authorized by or under these Rules to be performed by an Election Agent.

40. Appointment of Polling Agents.- (1) Each contesting Candidate or his election Agent may appoint one polling Agent and one or two relief Polling Agents as may be specified by the State Election Commission from time to time to act as the polling Agent of such Candidate at each polling station.

(2) Every such appointment shall be made in **Form 11** and shall be handed over to the polling Agent for production at the polling station.

(3) At every election where a poll is taken, each contesting Candidate at such election, his election Agent or his polling Agent shall have a right to be present at the polling station provided for taking the poll.

(4) Where any act or thing is required or authorized by this Rule to be done in the presence of the polling Agent, the non-attendance of any such Agent at the time and place appointed for the purpose shall not invalidate the act or thing done, if the act or thing is otherwise done fully.

41. Arrangements at Polling Station.- (1) At each polling station there shall be set up one or more voting compartments as the State Election Commission may direct from time to time in which electors can record their votes screened from observation.

(2) The Returning Officer shall provide at each polling station 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 instruments necessary for electors to mark the ballot papers.

(3) Every ballot box shall be so constructed that ballot papers can be inserted therein but cannot be withdrawn there from without the box being unlocked or opened.

(4) At the entrance to each polling station, there shall be displayed prominently-

(a) a notice showing the number and names of the contesting Candidates as published in **Form 9** and the distinctive symbol assigned to each Candidate in respect of each of the elections for which poll is taken in that polling station; and

(b) a notice showing the polling area and the groups of electors who are entitled to vote at that polling station.

42. Preparation of ballot boxes for Poll.- (1) Where a paper seal is used in an election for securing a ballot box, the Presiding Officer shall affix his own signature on the reverse side of 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 therefor in the ballot box and shall secure the sealing such a manner that the slit for the insertion of the ballot papers thereinto remains open. An account for the paper seals used shall also be maintained by the Presiding Officer as directed by the State Election Commission. The Presiding Officer may also permit the polling Agents to note down the serial numbers of the paper seals used.

(3) The paper seal 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 seal.

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

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

(a) name of the election or elections;

(b) the name of the District Panchayat, Panchayat Union, Village Panchayat and number of the Ward or Wards;

(c) the serial number and name of the polling station;

(d) the serial number of the ballot box (to be filled in, at the end of the poll on the label and addressed tag outside the ballot box only)' and

(e) the date of poll.

(6) The Presiding Officer shall, immediately before the commencement of the poll, show ballot box empty to such contesting Candidates, election Agents, polling Agents and other authorized persons as are present and shall then lock it up and place his seal upon it. The ballot box shall then be closed, sealed and secured and placed in full view of the Presiding Officer and the polling Agents. The Presiding Officer shall also sign the declaration in **Form 12** and also obtain the signatures of such of the polling Agents who are present and are willing to affix their signatures. He shall repeat this process as and when another ballot box is prepared for use. At the end of the poll, a further declaration in Part II of **Form 12** shall be recorded in the same manner.

43. Marked copy of electoral roll.- (1) There shall be as many marked copies of electoral rolls as may be prescribed by the State Election Commission for a polling station.

(2) Immediately before the commencement of the poll, the Presiding Officer shall demonstrate to the polling Agents and others present that the marked copy of the electoral roll or rolls to be used during the poll does not contain any entry other than those made in pursuance of these Rules and other authorized corrections made by the Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer.

44. 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, in taking the poll in respect of women electors generally and in particular to help in searching any woman elector in case it becomes necessary.

45. 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 for 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 13** ; and

(d) require him to sign 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 person challenged any question 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, besides taking appropriate action against him.

(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.

46. 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 or ballot papers, the Presiding Officer or the Polling Officer, as the case may be, shall overlook mere clerical or printing errors in any in the electoral roll, if he is satisfied that such person is identical with the elector to whom that entry relates.

47. Safeguards against personation.- (1) Every elector, shall before receiving the ballot paper or ballot papers allow-

(a) the inspection of his left forefinger by the Presiding Officer or Polling Officer; and

(b) and indelible ink mark to be put on the back of left forefinger immediately above the root of the nail or skin or in such manner as the State Election Commission may direct in special circumstances.

(2) If any such elector-

(a) refuses to allow such inspection of his left forefinger by the Presiding Officer or Polling Officer as the case may be; or

(b) refuses to allow an indelible ink mark to be put on left forefinger; or

(c) persists in doing any act with a view to removing any such mark after it has been put, he shall not be entitled to be supplied with any ballot paper or ballot papers or to record his votes at the election.

(3) No person who has already such mark on the left forefinger shall be supplied with a ballot paper.

(4) Any reference in these Rules 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 or fingers on his left hand, and shall in case where all the fingers of his left hand are missing, be construed as a reference to the forefinger or any other finger or fingers 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.

48. Right to vote.- (1) No person whose name is not entered in the electoral roll of any Ward shall be entitled to vote.

(2) No person shall vote at an election if he is subject to any of the disqualifications referred to in Section 16 of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1950 or Section 35 or 36 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994.

(3) No person shall vote in more than one Ward in a Panchayat notwithstanding the facts that his name may have been registered in the electoral roll of more than one Ward of the Panchayat and if a person votes in more than one Ward, his votes in all such Wards shall be *void*.

(4) No person shall at any election vote in the same Ward more than once, notwithstanding the fact that his name may have been registered in the electoral roll for that Ward more than once and if he does vote more than once, all his votes in the Ward shall be *void*.

(5) No person shall vote at any election if he is confined in a prison whether under a sentence of imprisonment or otherwise :

Provided that nothing in this sub-rule shall apply to a person subject to preventive detention under any law for the time being in force.

¹⁷**[48-A. Special procedure for preventing personation of electors.-** With a view to prevent personation of electors and facilitating their identification at the time of poll, every elector shall produce documentary evidence establishing his identity as may be specified and in the manner directed by the State Election Commission in this behalf from time to time.]

49. Ballot Papers.- (1) **Ballot paper for election of ¹⁸[***] members of Panchayat Union Councils and District Panchayats.-** Every ballot paper for election of ¹⁸[***] members of Panchayat Union Councils and of District Panchayats shall be in **Form 14-A** with a counterfoil attached to it. The names of the contesting Candidates with their respective distinctive symbols shall be printed on the ballot papers in the same order in which the names appear in **Form 9**. The size of the ballot paper and other matters relating thereto shall be decided by the State Election Commission from time to time.

(2) **Ballot papers for election of ¹⁹[President of Village Panchayat and Members of Village Panchayats].-** Every ballot paper for election of members of Village Panchayats shall be in **Form 14-B** with a counterfoil attached to it if so directed by the State Election Commission. Symbols alone shall be printed on the ballot papers. The size of the ballot paper and other matters relating thereto shall be decided by the State Election Commission from time to time.

(3) **Numbering of ballot papers.-** The ballot papers and the counterfoils, if any, shall be serially numbered and shall be stamped on their reverse by such distinguishing mark or marks and in such manner as may be directed by the State Election Commission from time to time.

50. Manner of voting.- At every election where a poll is taken, votes shall be given by ballot and all voters voting at an election shall do so in person at the polling station and no votes shall be received by proxy.

51. Issue of ballot papers and voting procedure.- (1) Before any ballot paper is delivered to an elector, the Presiding Officer shall sign his name in full on the back of each ballot paper and affix the distinguishing mark of the polling station, the serial number and other particulars of the elector shall be noted in the counterfoil, if any, and the elector shall be required to sign it. The entry relating to the elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll shall be underlined. No person in the polling station shall note down the serial numbers of the ballot papers issued to a particular electors.

(2) Each elector shall be given only one ballot paper for each election. The elector, on receiving the ballot paper, shall forthwith proceed to one of the voting compartments which is vacant, and there, with the aid of the instrument supplied for the purpose, make a mark on the ballot paper against the name or symbol of the Candidate or Candidates for whom he intends to vote. The mark may be made anywhere in the compartment within which the name and symbol, as the case may be, of such Candidate is printed on the ballot paper. In cases, where more than one Candidate have to be elected, the elector may make as many marks on the ballot paper in favour of as many Candidates as are to be elected. He shall, then, fold the ballot paper so as to conceal his vote and after showing to the Polling Officer the distinguishing mark stamped on its back, insert the folded ballot paper into the ballot box kept for the purpose.

(3) Every elector shall vote without undue delay and shall quit the polling station as soon as he had voted. He shall not place anything except ballot paper in the ballot box. Anything other than ballot papers found in the box at the time of counting of votes, shall be forfeited.

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

52. Voting procedure for electors on election duty.- (1) When an elector entitled to vote at an election is duly appointed for election duty at a polling station at which he is not ordinarily entitled to record his vote, or is drafted for other election duty and is unable to vote, he may send a request in **Form 15** 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 the poll. If the Returning Officer is satisfied that the applicant is so entitled to vote, he shall forward to the applicant an election duty certificate in **Form 16** along ²[with a ballot paper beginning from the last of the serial number from out of] those meant for the polling station where the applicant is ordinarily entitled to record his vote, the Returning Officer shall stamp on the back of the ballot paper and the counterfoil the words ³⁸[E.D.C.]. He shall before forwarding such ballot paper, underline the entry relating to that elector in the marked copy of the electoral roll relating to the polling station at which the elector is entitled to ²[record his vote and write the letters E.D.C. against such entry denoting that] elector has been issued with a ballot paper.

(2) On receiving the ballot paper, the elector on election duty shall record his vote by making a tick mark on the ballot paper against the name/s or symbol/s of the Candidate/s to whom he intends to vote. The mark may be made anywhere in the compartment within which the symbol or name of such Candidate is printed on the ballot paper. The elector shall sign a declaration in

Form 17. He shall then enclose the ballot paper in an envelope provided for the purpose and stick the envelope and secure it by seal or otherwise. He shall then enclose the envelope containing the marked ballot paper in an outer cover provided for this purpose, as well as the election duty certificate and the declaration aforesaid and send it to the Returning Officer by post or by messenger so as to reach him or the person authorised by him before 5.00 p.m. on the day before the poll.

53. Recording the votes of blind and infirm electors.-(1) If the Presiding Officer is satisfied that owing to old age or blindness or other physical infirmity, an elector is unable to recognize the symbols on the ballot paper or to read the names of the Candidates or to make mark or marks 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 his vote on the ballot paper or ballot papers on his behalf and in accordance with his wishes, and if necessary, for folding the ballot papers so as to conceal the vote and inserting it into the 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 these Rules, the companion shall be required to declare that he shall keep the secrecy of the vote recorded by him on behalf of the elector, and that he has not already acted as the companion of any elector at any polling station on that day.

(2) The Presiding Officer shall keep a record in **Form 18** of all such cases under this Rule.

54. 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 ballot paper may return it to the Presiding Officer, who is satisfied of the inadvertence, may issue another ballot paper and the ballot paper so returned 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 shall be marked "Returned-cancelled", by the Presiding Officer.

(3) 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 **Rule 51**, the ballot paper or ballot papers issued to him shall whether he has recorded his vote thereon or not be taken back from him by the Presiding Officer under the direction of the Presiding Officer. After the ballot paper or ballot papers

have been taken back, the Presiding Officer shall record on its back the words "Cancelled – voting procedure violated".

(4) All such ballot papers under sub-rules (1), (2) and (3) shall be signed by the Presiding Officer below those words and kept in separate covers and put into the packet referred to in Rule 58.

55. Tendered Votes.- (1) If a person representing himself to be 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 referred to in these Rules 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 19** and in the counterfoil of the ballot paper.

(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.

²**[56. Adjournment of Poll in emergencies.-** (1) If at a Poll, the proceedings at any Polling Station are interrupted or obstructed by any riot or open violence, or if an election 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 shall stop the Poll, inform through the Returning Officer to the District Election Officer, the State Election Officer and the State Election Commission. The fact, that the Poll has been so stopped, shall be immediately announced by the Presiding Officer to the persons present at the Polling Station.

