



Forum for Good Governance

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L. No. FGG/ECI/REP/ **87** /2021

Hyderabad
27th July, 2021

To
The Chief Election Commissioner
Election Commission of India
Nirvachan Sadan
New Delhi

Sir,

Sub : Telangana State – By elections to (31) Huzurabad Assembly Constituency - New schemes being introduced to lure the voters – Request for postponement of new schemes in Huzurabad till the by-election is over – Request – Reg.

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Sitting MLA of Huzurabad assembly constituency of Telangana State has resigned on 12th June, 2021. In all likelihood there going to be a by-election to this constituency in coming four months. Due to various reasons the by-election has become a prestige issue for the ruling party. There is a general feeling that the result of this by-election will have impact on next assembly elections.

A week back Hon'able Chief Minister of Telangana has announced a new scheme called DALITA BANDU. The scheme in brief is, in every Assembly constituency 100 Dalit families will be selected and each selected family will be given Rs.10 lakhs cash for their upliftment. In all an amount of Rs.10 crores will be expenditure per Assembly Constituency and Rs.1190 crores for entire state of Telangana - so far so good.

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We welcome the scheme as announced by Hon'able Chief Minister of Telangana to uplift the Dalits by directly transferring the cash into their accounts.

Chief Minister further announced that on a pilot basis it will be first introduced in Huzurabad Assembly constituency only and later on will be extended to entire state. Opposition parties while welcoming the scheme stated that it should be introduced in the entire 119 constituencies, why only in Huzurabad Assembly Constituency? Which is going to polls in next 3 to 4 months? The opposition parties further said that introducing the scheme only in Huzurabad is mainly for electoral gains in ensuing election.

Here, the issue has taken an interesting turn. Hon'able Chief Minister is on record saying that "I am not a saint living in Himalayas. I am a politician and I am introducing this scheme in Huzurabad for electoral gains only - what is wrong with it".

We understand the limitations of Election Commission: The Governments have freedom to take up any development programme till the election code comes into operation – This is as far as the letter of the law is concerned. But the Hon'able Chief Minister openly announcing that the scheme is being introduced for electoral gains is to be analyzed on the spirit of the law. Election Commission of India has a bounden duty to conduct elections in free and fair manner. If large number of schemes is announced just before a by-election it amounts to influencing the voters with tax payers' money.

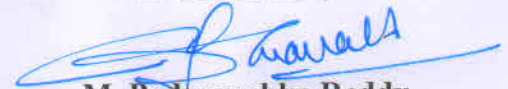
Further it is reported in the section of the press that Hon'able Chief Minister is going to extended the scheme to 10,000 families in Huzurabad by spending Rs.1,000 crores. Four persons from each Gram Panchayat of Huzurabad constituency in all about 430 people (Dalits) were called to Hyderabad and Hon'able Chief Minister announced many schemes benefitting the Dalits of Huzurabad constituency, like issue of pattedar pass books within 10 days, preparing the profile of Dalit families in Huzurabad, houses to all eligible families, issue of ration cards and pensions, distribution of Sheep units etc. All these schemes mentioned by Chief Minister are very good and we welcome it. State Government with its meager resources cannot implement these schemes announced in entire state. While the schemes are good, the intension of introducing the scheme just before by-elections is questionable.

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Here the Election Commission of India has to take serious note of Chief Minister's announcement that the scheme is being introduced for electoral gains, this is against the spirit of the constitution. So far no guidelines regarding selection of beneficiaries and the purpose for which the amount to be spent is yet to be worked out.

We request the Chief Election Commissioner of India to kindly inquire into the matter and order for postponement of the Dalit Bandu and other schemes just announced for Huzurabad till the by-election is over. In other constituencies, if Government wants they can implement the programmes.

Yours Sincerely



M. Padmanabha Reddy

Secretary

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