(2) Where a Presiding Officer stops the Poll under sub-rule (1), he shall observe procedure laid down in Rule 58 and make a full report of the circumstances to the Returning Officer who shall report the matter to the District

Election Officer, the State Election Officer and the State Election Commission. The ballot and packets referred to in Rule 58 shall also be sent to the Returning Officer, as soon as practicable.

(3) The District Election Officer shall thereupon order-

(a) that the poll be adjourned and held at such polling station for the number of hours for which it was not held on the previous occasion; or

(b) that the poll be adjourned and held at such polling station for the number of hours. An order passed by the District election Officer under this sub-rule shall be final.

(c) When an order under clause (a) or (b) of sub-rule (3) is passed, the Returning Officer shall not count the votes cast at such election until such adjourned poll has been completed.

(4) (a) An order passed under clause (a) or (b) or sub-rule (1) shall state-

(i) the date on which and the hours between which such adjourned poll, shall be held; and

(ii) the date on which and the place and hour at which the Returning Officer shall commence the counting of the votes.

(b) On receipt of orders passed under sub-rules (3) and (4) (a), the Returning Officer shall inform the contesting Candidates or their election Agents, of the date, time and place fixed for such adjourned poll and affix a notice on the notice board of the District Panchayat, Panchayat Union Council and of the office of the Village Panchayat or in a conspicuous place in the Ward notifying the date and hours so fixed. He shall also announce by beat of tom-tom in the polling area concerned the place, date and hours so fixed.

(5) (a) Where an order is passed under these Rules for the adjournment of the poll, for the number of hours for which it was not held on previous occasion, the Returning Officer shall proceed further as stipulated under sub-rule (1) of Rule 37 and return to the Presiding Officer appointed under the said sub-rule, all the packets received by him under sub-rule (2).

(b) The Presiding Officer shall open the packets just before the commencement of such adjourned poll in the presence of such persons who may be present at the polling station and commence such adjourned poll precisely at the hour fixed therefor.

(c) At such adjourned poll, the Presiding Officer shall allow only such electors to vote who have not cast their vote on the previous occasion.

(6) Where an order is passed under clause (b) of sub-rule (3) for the adjournment of poll for the full number of hours, the Returning Officer shall proceed afresh, under sub-rule (1) of Rule 37 and such adjourned poll shall be held at the polling station concerned in accordance with the provisions of these Rules in all respects, as if it were being held at such polling station for the first time:

Provided that there shall be no fresh nomination in the cases falling under this sub-rule.

(7) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Rule, if a contesting Candidate sponsored by a recognized political party in the election of ¹⁸[***] a Member or Members of a District Panchayat or the Panchayat Union Council or any contesting Candidate in the election of Member of a Village Panchayat dies at any time before orders are passed by the District Election Officer under sub-rule (3) or at any time after passing of such orders but before the commencement of such adjourned poll, the Returning Officer shall, upon being satisfied of the fact of the death of the contesting Candidate, stop all further proceedings in connection with the election and inform the District Election Officer, the State Election Officer and the State election Commission. The State Election Commission shall thereupon start election proceedings afresh in all respects as if it were a new election;

Provided that for the election proceedings so started, no fresh nomination shall be necessary in the case of the remaining contesting Candidates.]

57. 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 or at a place appointed for counting of votes 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 cannot be ascertained; or

(b) any such error or irregularity in procedure as is likely to vitiate the poll is committed at the polling station, the Returning Officer shall forthwith report the matter to District Election Officer and the State Election Commission.

(2) Thereupon, the District Election Officer shall, after taking all material circumstances into account either-

(a) declare the poll at the polling station to be *void*, appoint a day and fix the hours for taking a fresh poll at that polling station and direct that the day so appointed and the hours so fixed be published in the manner laid down in

clause (b) of sub-rule (4) of Rule 56, besides intimating the contesting Candidates or their election Agents; or

(b) if satisfied that the result of a fresh poll at the 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 direction to the Returning Officer as he may deem proper for the further conduct and completion of 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.

58. Closing of poll.- (1) (a) The Presiding Officer shall close the polling station at the hour fixed in that behalf under these Rules and shall not, thereafter, admit any elector in the polling station:

Providing that unless the poll is closed sub-rule (1) of Rule 56 all electors present at the polling station before it is closed shall be allowed to cast their votes.

(b) 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 whose decision shall be final.

(2) (a) The Presiding Officer of each polling station, as soon as practicable after the close of the poll, shall close the slit of the ballot box or boxes and where the box does not contain any mechanical device for closing slit, he shall seal up the slit and also allow any Candidate or polling agency present to affix his seal. The ballot box shall, thereafter, be sealed and secured.

(b) Where it becomes necessary to use second ballot box by reason of the first ballot box getting full, the first ballot box shall be closed and sealed as provided in clause (a) before another ballot box is put into use.

(3) The Presiding Officer shall then make up the following into separate packets and seal them with the seal and allow the Candidates or Agents to affix their own seals if they so desire-

(i) the marked copy of the electoral roll or rolls;

(ii) the unused ballot papers and the spoilt, returned, tendered and cancelled ballot papers; and

(iii) any other papers as directed by the State Election Commission:

Provided that the State Election Commission may direct that a common packet for all the elections can be made for the different items referred to above.

(4) (a) The Presiding Officer shall, at the close of the poll, prepare a ballot paper account for each election in **Form 20** for transmission to the Returning

Officer. It may be enclosed in separate cover with the words, "Ballot Paper Account" superscribed thereon. When two or more elections are held simultaneously, the ballot paper account shall be enclosed in separate covers or in a common cover as the State Election Commission may direct from time to time.

(b) 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 or accounts attested by him after obtaining a receipt from the said polling Agent therefore.

59. Transmission of ballot boxes, etc., to the Returning Officer.-

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 (used and unused);
- (b) the ballot paper account or accounts;
- (c) paper seal account;
- (d) the sealed packets referred to in Rule 58; and]
- (e) all other papers and marking or stamping articles used at the poll.

PART-VI

COUNTING OF VOTES

60. Admission to the place fixed for counting.- The counting of votes shall take place on the day at the place and hour appointed in that behalf. The votes shall be counted by or under the supervision and direction of the Returning Officer. Each contesting Candidate, his election Agent and such number of his counting Agents as may be specified by the State Election Commission, shall have a right to be present at the time of counting. The counting Agent shall be appointed ²[in writing by the Candidate or his election Agent in **Form 21**]. No other person shall be allowed to be present, except-

(i) such person hereinafter referred to as the "Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants" whom the Returning Officer may appoint to assist him in counting the votes;

(ii) public servants on duty in connection with the elections; and

(iii) such persons as may be authorized by the State Election Commission.

No person who has been employed by or on behalf of any Candidate for any purpose whatsoever connected with the election shall be appointed to assist in counting the votes.

61. Counting of postal ballot papers and scrutiny and opening of ballot boxes.- (1) The Returning Officer shall first deal with the postal ballot papers forwarded to him under Rule 52 as specified below:-

(a) No cover referred to in Rule 52 received by the Returning Officer, after the expiry of the time fixed in that behalf, shall be opened and no vote contained in any such cover shall be counted.

(b) The outer covers shall be opened one after another and the election duty certificates and declaration under Rule 52 contained therein shall be collected together, counted and sealed in a separate packet.

(c) The inner covers containing the marked ballot papers shall, then, be opened one after another and the voters counted. If the declaration is not found or has not been duly signed or is otherwise substantially defective, that inner cover shall not be opened and after making an appropriate endorsement thereon, the Returning Officer shall reject the ballot paper contained therein.

(2) The ballot boxes relating to each of the polling stations shall, then, be taken up for counting. The Returning Officer may in his discretion have the ballot boxes used at more than one polling station opened and their contents counted simultaneously.

(3) Before any ballot box is opened at a counting table, the counting Agents present at the table shall be allowed to inspect the paper seal and other seals on the ballot box and satisfy themselves that they are intact.

(4) The Returning Officer shall satisfy himself that none of the ballot boxes has, in fact, been tampered with.

(5) In the Returning Officer is satisfied that any ballot box has, in fact, been tampered with, shall not count the ballot papers contained in that box and shall follow the procedure laid down in Rule 57 in respect of that polling station.

(6) (a) If a fresh poll is held under Rule 57, the Returning Office shall, after completion of that poll recommence the counting of votes on the date, at the time and place which have been fixed by the District Election Officer in that behalf and of which notice has been previously given to the contesting Candidates and their election Agents.

(b) The provision of this part shall apply, so far as may be, to such further counting.

(7) The Returning Officer shall allow the Candidates and their Agents reasonable opportunities to inspect, without handling, all ballot papers which in his opinion are liable to be rejected under Rule 63. He shall endorse on every ballot paper which he rejects, the letter 'R' and the ground of rejection in abbreviated form either in his own handwriting or by means of a rubber stamp and shall initial such endorsement.

(8) he shall verify the ballot paper account submitted by the Presiding Officer under sub-rule (4) (a) of Rule 58.

62. Destruction or loss of ballot papers at the time of counting.- (1)

If at any time before the counting of votes is completed, ballot papers used at a polling station are unlawfully taken out to the custody of the Returning Officer or accidentally or intentionally destroyed or lost or damaged or tampered with to such an extent that the result of the poll of that polling station cannot be ascertained, the Returning Officer shall forthwith report the matter to the ²[District Election Officer, State Election Officer and the State Election Commission].

(2) Thereupon, the District Election Officer shall after taking all material circumstances into account either,-

⁴³[(a) direct that the counting of votes shall be stopped, declare the poll at that polling station to be *void*, appoint the date and fix the hour for taking the fresh poll at that polling station and notify the date so appointed and hour so fixed in such a manner as he may deem fit; or].

(b) ⁴⁴[if satisfied that the outcome of a poll at that polling station will not in any way affect the result of the election,] the District Election Officer shall issue such direction to the Returning Officer as he may deem proper for resumption and completion of the counting and for the further conduct and completion of the election to which the votes have been counted.

(3) Provision of these Rules shall apply to every such fresh poll as they apply to the original poll.

63. Rejection of ballot papers.- (1) A ballot paper shall be rejected-

(a) if it bears any mark or writing by which the elector can be identified, or

(b) if no vote is recorded thereon, or

(c) if votes are given on it in favour of more Candidates than the number of Candidates to be elected, or

(d) if the mark indicating the votes thereon is placed in such manner as to make it doubtful to which Candidate the vote has been given, or

(e) if it is a spurious ballot paper, or

(f) if it is so damaged or mutilated that its identity as a genuine ballot paper cannot be established, or

(g) if it bears a serial number, or is of a design, different from the serial numbers or design as the case may be, of the ballot papers authorized for use at the particular polling station, or

(h) if it does not bear both the distinguishing mark and / or the signature of the Presiding Officer which it should have borne under the provision of sub-rule (1) of Rule 51 or the words ²[E.D.C.] under the sub-rule (1) of Rule 52, or

(i) if it is not the relevant ballot paper:

Provided that where the Returning Officer is satisfied that any such defect as is mentioned in clause (g) or clause (h) has been caused by any mistake or failure on the part of a Presiding Officer, the ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground of such defect:

Provided further that a ballot paper shall not be rejected merely on the ground that the mark indicating the vote is not distinct or made more than once, if the intention that the vote shall be for a particular Candidate clearly appears from the way the paper is marked.

(2) All ballot papers rejected under this Rule shall be made into a separate bundle.

(3) The decision of the Returning Officer under this Rule shall be final, subject only to the decision of the competent court on an election petition.

64. Counting of valid votes,- (1) The vote recorded in every ballot paper which is not rejected under Rule 63 shall be counted.

(2) After the counting of the votes recorded in all ballot papers contained in all ballot boxes has been completed, the Returning Officer shall have the result of such counting entered in Part II of **Form 20** and it shall be signed by the counting supervisor and the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall, then, make the entries relating thereto in a result sheet in **Form 22**.

(3) The valid ballot papers found in all the ballot boxes as well as the valid votes referred to in clause (c) of sub-rule (2) shall, thereafter, be bundled together and kept along with the bundle of rejected ballot papers in a separate packet which shall be sealed and on which shall be recorded the following particulars, namely:-

(a) name of election;

(b) the number of the Ward and the name of Panchayat; and

(c) the date of counting.

65. Counting to be continuous.- The Returning Officer shall, as far as practicable proceed continuously with the counting and shall during any interval when the counting has to be suspended, keep the ballot papers, packets and all other papers relating to elections sealed with his own seal and the seals of such Candidates or election Agents as may desire to affix their seals and take sufficient precaution for their safe custody during such interval.

66. Re-count of votes.-(1) After the completion of the counting and recording in **Form 22** the total number of votes polled by each Candidate under sub-rule (2) of Rule 64, the Returning Officer shall announce the same. After such announcement and before the declaration of the result of the election, a contesting Candidate or in his absence his election Agent, may apply in writing to the Returning Officer for a re-count of all or any of the votes already counted stating the grounds on which he demands such re-count.

(2) On such application being made, the Returning Officer shall decide the matter and may allow the application in whole or in part, or may reject it in toto if it appears to him to be frivolous or unreasonable.

(3) Every decision of the Returning Officer under sub-rule (2) shall be in writing and contain the reasons therefore.

(4) If the Returning Officer decides under sub-rule (2) to allow an application either in whole or in part, he shall-

(a) count the votes again in accordance with his decision;

(b) amend the result sheet in **Form 22** to the extent necessary after such re-count; and

(c) announce the amendments so made by him.

(5) After the total number of votes polled by each Candidate has been announced under sub-rule (1) or under sub-rule (4) of this Rule, the Returning Officer shall complete and sign the result sheet in **Form 22** and no application for a re-count shall be entertained thereafter:

Provided that no step under this sub-rule shall be taken on the completion of the counting until the Candidates or the election Agents present at the completion thereof have been given a reasonable opportunity to exercise the right conferred by sub-rule (1).

67. Declaration of result of election.- (1) (a) In the case of election of members of District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, after the Returning

Officer has completed the scrutiny and counting of votes, he shall declare the contesting Candidate to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given as elected and complete and certify the return in **Form 23** and send the signed copy thereof to the District Election Officer and the State Election Commission.

(b) The Returning Officer shall also forthwith cause to be affixed a copy of the declaration referred to in clause (a) in his office and in the office of the District Panchayat, or the Panchayat Union, as the case may be.

(c) If there is an equality of votes between two or more contesting Candidates, and the addition of one vote will entitle any of these Candidates to be declared elected, the Returning Officer shall decide between these Candidates by lot and the Candidate on whom the lot falls shall be deemed to have received an additional vote. The Returning Officer shall then declare the result accordingly.

(d) Any contesting Candidate or his election Agent or his counting Agent, on application, be permitted to take a copy or an extract from the statement in **Form 22**.

(2) (a) In the case of election of President of Village Panchayat, after the Returning Officer has completed the scrutiny and counting of votes, he shall declare the contesting Candidate to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given and complete and certify the return in **Form 23** and send the signed copy thereof to the District election Officer and the State Election Commission.

(b) The Returning Officer shall also forthwith cause the said form to be affixed in his office, and in the office of the Village Panchayat and one or more conspicuous places in the Village Panchayat.

(c) If there is an equality of votes between two or more contesting Candidates, the Returning Officer should follow the procedure laid down in clause (c) of sub-rule (1).

(d) Any contesting Candidates or his election Agent or his counting Agent, on application be permitted to take a copy or an extract from the Statement in **Form 22**.

(3) (a) In the case of election of member of Village Panchayats, after the Returning Officer has completed the scrutiny and counting of votes, he shall declare elected, the contesting Candidate or Candidates as the case may be, to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given and complete and certify the return in **Form 24** and send the signed copy thereof to the District Election Officer and the State Election Commission:

Provided that if one or more seats are reserved for members of the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes ⁴⁵[***] the Returning Officer shall first

declare elected the Candidate / Candidates who are eligible to be elected to such seats and to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given to the seats so reserved and then declare elected the contesting Candidate or Candidates who among the remaining contesting Candidates have obtained the largest number of votes to the non-reserved seats in such Ward.

Illustration.- In an election in a Ward to fill four seats of which two are reserved, there are six contesting Candidates, A, B, C, D, E and F and they secure votes in descending order. A securing the largest number, B, C and D are qualified to be chosen to fill the reserved seats, while A, E and F are not so qualified. The Returning Officer will first declare B and C duly elected to fill the two reserved seats, and then declare A and D (Not A and E) to fill the remaining two seats;

Provided further that if a seat is reserved for woman in any Ward, the Returning Officer shall first declare the woman Candidate, who is eligible to be elected to such seat and to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given to be elected to the seat so reserved, and then declare the contesting Candidate or Candidates who among the remaining contesting Candidates have obtained the largest number of votes to be elected to the non-reserved seats in such Ward:

Provided also that if one or more seats are reserved for members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes ¹⁴[***] or for women in any Ward, the Returning Officer shall first declare the woman Candidate to whom the largest number of valid votes have been given to be elected to the seat reserved for women and adopt procedure laid down in the first proviso in respect of declaration of Candidates for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes ¹⁴[***] or other non-reserved seats.

(b) The Returning Officer shall also cause to be affixed in his office, a copy of the declaration referred to in clause (a) above, and in the notice board of the office of Village Panchayat or in a conspicuous place in the Panchayat.

(c) If there is an equality of votes between two or more contesting Candidates and the addition of one vote will entitle any of these Candidates to be declared elected, the Returning Officer shall decide between these Candidates by lot and the Candidate on whom the lot falls shall be deemed to have received an additional vote. The Returning Officer shall, then, declare the result accordingly.

(d) Any contesting Candidate or his election Agent or his counting Agent, on application, be permitted to take a copy or an extract from the Statement in **Form 22.**

68. Disposal of ballot papers.- (1) The Returning Officer, shall after declaring the results, retain in his custody or cause to be deposited in the custody of the officer as may be specified by the State election Commission, the packets of ballot papers, whether counted, rejected, cancelled or unused, the sealed packets containing the declarations under sub-rule (2) of Rule 52 and the marked copy of the electoral roll. These packets shall not be opened and their contents shall not be inspected or produced except under the orders of an election or other competent court.

(2) The Returning Officer or the officer specified by the State Election Commission under sub-rule (1), shall retain the packets and the marked copies of the electoral roll for six months and shall, thereafter, unless otherwise directed by an election other competent Court, cause them to be destroyed.

69. Publication of the names of successful Candidates.- (1) In the case of election of members of District Panchayats, the name of the Candidate duly elected shall be forwarded without delay in **Form 25** by the Returning Officer to the State Election Commission and a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the District election Officer, who shall arrange to publish the same in the *District Gazette* and shall also arrange to publish on the notice board of the office of the District Panchayat in a consolidated form. The State election Commission shall arrange to publish the names of the Candidates in the *Tamil Nadu Government Gazette* in a consolidated form.

(2) In the case of election of members of Panchayat Union Council, the names of the Candidates duly elected shall be forwarded without delay in **Form 25** by the Returning Officer to the State Election Commission and a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the District Election Officer, who shall arrange the same, to be published in the *District Gazette* and on the notice board of the Panchayat Union in a consolidated form.

(3) In the case of election of President of Village Panchayat, the name of the Candidate duly elected shall be forwarded in **Form 25** by the Returning Officer to the District Election Officer and State Election Commission and the District Election Officer shall cause the same to be published in the *district Gazette* and shall also be published on the notice boards of the offices of the concerned Village Panchayat and the Panchayat Union.

(4) In the case of election of members of Village Panchayats as soon as the result of the election has been declared, the Returning Officer shall cause to be published in **Form 26** the name or names of the Candidate or Candidates duly elected to the Village Panchayat, on the notice board of his office, as well as of the Village Panchayat concerned and in any conspicuous place in the Panchayat Village.

70. Fixing other dates of election for special reason.-

Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing rules, the State Election Commission may, for special reasons, empower the District Election Officer to fix dates and periods other than those notified earlier under these Rules, for all or any of the stages of any election under the Act.

²⁰**[70-A. Oath or Affirmation by the President / Member.-** (1) In the first meeting of the Panchayat after an ordinary election or after a causal election,-

(a) the President of Village Panchayat shall make and subscribe an Oath or Affirmation before the Returning Officer or Assistant Returning Officer;

(b) the members of the Village Panchayat shall make and subscribe an Oath or Affirmation in the presence of the President of the Village Panchayat;

(c) the senior member of Panchayat Union Council or the District Panchayat, as the case may be, nominated by the respective Returning Officers, shall make and subscribe an Oath or Affirmation before such Returning Officers; and

(d) the other members of the Panchayat Union Council or the District Panchayat, as the case may be, shall make and subscribe an Oath or Affirmation in the presence of the senior member, so nominated, of the Panchayat Union Council or the District Panchayat, as the case may be.

(2) The President of Village Panchayat and members of the Panchayats shall make and subscribe an Oath or Affirmation in the following form, namely:-

"I, A.B. having been elected a member / having become a member swear in the name of God / solemnly affirm that I will bear true faith and allegiance to, of this Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat the Constitution of India as by law established, that I will uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India and that I will faithfully discharge the duty upon which I am about to enter".]

PART-VII

ELECTION OF CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN OF DISTRICT PANCHAYAT AND PANCHAYAT UNION COUNCILS

71. Place of election of Chairmen of District Panchayats and Panchayat Union Councils- Elections of Chairmen of the District Panchayats or the Panchayat Union Councils shall be held at a meeting convened by the Returning Officer in the manner prescribed in these Rules in the offices of the respective Panchayats.

72. Electors.- Members elected to the Territorial Wards of the District Panchayat or Wards of a Panchayat Union Council shall be voters for electing the Chairman of the District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be.

73. Convening of the meeting for election.-(1) In respect of a District Panchayat, the District Collector shall be, the Returning Officer and in respect of Panchayat Union Council, the ¹³[Assistant Director of Rural Development] or any other officer equivalent in remark, nominated by the State Election Commission shall be the Returning Officer.

(2) ²¹[Immediately after the declaration of the results of Election under Rule 67], the Returning Officer shall convene a meeting of Ward members on such dates as may be, notified by the State Election Commission for the purpose of election of Chairman. In respect of a casual vacancy, such meeting shall be convened on a date fixed by the State election Commission within ²²[sixty days] of the occurrence of such casual vacancy.

(3) The Returning Officer shall give at least seven clear days notice to all Ward members for the meeting.

(4) The Returning Officer shall not start the process of election unless there be present a majority of the Ward members of the District Panchayat or the Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be.

²³[Provided that this sub-rule shall not apply, if the process of election could not be started at three consecutive meetings for want of such majority.]

74. Qualification of Candidates for election of Chairman.- (1) Where the office of the Chairman of a District Panchayat or a Panchayat Union Council is reserved for persons belonging to Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes ⁵³[***] or women, under Section 57 of the Act, only persons belonging to that category shall be eligible to stand for election for such office.

(2) Where no such reservation has been made, nothing contained in sub-rule (1) above, shall be deemed to prevent any Ward member belonging to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe ⁵⁴[***] or women, of a District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be, from standing for election as Chairman.

75. Presentation of nomination.- (1) Every Candidate for election as Chairman must be nominated in **Form 27-A** in writing. The nomination paper must be signed by two Ward members present at the meeting as proposer and seconder and delivered to the Returning Officer. The nomination shall also contain a declaration in writing expressing the candidate's willingness to be elected as Chairman and signed by the Candidate. Where the office of the Chairman is

reserved under Section 57 of the Act to persons belonging to Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes ¹⁴[***] the Candidate shall give in writing a further declaration that he or she belongs to the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe ¹⁴[***], as the case may be. All the nominations filed and found to be valid under these Rules shall be accepted. All the nominations which are not found valid shall be rejected. The Returning Officer shall record in writing his orders of such rejection with reasons therefor.

²⁴[Provided that in the case of Panchayat Union Councils or District Panchayats, where the total number of Ward members are five or less than five, the nomination paper may be signed by one Ward member present at the meeting as Proposer and Secunder is not necessary].

(2) The Returning Officer shall record in the minutes book of the Panchayat the names of all the validly nominated Candidates so proposed and seconded.

76. Reading out the names of Candidates.- The names of all the Candidates who have been proposed and seconded and whose nominations have been accepted under Rule 75 shall be read out by the Returning Officer to the hearing of the Ward members present at the meeting.

77. Declaration of result of election when there is no contest.- (1) If there is only one candidate validly nominated to the office of the Chairman, there shall be no ballot and the Candidate shall be declared to have been duly elected as the Chairman of the District Panchayat or the Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be.

(2) When no nomination is presented within a reasonable time after the commencement of the meeting, the Returning Officer shall take necessary further action for the holding of a fresh meeting for the election in accordance with these Rules. He shall also report the fact to the District Election Officer and the State Election Commission.

78. Procedure of election when there is contest.- If the number of Candidates is more than one, the votes of the Ward members present at the meeting shall be taken by ballot in the manner laid down in these Rules.

79. Arrangement of voting compartment.- The Returning Officer shall provide in the place where the meeting is held, a voting compartment in which the Ward members present at the meeting can record their votes screened from observation of all others.

80. Ballot box.- The Returning Officer shall also place a ballot box for the receipt of ballot papers in the view of the Ward members present at the meeting. The ballot box shall be so constructed that the ballot papers can be inserted

therein but cannot be withdrawn therefrom without the box being unlocked or opened.

81. Preparation of ballot box.-The Returning Officer shall immediately before the votes are taken, demonstrate to such Ward members as may be present that the ballot box is empty, lock it up, and place a seal upon it in such a manner as to prevent its being without breaking the seal.

82. Preparation and issue of ballot papers.- (1) Every Ward member present at the meeting wishing to vote shall be supplied with a ballot paper in **Form 28-A**. Every ballot paper shall be of identical colour and size on which the names of all the Candidates and the number of the Ward of the District Panchayat or the Panchayat Union, as the case may be, from which they are elected shall be legibly written or typewritten in Tamil in the order of Tamil alphabet.

(2) The ballot paper shall be assigned by the Returning Officer at the appropriate place and also on the reverse side before being handed over to the Ward members, for voting.

83. Voting procedure.- The Ward member shall, on receiving the ballot paper, proceed to the voting compartment for the purpose of recording his vote and put a mark on it with the help of the instrument provided for this purpose by the Returning Officer on the ballot paper against the name of the Candidate for whom he wishes to vote. He shall, before quitting the voting compartment fold up the ballot paper so as to conceal the mark and put the ballot paper so folded up into the ballot box in the presence of the Returning Officer.

84. Arrangements to ensure secrecy of ballot.- The Returning Officer shall cause such arrangements to be made as will ensure the secrecy of the ballot and prevent the Ward members who have already voted, from voting for the second time and also from having access to the Ward members who are yet to vote.

85. Recording of votes of illiterate/blind/infirm voters.- (1) If, owing to illiteracy or blindness or other physical infirmity, a Ward member is unable to read the ballot paper and make a mark thereon and applies for assistance in doing so, the Returning Officer shall record the vote in the ballot paper in accordance with the wishes of the Ward member and fold it up so as to conceal the vote.

(2) The Ward member shall then himself or with the assistance of the Returning Officer insert the ballot paper into the ballot box.

(3) While acting under this Rule, the Returning Officer shall observe as much secrecy as is feasible and shall keep a brief record of each instance but shall not indicate therein for whom any vote has been given.

86. Counting of votes.- After the voting by the Ward members is over, the Returning Officer shall open the ballot box in the presence of the Ward members present, take out the ballot papers therefrom and record the number of votes obtained by each Candidate in a statement.

87. Invalid ballot papers.- A ballot paper shall be invalid on which-

(a) there is no mark; or

(b) a mark is set opposite to the name of more than one Candidate; or is so placed as to render it doubtful to which Candidate it is intended to apply; or

(c) some mark other than the one authorized is set opposite to the name of the same Candidate;

(d) any mark is made by which the Ward member may afterwards be identified; or

(e) the mark has been made by any instrument other than one provided for this purpose under Rule 83.

88. Declaration of result of election.- (1) If the number of Candidates are two, the Candidate who obtains the largest number of votes shall be declared to have been duly elected. In the event of there being an equality of votes between the two Candidates and the addition of one vote to any one of such Candidates will entitle him to be declared duly elected, the Returning Officer shall draw for in the presence of the Ward members and the Candidate whose name is drawn shall be deemed to have the additional vote and shall be declared to have been duly elected.

(2) If the number of Candidates are three and if any one of them secures more than one half of the total number of votes polled, he shall be declared to have been duly elected. If none of them secures more than one half of the number of votes polled, the Candidate who obtains the smallest number of votes shall be eliminated and a second ballot taken. In the event of there being an equality of votes among the three Candidates, the Returning Officer shall draw lots in the presence of the Ward members present and the Candidates whose names are first and second drawn shall be retained and a second ballot taken.

(3) If there is an equality of votes between two Candidates and if the third Candidate secures a lesser number of votes he shall be eliminated and a second ballot taken. If there is an equality of votes between two Candidates and if the third Candidate secures a larger number of votes than the two, a lot shall be drawn between the two Candidates who had secured equal number of votes and the Candidate whose name is first drawn shall be retained and second ballot taken between him and the third Candidate.

(4) If the number of Candidates are more than three and if any of the Candidates secures more than one half of the number of votes polled, he shall be declared to have been duly elected. If none of the Candidate secures more than one half of the number of votes polled, the first Candidate who secures the largest number of votes and the second Candidate who secures the next larger number of votes shall be retained and the other Candidates eliminated and a second ballot taken.

(5) In other cases, the principle enunciated in sub-rule (2) above shall be adopted till there remain two Candidates in the field.

89. Duties of the Returning Officer after completion of voting- Immediately after the meeting, the Returning Officer shall-

(a) record the proceedings of the meeting in the minutes book of the District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be, sign it, attest with his initials every correction made therein, and also permit Ward members presents at the meeting to affix their signatures to such record, if they express their desire to do so;

(b) send a report of the result of the election to the District Election Officer, Director of Rural Development, Government and the State Election Commission and to such other officers or authorities as may be specified by the State Election Commission; and

(c) public a notice signed by him stating the name of the person elected as Chairman of the District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be, on the notice board of the District Panchayat Office or the Panchayat Union Office concerned;

(d) the Returning Officer shall forward a copy of the notice referred to in the sub-rule (c) above, to the Director of Stationery and Printing, Chennai and the State Election Commission for publication of the name of the elected Candidate as soon as practicable, in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette.

90. Packing and sealing of ballot papers.- (1) The Returning Officer shall then make up the ballot papers and all other records into a separate packet, seal up the packet and note thereon a brief description of its contents, the election to which it relates and the date thereof.

(2) These packets shall not be opened and their contents shall not be inspected or produced except under the orders of an Election Commission or other competent Court.

(3) These packets shall be retained in safe custody in the office of the District Panchayat or Panchayat Union, as the case may be, for a year and shall then, unless otherwise directed by the competent Court, be destroyed.

91. Election of Vice-Chairman of District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council.- (1) After the declaration of the results of the election of Chairman, the meeting of the Ward members for the election of Vice-Chairman of District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be, shall be convened on the notified date and presided over by the officers appointed as Returning Officer under Rule 73 for purpose of conducting the election of Vice-Chairman of a District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be.

(2) In the case of a casual vacancy of Vice-Chairman of a District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be, the meeting for the election of Vice-Chairman shall be conducted on the day fixed by the State Election Commission which shall be within ²²[sixty days] from the date of occurrence of the vacancy.

(3) The meeting for the election of Vice-Chairman shall be held in the office of the concerned District Panchayat or Panchayat Union, as the case may be.

(4) At least seven clear days notice shall be given for the meeting for election of Vice-Chairman.

(5) No election of Vice-Chairman shall be conducted at a meeting convened under this Rule, unless, there be present a majority of a Ward members then on the District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be;

²³[Provided that this sub-rule shall not apply, if election of Vice-Chairman could not be conducted at three consecutive meetings for want of such majority.]

(6) The provisions of ¹³[Rules 75 to 88 and clauses (a) to (C) of Rule 89 and Rule 90] shall apply to the election of Vice-Chairman as they apply in relating to the election of Chairman of District Panchayat or Panchayat Union Council.

92. Powers to postpone or advance the election.- Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing Rules, the State Election Commission may, for sufficient reasons, direct, from time to time, the postponement of the meeting of the election of Chairman, or Vice-Chairman of a District Panchayat or a Panchayat Union Council, as the case may be, the advancement or further postponement of the date so postponed and the Returning Officer shall give effect to such direction.

PART-VIII

ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT OF VILLAGE PANCHAYATS.

93. Holding of the meeting for election.- The election of the Vice-President shall be held in the office of the concerned Village Panchayat at a meeting specially convened for the purpose.

94. Convening and presiding over the meeting.- ²⁵[(a)] The meeting for election of Vice-President shall be convened , presided over and conducted by the Returning Officer, or if so authorized by the State Election Commission, by the Assistant Returning Officer.

¹⁹[(b) The Returning Officer appointed under sub-rule (3) of Rule 8 shall be the Returning Officer for the purpose of this rule].

(2) In the case of an election to fill an ordinary vacancy, such meeting shall be convened on the date notified.

(3) In the case of an election to fill a casual vacancy, such meeting shall be convened ¹³[on the day fixed by the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission which shall be within ²²[sixty days] from the date of occurrence of such vacancy].

(4) Seven clear days notice shall be given for the said meeting.

²⁶[(5) No election of Vice-President shall be conducted at a meeting convened under this Rule unless there be present more than half of the Ward members of the Village Panchayat available in the Village Panchayat at the time of election :

Provided that this sub-rule shall not apply if at an election conducted at three consecutive meetings no Vice-President is elected for want of such quorum (requirement)].

95. Election procedure.- The provisions of Rules 75 to 88 shall apply to the election of Vice-Presidents as they apply in relation to the election of Chairmen of District Panchayats or Panchayat Union Councils.

96. Declaration of result of election.- The Candidate who obtains the largest number of votes shall be declared to have been duly elected. In the event of there being an equality of votes between any two or more Candidates and the addition of one vote to any one of such Candidates will entitle him to be declared duly elected, the Returning Officer shall draw lot in the presence of the members, and the Candidate whose name is first drawn shall be deemed to have secured an additional vote and shall be declared to have been duly elected.

97. Reporting of the result of the election.- Immediately after the meeting, the Returning Officer shall-

(a) prepare a record of the proceedings of the meeting in the minutes book of the Village Panchayat and sign it attesting with his initials every correction made therein; and also permit any member present at the meeting to affix his signature to such record, if he expresses his desire to do so ;

(b) send a report of the result of the election to the District Election Officer and to such officer or authority as may be specified by the State Election Commission by general or special order ; and

(c) publish on the notice board of the Panchayat a notice signed by him stating the name of the person elected as Vice-President.

98. Packing and sealing of ballot papers and other records.- (1) The Returning Officer shall, then, make up the ballot papers into a packet, seal up the packet and note thereon a description of its contents, the election to which it relates and the date thereof.

(2) These packets shall not be opened and their contents shall not be inspected or produced except under the order of an Election Commission or other competent Court.

(3) The packet shall be retained in safe custody in the office of the Panchayat Union in which the Panchayat is situated for a year and shall then, unless otherwise directed by the orders of an election or other competent Court, be destroyed.

99. Power to postpone or advance the date of election.- Notwithstanding anything contained in the foregoing Rules, the District Election Officer subject to the control of the State Election Commission, may, for sufficient reasons, direct, from time to time, the postponement of the date of the election of Vice-President of a Village Panchayat, the advancement or further postponement of the date so postponed and the Returning Officer shall give effect to such direction.

PART-IX

²⁷[***] [Rules 100 to 119-Omitted]

PART-X

ELECTION EXPENSES

120. Election expenses. – (1) Every Candidate at an election shall, either by himself or by his election Agent, keep a separate and correct account of all expenditure in connection with the election incurred or authorized by him or

his election Agent between the date on which he has been nominated and the date of declaration of the result thereof, both days inclusive.

(2) The account of election expenses to be kept by a Candidate or his election Agent under sub-rule (1), shall contain all the particulars specified and in the format prescribed by the State Election Commission.

(3) If so directed by the State Election Commission, every contesting Candidate at an election shall, within thirty days from the date of declaration of the result of the election, lodge with the District Election Officer or any other office not below the rank of a Panchayat Union Commissioner as specified by the State Election Commission, an account kept by him or by his election Agent under sub-rule (1).

(4) The District Election Officer or the Officer specified in sub-rule (3) shall, within two days from the date on which the accounts of election expenses have been lodged by a Candidate under sub-rule (3), cause a notice to be affixed to the notice board of his office, specifying—

the date on which the account has been lodged;

the name of the Candidate; and

the time and place at which such account can be inspected.

(5) Any person shall, on payment of a fee of five rupees, be entitled to inspect any such account and on payment of such fee, as may be fixed, by the State Election Commission in this behalf be entitled to obtain attested copies of such account or of any part thereof.

²⁸[(6) As soon as may be after the expiration of the time specified in sub-rule (3) for the lodging of the accounts of election expenses at any election, the District Election Officer or the Officer specified therein, shall report to the State Election Commission-

(a) the name of each contesting Candidate;

(b) whether such Candidate has lodged his account of election expenses, and if so, the date on which such account has been lodged; and

(c) whether in his opinion, such account has been lodged within the time and the manner required by these Rules and orders issued thereunder.

(7) Where the District Election Officer or the Officer specified in sub-rule (3) is of the opinion that the account of election expenses of any Candidate has not been lodged in the manner required by these rules or orders issued

thereunder, he shall, with every such report, forward to the State Election Commission, the account of election expenses of that Candidate and the vouchers lodged along with it.

(8) Immediately after the receipt of the report referred to in sub-rule (6), the District Election Officer or the Officer specified in sub-rule (3) shall publish a copy thereof, by affixing the same to his Notice Board.

(9) As soon as may be after the receipt of the report referred to in sub-rule (6), the State Election Commission shall consider the same and decide whether any contesting Candidate has failed to lodge the account of election expenses within the time and in the manner required by these rules or orders issued thereunder.

(10) Where the State Election Commission decides that a contesting Candidate has failed to lodge his account of election expenses within the time and in the manner required by these Rules or orders issued there under, it shall, by notice in writing, call upon the Candidate to show cause why he should not be disqualified under sub-section (4) of Section 37 of the Act for the failure.

(11) The contesting Candidate who has been called upon to show cause under sub-rule (10), may within twenty days of the receipt of such notice, submit in respect of the matter a representation in writing to the State Election Commission and shall, at the same time send to the District Election Officer or the Officer specified in sub-rule (3), a copy of his election expenses if he had not already furnished such an account.

(12) The District Election Officer or the Officers specified in sub-rule (3) shall, within five days of the receipt thereof, forward to the State Election Commission, the copy of the representation and account, if any, with such comments as he wishes to make thereon.

(13) If, after considering the representation submitted by the Candidate and the comments made by the District Election Officer or the Officer specified in sub-rule (3) and after such inquiry as it thinks fit the State Election Commission is satisfied that the Candidate has no good reason or justification for the failure to lodge his account within the time and in the manner required by these Rules or orders issued, thereunder, it shall, by order declare him to be disqualified under sub-section (4) of Section 37 of the Act for being chosen as, and for being a member of President, as the case may be, for a period of three years from the date of the order and cause the order to be published in the *Tamil Nadu Government Gazette*.]

121. Maximum Election Expenses.-²⁹[(1) The total of the expenditure of which account is to be kept under sub-rule (1) of Rule 120 and which is

incurred or authorised in connection with an election shall not exceed the amount mentioned below:-

- (a) for election as Ward member of a District Panchayat ... Rs.75,000
- (b) for election as Ward member of a Panchayat Union ... Rs.37,500
- (c) for election as President of a Village Panchayat ... Rs.15,000
- (d) for election as Ward member of a Village Panchayat ... Rs. 3,750]

(2) Any Candidate, either by himself or by his election Agent, who has exceeded the amount mentioned above and who has not kept a separate and correct account of all expenditure in connection with the election incurred as defined in Rule 120 of these rules or fails to lodge an account of election expenses with the authority specified and within the period stipulated in sub-rule (3) of Rule 120 of these Rules shall be deemed to have indulged in a corrupt practice under sub-section (8) of Section 260 of the Act.

PART-XI

ADJUDICATION OF ELECTION DISPUTES

122. Election petitions.- Save as otherwise provided, no election held under the Act, shall be called in question except by an election petition presented in accordance with Section 28 of the Act or the Rules, to the District Judge under whose jurisdiction the Panchayat or the Planning Committee or other statutory Committees fall, by any Candidate or elector against the Candidate who has been declared to have been duly elected.

Explanation.- In this Rule 'elector' means a person who was entitled to vote at the election to which the election petition relates, whether he has voted at such election, or not.

123. Time-limit for presenting election petitions.- (1) An election petition shall be presented within ³⁰[forty-five days] from the date of publication of the result of the election, under the Act.

Explanation.- If the Court of the District Judge is closed on the last day of the forty five days aforesaid, the petition may be presented on the next following day on which the said Court is open.

(2) Every election petition shall be accompanied by as many copies as there as Respondents mentioned therein with three more additional copies and every copy including the additional copies should be attested either by the petitioner under his own signature or by his counsel to be the true copy of the

petition. Any Schedule or annexure to the petition shall also be signed either by the petitioner or his counsel and enclosed with each copy of the petition.

124. Grounds for presenting an election petition.- An election petition shall be presented on one or more grounds specified in Section 259 of the Act.

125. Contents of an election petition.- An election petition shall contain a statement in a concise form, the material facts on which the petitioner relies. It shall set forth full particulars of any corrupt practice as specified in Section 260 of the Act which he alleges, and shall wherever necessary, be divided into paragraphs and numbered consecutively. The petition as well as its annexures or appendices, if any, shall be signed by the petitioner or by his counsel and verified in the manner as laid down in the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (Central Act 5 of 1908) for the verification of pleadings.

126. Parties to the petition.- A petitioner shall join as respondents to his petition-

(a) (i) Where the petitioner, in addition to claiming a declaration that the election of all or any of the returned Candidates is *void*, claims a further declaration that he himself or any other Candidate has been duly elected, all the contesting Candidates other than the petitioner; and

(ii) Where no such further declaration is claimed, all the returned Candidates; and

(b) any other Candidate against whom allegations of any corrupt practice are made in the petition.

127. Relief that may be claimed by the petitioner.- A petitioner may, in addition to claiming a declaration that the election of all or any of the returned Candidates is void, claim a further declaration that he himself or any other Candidate has been duly elected.

128. Security for costs.- (1) At the time of presentation of the petition, the petitioner shall deposit with the election Court, rupees two thousand five hundred in cash as security, for the costs of the same. During the course of the trial of an election petition, the election Court may, at any time, call upon the petitioner to give such further security for costs as it may direct. It may also call upon the petitioner to execute a bond for such amount and with such securities as it may require for the payment of any further cost.

(2) If the provisions of Rules 122, 123, 124, 125 or sub-rule (1) of this Rule are not complied with, the election Court shall dismiss the petition.

(3) Upon compliance with the provisions of the foregoing Rules, the election Court shall proceed to inquire into the petition. Where more election petitions than one are presented in respect of the same election, they may be tried individually or in one or more groups as the District Judge deems fit.

129. Serving of copies.- The District Judge, hereinafter referred to as the election Court shall, as soon as may be, cause a copy of the petition to be served on such Respondents and on the Secretary or Commissioner or *Chief Executive Officers as the case may be, of the Panchayat concerned and the State Election Commission. Any Candidate not already a Respondent shall, upon application made by him to the election Court within fourteen days from the date of commencement of the trial and subject to any order as to security for costs which may be made by the election Court, be entitled to be joined as a Respondent.

130. Trial of election petition.- (1) Every election petition shall be inquired into by the election Court in accordance with the procedure applicable under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (Central Act 5 of 1908) to the trial of suits:

Provided that it shall only be necessary for the election Court to make a memorandum of the substance of the evidence of any witness examined by it:

Provided further that the election Court shall have the discretion to refuse, for reasons to be recorded in writing, to examine any witness or witnesses, if it is of the opinion that the evidence of such witnesses is not material for the decision of the petition or that the party tendering such witness or witnesses is doing so on frivolous grounds or with a view to delaying the proceedings.

(2) The provisions of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 (Central Act of 1872) shall be deemed to apply in all respects to the trial of an election petition.

(3) Notwithstanding anything in any enactment to the contrary, no document shall be inadmissible in evidence at the trial of an election petition on the ground that it is not duly stamped or registered.

(4) No witness or other person shall be required to state for whom he has voted at an election.

(5) The reasonable expenses incurred by any person in attending to give evidence may be allowed by the election Court to such person and shall, unless the said Court otherwise directs, be deemed to be part of the costs.

131. Withdrawal of election petition.- (1) An election petition may be withdrawn only by leave of the election Court.

(2) If there are more petitioners than one in an election petition, no application to withdraw the petition shall be made except with the consent of all the petitioners.

(3) When an application for withdrawal is made, notice thereof fixing a date for the hearing of the application shall be given to all other parties to the petition.

(4) No application for withdrawal shall be granted, if the election Court is of opinion that such application has been induced by any bargain or consideration which it considers ought not to be allowed.

(5) If the application is granted-

(a) the petitioner shall be ordered to pay the cost of the Respondents therefor incurred or such portion thereof as the election Court may think fit; and

(b) such withdrawal shall be communicated by the election Court to the Secretary or the Commissioner or the Chief Executive Officer, as the case may be, of the Panchayat concerned and the State Election Commission.

132. Abatement of election petitions.- An election petition shall abate only on the death of a sole petitioner or of the survivor of several petitioners, and such abatement shall be communicated by the election Court to the Secretary or the Commissioner or the *Chief Executive Officer, as the case may be, of the Panchayat concerned and the State Election Commission.

133. Recrimination when seat claimed.- When in a inquiry into an election petition, any Candidate other than a returned Candidate, claims the seat for himself, the returned Candidate or any other party to the proceedings may give evidence to prove that the election of such claimant would have been *void* if he had been a returned Candidate and a petition had been presented calling in question his election:

Provided that the returned Candidate or such other party, as aforesaid, shall not be entitled to give such evidence unless he had within fourteen days from the date of commencement of the trial, given notice to the election Court of his intention to do so and has also given the security referred to in Rule 128.

134. Decision of the Election Court.- At the conclusion of the trial of an election petition, the election Court shall make an order –

(a) dismissing the election petition ; or

(b) declaring the election of all or any of the returned Candidates to be void; or

(c) declaring the election of all or any of the returned Candidates to be void and the petitioner or any other Candidate to have been duly elected.

135. Other orders to be made by the election Court.- At the time of making an order under Rule 134 , the election Court shall also make an order-

(1) Where any charge is made in the petition of any corrupt practice having been committed at the election, recording-

(a) a finding, whether any corrupt practice has or has not been proved to have been committed at the election and the nature of that corrupt practice; and

(b) the names of all persons, if any, who have been proved at the trial to have been guilty of any corrupt practice and the nature of that practice; and

(2) fixing the total amount of costs payable and specifying the persons by and to whom the costs shall be paid:

Provided that a person who is not a party to the petition shall not be named in the order under sub-clause (b) of sub-rule (1) unless-

(a) he has been given notice to appear before the election Court and to show-cause why he should not be so named; and

(b) if he appears in pursuance of the notice, he has been given an opportunity-

(i) of cross-examining any witness who has already been examined by the election court and has given evidence against him.

(ii) of calling evidence in his defence, and'

(iii) of being heard.

136. Grounds for declaring election to be void.- If the election Court is of opinion-

(1) that the existence of all or any of the grounds specified in Section 259 of the Act, has been established, or

(2) that on the date of his election, a returned Candidate was not qualified, or was disqualified, to be chosen to fill the seat under this Act, then the Court may declare the election of the returned Candidate to be *void*.

137. Grounds on which a Candidate other than the returned Candidate may be declared to have been elected/- If any person who has lodged a petition has, in addition to calling in question the election of the

returned Candidate, claimed a declaration that he himself or any other Candidate has been duly elected and the election court is of opinion-

(a) that in fact the petitioner or such other Candidate received a majority of the valid votes; or

(b) that but for the votes obtained by the returned Candidate by corrupt practices, the petitioner or such other Candidate would have obtained a majority of the valid votes, the election Court shall after declaring the election of the returned Candidate to be *void*, declare the petitioner or such other Candidate, as the case may be to have been duly elected.

138. Procedure in case of an equality of votes.- In cases, where there is an equality of votes between any Candidates at the election and that the addition of a vote would entitle any of those Candidates to be declared elected, then that question may be determined by lot and shall be proceeded as if the one, on whom the lot falls had received an additional vote.

139. Communication of orders of the Election Court.- The Election court shall, as soon as may be after the conclusion of the trial of an election petition, intimate the substance of the decision to the Secretary or Commissioner or *Chief Executive Officer, as the case may be, of the Panchayat concerned and to the State Election Commission and as soon as may be thereafter, shall send to the State Election Commission an authenticated copy of the decision.

140. Transmission of order to the Appropriate Authority, etc. and its publication.- As soon as may be after the receipt of any order made by the Election Court under Rule 134 or 135, the State Election Commission shall forward copies of the order to the Appropriate Authority who shall cause the order to be published in the office of the Panchayat concerned.

141. Effect of orders of the election Court.- (1) Every such order shall take effect as soon as it is pronounced by the election Court.

(2) Where by an order, the election of a Candidate is declared to be void, acts and proceedings in which that Candidate has, before the date of such order participated, shall not be invalidated by reason of that order, nor shall such Candidate be subjected to any liability or penalty on the ground of such participation.

PART – XII

MISCELLANEOUS

142. Interpretation of these Rules by Government.- If any question arises as to the interpretation of these Rules, otherwise than in connection with an inquiry held under the Rules, for the decision of disputes as to the validity of

an election, the question shall be referred to the Government who, after consulting the State Election Commission, shall communicate their decision, which shall be final.

143. Removal of difficulties if any, by State Election Commission.-

(1) The State Election Commission may issue such general or special directions as may in its opinion be necessary, for the purpose of giving due effect to these Rules, or holding any election under the Act.

(2) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of these Rules, or in holding any election, the State Election Commission as occasion may require, may, by order, do anything which appears to it necessary for the purpose of removing the difficulty.

144. Savings.- All orders, directions, etc., issued by the Government, State Election Commission or District Election Officer, for the preparation of electoral rolls and for the conduct of elections under these Rules, shall unless repugnant to these Rules, be deemed to have been issued or made under these Rules.

J.T ACHARYULU
SPECIAL COMMISSIONER AND
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

-
1. *Published in Tamil Nadu Government Gazette (Extraordinary), Part III – Section 1(a) Issue No.411, dated 7th August 1995.*
 2. *Substituted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections) dated 28th August 1996.*
 3. *Clause (xix) "**Other elected member**" means-(a) in the case of a District Panchayat, the Chairman of a Panchayat Union Council elected to represent in the District Panchayat under sub-section (2) of Section 25 of the Act; and (b) in the case of a Panchayat Union Council, the President of a Village Panchayat, elected to represent in the Panchayat Union Council under sub-section (2) of Section 17 of the Act" was omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 282, Rural Development (C4), dated 30th October 2000*
 4. *Substituted by ibid.*
 5. *Inserted by G.O.Ms.No. 299, Rural Development (4), dated 13th November, 2000.*
 6. *The words of "offices of members" substituted by G.O. M.s.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections) dated 28th August, 1996.*
 7. *The expression "other elected members to the Panchayat Union Councils and District Panchayats" is omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 282, Rural Development (C4), dated 30th October, 2000.*
 8. *Substituted by G.O.Ms.No.299, Rural Development (C4), dated 13th November 2000.*
 9. *The words "and other Statutory Committees" was omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 183, Rural Development, dated 31st August, 1998.*
 10. *Rule 6-A inserted by G.O.Ms.No. 86, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (C4), dated 27th July 2006.*
 11. *Substituted for the words "Divisional Development Officer" by G.O.Ms.No.282, Rural development (C4) dated 30th October 2000.*

12. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No. 151, Rural Development (C1), dated 2nd June, 2001.
 13. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No. 282, Rural Development (C4) dated 30th October, 2000.
 14. The words "backward classes" omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 163, Rural development, dated 7th August 1996.
 Note: See 2002 TNLJ (2), Page 312 – Rejection of Nomination Paper and Parties to the election Petition.
 15. Added by G.O.Ms.No. 175, Rural Development, (Panchayat Elections) dated 28th August, 1996.
 16. The words "President of Village Panchayats" were omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 282, Rural Development (C4), dated 30th October, 2000.
 17. Inserted by G.O. Ms.No.151, Rural Development (C1), dated 2nd June 2001.
 18. The words "President of Village Panchayats" omitted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections),dated 28th August, 1996.
 19. Inserted by *ibid*.
 20. Inserted by G.O.Ms.No. 241, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections), dated 24th September 2001.
 21. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No. 235, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections), dated 24th October 1996.
 22. Substituted for the words "thirty days' by G.O.Ms.No. 168, Rural Development (C4), dated 1st November 2004.
 23. Added by G.O.Ms.No. 136, Rural Development (C4, dated 1st September 2004.
 24. Added by G.O.Ms.No. 44, Rural Development (C1), dated 13th March 1998.
 25. Renumbered by G.O.Ms.No. 213, Rural Development (PE), dated 21st August 2001.
 26. Inserted by G.O.Ms.No. 48, Rural Development (C4), dated 29th February, 2000.
 27. Omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 282, Rural Development (C4), dated 30th October 2000.
 28. Inserted by G.O.Ms.No. 179, Rural Development (C4), dated 30th August, 1999.
 29. Sub-rule (1) of Rules 121 substituted by G.O.Ms.No. 90, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (C4), dated 2nd August 2006.
 30. Substituted for the expression "fifteen days' by the G.O.Ms.No. 116, Rural Development (C4), dated 22nd July 2004.
- * Now, Secretary of the District Panchayat – vide Tamil Nadu Act 28 of 1998.

FORM 1

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION OF ELECTORAL ROLL

[See Rule 20 (1)]

Notice is hereby given that Panchayat Electoral Roll has been prepared in accordance with the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Elections) Rules, 1995 by adopting the existing entries in the relevant part of the electoral roll of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly _____ Constituency. A copy thereof relating to the _____ Ward of the _____ Panchayat Village /Panchayat Union/District Panchayat has been published for inspection at my office and at the offices of the Panchayat Village, Panchayat Union and District Panchayat.

Any person who wishes to lodge any claim for including his/her name in the roll or any objection to the inclusion of a name or any objection to the particulars in any entry in the said roll, shall first get such claim or objection settled with reference to the corresponding entry in the Assembly Roll by lodging suitable claim or objection under the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 before the Electoral Registration Officer of the said Assembly Constituency.

All orders of inclusion, deletion or corrections issued on the basis of these claims and objects by the Assembly Electoral Registration Officer till the last date fixed for making nomination for election in the Wards of the Panchayat will be duly incorporated in the Panchayat Electoral Rolls.

Panchayat Electoral Registration Officer,
_____ *Panchayat.*

FORM 2A

NOTICE OF ELECTION

[See Rule 25 (1)]

ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF _____ PANCHAYAT UNION COUNCIL/DISTRICT PANCHAYAT.

Notice is hereby given that—

- 1 (a) Elections are to be held to elect members of Ward/Territorial Wards of _____ District Panchayat/Panchayat Union;
- (b) The number of members to be elected from each Ward/Territorial Ward and those among them which are reserved under Sections 20/32 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes ¹[***] or for Women are given below:-

Ward or Territorial Ward Member	Unreserved	RESERVED							TOTAL
		for S.C.	for S.T.	¹ [***]	For Women belonging to				
					for S.C.	for S.T.	¹ [***]	Open	
TOTAL									

Nomination papers may be delivered by a Candidate or his Proposer to the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer at _____ between 11.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. on any day other than a public holiday from _____ to _____;

- (2) Forms of nomination papers will be available in the office of the District Panchayat and in the office of the Panchayat Union from this date on all working days;
- (3) The nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny at 11.00 a.m. on _____ at _____.
- (4) Notice of withdrawal of Candidature may be delivered by a Candidate or his Proposer who has been specifically authorised in this behalf in writing by the Candidate to the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer upto 3.00 p.m. on _____;
- (5) In the event of the election being contested, poll will be taken on _____ between the hours of _____ a.m. and _____ p.m. at the polling stations notified for this purpose;
- (6) The counting of votes shall commence at _____ a.m. on _____.
- (7) The election shall be completed before _____.
- (8) The meeting of the newly elected Ward Members shall be held on _____ at _____ for the election of the Chairman and/or the Vice Chairman of the Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

Returning Officer.

Place: _____ *District Panchayat.*

Date: _____ *Panchayat Union Council.*

1. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 2B

NOTICE OF ELECTION

[See Rule 25 (2)]

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBER OR MEMBERS OF WARDS OF _____ VILLAGE PANCHAYAT.

Notice is hereby given that—

- 1 (a) Elections are to be held to elect a President and Member or Members of Wards of _____ Village Panchayat;
- (b) The office of the President of this Village Panchayat is not reserved for any category is reserved under Section 57 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, for persons belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes ¹[***] or Women;
- (c) The number of Members of the Panchayat to be elected from each Ward and those among them which are reserved under Sections 11 of the aforesaid Act, 1994 for persons belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes ¹[***] or Women are given below:-

Office	Total number of seats	RESERVED							Unreserved
		for S.C.	for S.T.	¹ [***]	For Women belonging to				
					for S.C.	for S.T.	¹ [***]	Open	
President									
Member-Ward 1									
Ward 2									
TOTAL									

- (2) Nomination papers may be delivered by a Candidate or his Proposer to the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer at _____ between 11.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. on any day other than a public holiday from _____ to _____;
- (3) Forms of nomination papers will be available in the office of the District Panchayat and in the office of the Panchayat Union from this date on all working days and at the office of the Assistant Returning Officer;
- (4) The nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny at 11.00 a.m. on _____ at _____.
- (5) Notice of withdrawal of Candidature may be delivered by a Candidate or his Proposer who has been specifically authorised in this behalf in writing by the Candidate to the Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer upto 3.00 p.m. on _____;
- (6) In the event of the election being contested, poll will be taken on _____ between _____ a.m. and _____ p.m. at the polling stations notified for this purpose;
- (7) The counting of votes shall commence at _____ a.m. on _____.
- (8) The election shall be completed before _____.
- (9) The meeting of the newly elected Ward Members shall be held on _____ at the office of the _____ Village Panchayat for the election of the Vice President.

Returning Officer.

Place: _____ *Village Panchayat.*

Date: _____ *Panchayat Union Council.*

1. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 3

NOMINATION PAPER

[See Rule 26 (1), (2) and 30]

Member to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat
Election of _____
President to the _____ Village Panchayat.

(TO BE FILLED IN BY THE PROPOSER)

I hereby nominate Thiru./Tmt./Selvi. _____ as a Candidate for the election as a member
from Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/ Panchayat Union
Council/District Panchayat/President of _____ Village Panchayat.

His/Her name is entered at Serial No. in Par No. _____ of the electoral roll for Ward
No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat comprised in _____ Panchayat
Union.

Place:

Date:

Signature of the Proposer.

(TO BE FILLED BY THE CANDIDATE)

I, the above mentioned Candidate assent to this nomination and hereby declare -

(a) that I have completed _____ years of age;

(b) ** that the symbols I have chosen are in the following order of preference:-

(i) _____ (ii) _____ (iii) _____

(c) that I am aware of the fact that under Rule 30 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Elections) Rules, 1995. I am prohibited
from contesting more than one seat as below and further that nomination filed in violation of sub-rule (1) of the above mentioned rule
shall be rejected by the Returning Officer:-

(i) No member of a Village Panchayat or no person who stands for election as a member of a Village Panchayat shall be eligible to stand for election as a President of a Village Panchayat, or member of a Panchayat Union Council or a member of a District Panchayat.

(ii) No member of a Panchayat Union Council or no person who stands for election as a member of a Panchayat Union Council shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat, or President of a Village Panchayat, or member of District Panchayat.

(iii) No member of a District Panchayat or no person who stands for election as a member of a District Panchayat shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat or President of a Village Panchayat or member of a Panchayat Union Council.

(iv) No President or no person who stands for election as a President shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat, or member of a Panchayat Union Council or a member of District Panchayat.

(v) Under Section 10 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994, no person shall be eligible to stand for election as a member of a Village Panchayat, or member of a Panchayat Union Council or a member of a District Panchayat.

(d) § that I am a member of the _____ Caste/Tribe which is Scheduled Caste/Tribe ¹[***] of the State of the Tamil Nadu in relation to _____ (area).

** [(e) that I am not employed as Village Administrative Officer or village servant or an officer or servant of the State or Central Government or of a Village Panchayat, Panchayat Union Council, District Panchayat, Municipal Council or Municipal Corporation or of any Industrial Township or of Cantonment or of any body Corporate, owned or controlled by the State or Central Government.]

Place:

Signature of the Candidate.

Date:

Note.- ** Item (b) need not be filled in by Candidates for election of member of a Village Panchayat.

§ Item (d) needs to be made only by SC/ST ¹[***] candidate.

* Item (e) added by G.O.Ms.No.164, Rural Development(C4), dated 27th October 2004.

1. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

(TO BE FILLED IN BY THE RETURNING OFFICER)

Serial number of nomination paper:

The nomination was delivered to me at my office at _____(hour) on _____ (date) by the Candidate/Proposer.

Place:

Date:

Returning Officer.

Receipt for nomination paper and notice of scrutiny

(To be handed over to the person presenting the nomination paper)

Serial number of nomination paper:

The nomination paper of _____ a Candidate for election as President/Member from Ward No. _____ of the Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union/District Panchayat, was delivered to me at my office at _____ (hours) on _____ (date) by the Candidate/Proposer.

All nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny at 11.00 a.m. on _____(date) at _____ (place).

Place:

Date:

Returning Officer/Assistant Returning Officer.

FORM 4

NOTICE OF NOMINATION

[See Rule 28 (2)]

Election of Member/Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union council / District Panchayat.

Election of President to the Village Panchayat

Serial Number of Nomination Paper	Name of Candidate	Name of Father / Husband	Age of Candidate	Address	Sex	Caste/Tribe (in case of S.C/S.T. ¹ [***] Candidates)	Electoral roll number of the Candidate	Name of the Proposer	Electoral roll number of the Proposer
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)

Place:

Date:

Returning Officer

1. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 5

LIST OF NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

¹ [See Rules 28(3), (4) and 29 (1)]

_____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council/ District Panchayat.

List of nomination received for election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat:

President to _____ Village Panchayat

Serial Number	Name of Candidate	Father's/Husband's name	Community (Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe ² (***) or not)	Sex	Address
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

NOTE: The nomination papers will be taken up for scrutiny at 11.00 a.m. on _____ at _____ (place).

Returning Officer / Assistant Returning Officer.

1. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections) Dept., dated 28th August 1996.
 2. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 6

LIST OF VALIDLY NOMINATED CANDIDATES

¹ [See Rules 28 (3), (4) and 29 (9)]

_____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat.

List of nominations received for election of Member / Members of Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat, President of _____ Village Panchayat.

Serial Number	Name of Candidate	Father's/Husband's name	Community (Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe 2(***) or not)	Sex	Address
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Returning Officer / Assistant Returning Officer.</i>					

1. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections) Dept., dated 28th August 1996.
 2. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 7

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

[See Rule 30]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat
Union council / District Panchayat _____

Election of President to _____ Village Panchayat

To
The Returning Officer,
I, _____, a Candidate nominated at the above election, do hereby give
notice that I withdraw my Candidature.

Place : _____

Date : _____

Signature of Candidate.

The notice was delivered to me at my office at _____ (hour) on _____ (date) _____

by _____ the _____

Place :

Date :

Returning Officer / Assistant Returning Officer.

RECEIPT FOR NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

(To be handed over to the person delivering the notice)

The notice of withdrawal of candidature by _____, a Candidate at the election of Member / Members to Ward number _____ of _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat / election of President to _____ Village Panchayat was delivered to me by the * _____ at my office at _____(hour) on _____ (date).

Returning Officer / Assistant Returning Officer.

Note: * Here insert one of the following alternatives as may be appropriate :-

(1) Candidate.

(2) Candidate's Proposer who has been authorised in writing by the Candidate to deliver it.

FORM 8

LIST SHOWING NOTICES OF WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDATURE

[See Rule 30]

Election of Member/President _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

Notice is hereby given that the following Candidate / Candidates at the above election has/have withdrawn his/their Candidature.

Name of the Candidate	Address of Candidate	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)

Place :

Date :

Returning Officer / Assistant Returning Officer.

FORM 9

LIST OF CONTESTING CANDIDATES

[See Rules 31, 32,(1)(a), 2(a), 3(a) 4(a), 4(b), 4(c), 35(4), 41(4)(a) and 49(1)]

List of contesting Candidates for election of Member / Members to Ward NO. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat. President _____ to the Village Panchayat.

Serial Number	Name of the candidate	Sex	Whether the Candidate belongs to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe ¹ [***] or not	Address of Candidate	Distinctive symbol assigned to the Candidate
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

NOTE.- The poll will be taken on _____ between _____ a.m. and _____ p.m at the polling stations noticed for the purpose.

Place :

Date :

Returning Officer / Assistant Returning Officer.

1. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 10

APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION AGENT

[See rule 38]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

President to _____ Village Panchayat.

To

The Returning Officer,

I, _____ of _____, a Candidate at the above election do hereby appoint Thiru / Tmt / Selvi _____ of _____ as my election Agent from this day at the above election.

Place :

Date:

Signature of Candidate.

I accept the above appointment.

Place:

Date:

Signature of Election Agent.

FORM 11

APPOINTMENT OF POLLING AGENT

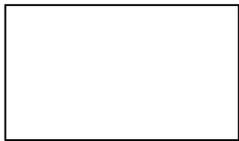
[See Rule 38]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

President to _____ Village Panchayat.

I, _____ a Candidate / Election Agent of _____ who is candidate in the above election to hereby appoint Thiru _____ of _____ as Polling Agent to attend the polling station No. _____ at _____.

His recent photograph, duly attested be me is pasted below:-



Place:

Date:

Signature of Candidate or Election Agent..

I accept the above appointment.

Place :

Date:

Signature of Polling Agent.

DECLARATION OF POLLING AGENT TO BE SIGNED BEFORE THE PRESIDING OFFICER

I hereby declare that at the above election I will not do anything forbidden by Section 58 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 which I have read / has been read over to me.

Place:

Date :

Signature of Polling Agent.

Signed before me.

Date :

Place :

Signature of Presiding Officer.

(TO BE HANDED OVER TO THE POLLING AGENT FOR PRODUCTION AT THE POLLING STATION)

Section 58 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994.

“Every Officer, Clerk, Agent or other person performing any duty in connection with the recording or counting of votes at an election who, except for some purpose authorised by law, communicate to any person any information showing directly or indirectly for which Candidate any voter has voted, and every person, who by improper means procures any such information, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine, or with both”.

FORM 12

[See Rule 42 (6)]

PART – I

DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF POLL

Election of Member/Members to Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

President to _____ Village Panchayat.

Number and Name of the Polling Station : _____

Date of Poll : _____

I hereby declare –

- (1) that I have demonstrated to the Polling Agents and other persons present that the ballot boxes to be used for the poll are empty :
- (2) that on the paper seal used for securing the ballot box, I have affixed my own signature and obtained thereon, the signatures of such of the Polling Agents who are present and desirous of affixing the same.
- (3) that I have demonstrated to the Polling Agents and others present that the marked copy of the electoral roll/rolls to be used during the poll does / do not contain any marks other than those used for issuing election duty certificates, and
- (4) that I have allowed the Polling Agents to note the first and the last of the serial numbers of the ballot papers and also the numbers on the paper seals which will be used at the polling station.

Signature of Presiding Officer.

Signature of Polling Agents –

1. _____ (of Candidate _____)

2. _____ (of Candidate _____)

3. _____ (of Candidate _____)

4. _____ (of Candidate _____)

5. _____ (of Candidate _____)

6. _____ (of Candidate _____)

7. _____ (of Candidate _____)

8. _____ (of Candidate _____)

9. _____ (of Candidate _____)

The following Agents declined to affix their signatures to this declaration :-

1. _____ (of Candidate _____)

2. _____ (of Candidate _____)

3. _____ (of Candidate _____)

4. _____ (of Candidate _____)

Signature of Presiding Officer.

PART-II

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 each of the entries in the ballot paper account in Form No.20.

Place :

Date:

Signature of Presiding Officer.

RECEIVED AN ATTESTED COPY OF THE ENTRIES MADE IN THE BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT

Signature of Polling Agents:-

1. _____ (of Candidate _____)
2. _____ (of Candidate _____)
3. _____ (of Candidate _____)
4. _____ (of Candidate _____)
5. _____ (of Candidate _____)
6. _____ (of Candidate _____)
7. _____ (of Candidate _____)
8. _____ (of Candidate _____)
9. _____ (of Candidate _____)

The following polling Agents who were present at the close of the poll declined to receive an attested copy of the ballot paper account and to give a receipt therefor and so an attested copy of the ballot paper account was not supplied to them.

1. _____ (of Candidate _____)
2. _____ (of Candidate _____)
3. _____ (of Candidate _____)
4. _____ (of Candidate _____)
5. _____ (of Candidate _____)
6. _____ (of Candidate _____)
7. _____ (of Candidate _____)
8. _____ (of Candidate _____)
9. _____ (of Candidate _____)

Place :

Date:

Signature of Presiding Officer.

FORM 13

LIST OF CHALLENGED VOTES

[See Rule 45 (2) (C)]

Election of Member/Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

President to _____ Village Panchayat.

Number and Name of the Polling Station: _____

Date of Poll : _____

Sl.No. of entry	Name of Elector	Name of Father/ Husband	Sl.No. of Part of Roll.	Signature or thumb- impression of the Person challenged.	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.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)

Place: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Presiding Officer.

FORM 14-A

BALLOT PAPER

[See Rule 49 (1)]

_____ District Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/ ¹ [***] _____ Ward No. _____	
Electoral Roll Part number _____ Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat SI.No. of the elector _____	
<i>Signature or Thumb impression of the elector.</i>	
.....	
_____ District Panchayat / Panchayat Union ¹ [***] _____ Ward No. _____	
NAME	SYMBOL

1. The words "President of Village Panchayat" were omitted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development(Panchayat Elections) dated 28th August 1996.

FORM 14-B

BALLOT PAPER FOR ELECTION OF ¹[PRESIDENT /MEMBER OF A VILLAGE PANCHAYAT]

[See Rule 49 (2)]

_____ Panchayat		Ward No. _____
Electoral Roll Part No. _____		
Sl.No. of the elector _____		
	 Signature or Thumb impression of the elector.
Election to ¹[President / Member of a Village Panchayat]		
NAME		SYMBOL

1. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections) Dept., dated 28th August 1996.

FORM 15

APPLICATION BY AN ELECTOR ON ELECTION DUTY TO VOTE

[See Rule 52 (1)]

<p>To The Returning Officer, _____Village Panchayat /Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat.</p> <p>Sir,</p> <p>I have been posted for election duty at the ensuing Member/Members to ward No. _____of the _____Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat election of President to _____Village Panchayat at the polling station No. _____ situated in the _____Village Panchayat in _____ Panchayat Union.</p> <p>I hereby declare that I am an elector of ward number _____ of the _____Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union / District Panchayat. I have been enrolled under serial number _____of part number _____in the electoral roll of the ward No. _____of _____Village Panchayat.</p> <p>I request that a certificate in Form 16 with a ballot paper may be sent to me to the address given below to enable me to cast my vote at the above election.</p> <p>My address : _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Signature of elector on election duty.</i></p> <p>NOTE.- Separate application shall be made for each election.</p>

FORM 16

ELECTION DUTY CERTIFICATE

[See Rule 52 (1)]

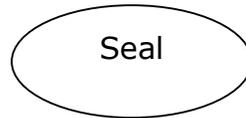
Certified that _____ is an elector in a ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat/ Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat. His electoral roll particulars are given below:-

Serial No.	
Part No.	
Ward No.	
Village Panchayat	

Certified also that by reason of being on election duty, he is unable to vote at the polling station, where he is entitled to vote and that he is therefore, hereby authorized to vote through postal ballot paper in the manner laid down in Rule 52.

Place :

Date :



Signature of Returning Officer.

FORM 17

DECLARATION BY ELECTOR

[See Rule 52 (2)]

Election of Member/Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.
President to _____ Village Panchayat.

I hereby declare that I am the elector to whom the postal ballot paper bearing serial number _____ has been issued at the above election. I declare that I have marked my vote myself on the ballot paper.

Place :

Date :

Signature of elector.

Address: _____

FORM 18

LIST OF BLIND AND INFIRM ELECTORS

[See Rule 53 (2)]

Election of Member/Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.

President to _____ Village Panchayat.

Name of the Polling

Station and Number : _____

Ward number and serial number of elector	Full name of elector	Full name of companion	Address of companion	Signature of companion
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Place:

Date:

Signature of Presiding Officer.

FORM 19

LIST OF TENDERED VOTES

[See Rule 55 (2)]

Election of Member/Members of Ward No.____of the _____ Village Panchayat/ Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat.
 President to _____ Village Panchayat.

Number and name of the Polling Station : _____

Serial number	Serial Number, part number, Ward number and name of elector.	Address of elector	Serial number of tendered ballot paper	Signature or thumb-impresion of person tendering vote.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

Place:

Date :

Signature of Presiding Officer.

FORM 20

[See Rules 58 (4)(a) and 64(2)]

Election of Member / Members to ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat.

President to _____ Village Panchayat.

PART-I

BALLOT PAPER ACCOUNT

Name of the District Panchayat		Ward No.		
Name of the Panchayat Union		Ward No.		
Name of the Village Panchayat		Ward No.		
Number _____ Name of Polling Station				
		Serial Numbers		Total Number
		From	To	
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)
1.	Ballot papers received.			
2.	Ballot papers unused (i.e. not issued to voters)- (a) With the signature of Presiding Officer (b) Without the signature of Presiding Officer			
TOTAL: (a+b)				
3.	*Ballot papers used at the polling station (1-2=3)			
4.	*Ballot papers used at the polling station but NOT INSERTED INTO THE BALLOT BOX-			
	(a) Ballot papers cancelled for violation of voting procedure under Rule 54			
	(b) Ballot papers cancelled for other reasons			
	(c) Ballot papers used as tendered ballot papers			
TOTAL : (a+b+c)				

5.	*Ballot papers to be found in the ballot box (3-4=5) (*Serial numbers need not be given)			
----	---	--	--	--

Place :

Date :

Signature of Presiding Officer.

PART-II

RESULT OF INITIAL COUNTING

1. Total number of ballot papers that should be found in the ballot box(es) as shown in item 5 of Part I.	
2. Total number of ballot papers actually found in the ballot box(es) as per initial counting.	
3. Discrepancy, if any.	

Place :

Date :

Signature of Counting Supervisor.

Signature of the Returning Officer.

FORM 21

APPOINTMENT OF COUNTING AGENTS

[See Rule 60]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat President to _____ Village Panchayat.

To
The Returning Officer

I, _____,
a Candidate / the Election Agent of _____ who is Candidate at the above election do hereby appoint the following person as my counting agent to attend the counting of votes at _____

Name of the counting Agent	Address of the counting Agent

His recent photograph, duly attested by me is pasted below-

Place :
Date :

Signature of Candidate or election Agent.

I agree to act as such counting agent.

Place:

Date :

Signature of counting Agent.

DECLARATION OF COUNTING AGENT TO BE SIGNED BEFORE THE RETURNING OFFICER

I hereby declare that at the above election I will not do anything forbidden by section 58 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 which I have read / has been read over to me.

Signature of Counting Agent.

Place:

Date :

Signed before me.

Place:

Date :

Signature of the Returning Officer.

TO BE HANDED OVER TO THE COUNTING AGENT FOR PRODUCTION AT THE COUNTING CENTRE

Section 58 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994.

"Every Officer, Clerk, agent or other person performing any duty in connection with the recording or counting votes at an election who, except for some purpose authorized by law, communicates to any person any information showing directly or indirectly for which candidate any voter has voted, and every person, who by any improper means procures any such information, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine, or with both".

FORM 22

RESULT SHEET

[See Rules 64(2), 66(1), (4)(b), (5), 67(1)(d), (2)(d) and (3)(d)]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat
 President to _____ Village Panchayat.

Serial Number	Name of the Candidate	Votes secured through Postal ballot	Votes secured at the Poling stations	TOTAL
1				
2				
3				
...				
TOTAL NUMBER OF VALID VOTES POLLED				
REJECTED VOTES				
TENDERED VOTES				
TOTAL				

Place:

Date :

Returning Officer.

FORM 23

RETURN OF ELECTION

[See Rule 67(1) (a), (2)(a)]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat / Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat
 President to _____ Village Panchayat.

Sl. No. (1)	Name of the Candidate (2)	Name of valid votes polled (3)
1		
2		
3		
...		
TOTAL NUMBER OF VALID VOTES POLLED		
TOTAL NUMBER OF REJECTED VOTES		

I declare that Thiru / Thirumathi / Selvi _____ has been duly elected as the
 President of _____ Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat in _____ ward
 of _____ Panchayat Union Council / District Panchayat in _____

Place:

Date :

Returning Officer.

FORM 24

RETURN OF ELECTION

[See Rule 67(3) (a)]

Election of Member / Members to Ward No. _____ of _____ Village Panchayat.

Sl. No. (1)	Name of the Candidate (2)	Name of valid votes polled (3)
1		
2		
3		
...		
TOTAL NUMBER OF VALID VOTES POLLED		
TOTAL NUMBER OF REJECTED VOTES		

I declare that the following Candidate has / candidates have been duly elected to the seat / seats specified against him name or names:-

Name of the elected Candidate (1)	Seat to which he is elected (2)

Place:
Date :

Returning Officer.

FORM 25

DECLARATION OF THE RESULT OF ELECTION.

(See ¹[Rule 69] (1), (2), (3))

Election of Member/ Members to Ward No.____ of the _____ Village Panchayat/ Panchayat Union Council/ District Panchayat.
President to _____ Village Panchayat.

DECLARATION

In pursuance of the provisions contained in sub-rule (1)(2) (3) of Rule 70 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Elections) Rules, 1995, I declare that-

Thiru/Tmt/Selvi. _____

has been duly elected as member from Ward No. _____ of _____ Panchayat Union Council/District Panchayat/
President of _____ Village Panchayat of _____ District.

Place :

Date:

Returning Officer.

1. Substituted by G.O.Ms.No.175, Rural Development (Panchayat Elections) Dept., dated 28th August 1996.

FORM 26

DECLARATION OF THE RESULT OF ELECTION.

[See Rule 69 (4)]

Election of Member/ Members to Ward No. _____ of the _____ Village Panchayat.

DECLARATION

In pursuance of the provisions contained in sub-rule (4) of Rule 69 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats (Elections) Rules, 1995, I declare that the following Candidate has/candidates have been duly elected to the seat/seats specified against his name/their names:-

Name of the elected Candidates (1)	Seat to which he is elected (2)

- Here indicate SC/ST ¹[***] Women/Open seat etc.

Place :

Date:

Returning Officer.

1. The words "for B.C." omitted by G.O.Ms.No.163, Rural Development Department, dated 7th August 1996.

FORM 27-A

NOMINATION FORM

[See Rule 75(1)]

Election of Chairman/Vice- Chairman of the _____ Panchayat Union Council/ District Panchayat.

Vice-President to _____ Village Panchayat.

I, Thiru/Tmt/Selvi _____ member from ward No. _____ hereby nominate Thiru/Thirumathi/Selvi _____ member from Ward No. _____, as a Candidate for the election of Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the _____ Panchayat Union Council/ District Panchayat/ Vice-President of _____ Village Panchayat. Place : Date :	<i>Signature of Proposer.</i>
--	-------------------------------

I, Thiru/Thirumathi/Selvi _____ member from ward No. _____, hereby second the above nomination. Place : Date :	<i>Signature of the Seconder.</i>
--	-----------------------------------

DECLARATION OF THE CANDIDATE.	
I, Thiru/Thirumathi/Selvi _____ member from ward No. _____, hereby assent to this nomination. Place : Date :	<i>Signature of the Candidate.</i>

Form 27-B was omitted by G.O.Ms.No. 282 (Rural Development) (C4), dated 30th October 2000.

FORM 28-A
BALLOT PAPER
[See Rule 82(1)]

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN-VICE PRESIDENT	
Serial Number :	
NAME :	
WARD NUMBER :	
NAME :	
WARD NUMBER:	
NAME :	
WARD NUMBER:	
NAME :	
WARD NUMBER:	
	<i>Returning Officer.</i>

Form 28-B was omitted by G.O.Ms.No.282 (Rural Development (C4), dated 30th October 2000.