

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1616
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2015
Difficulties in Exercise of Franchise
Sreeramulu Shri B.

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the difficulties faced by the differently abled and elderly persons in reaching polling booths to exercise their franchise;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard so as to encourage participation of such persons in voting?

Answer

ANSWER

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLIES TO PART (a) to (c) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1616 FOR ANSWER ON 30th JULY, 2015.

(a) Yes, madam.

(b) The Election Commission has informed the following

1. The polling stations are set up in such a manner that ordinarily no voter is required to travel more than 2 kilometer for casting vote.
2. On day of poll there is no bar on public transport carriage like buses playing between fixed terminals.
3. Private vehicles used by the sick or disabled persons, for their own uses are allowed.
4. A companion to accompany a blind/infirm elector to assist him/her to cast the vote is also provided.

(c) For senior citizens/elderly electors the Commission has instructed that there will be separate queue at the polling stations, so that they need not wait for too long to cast their franchise and face inconvenience.

The Commission has also issued the following instructions to ensure that all physically handicapped voters are able to exercise their franchise with least inconvenience:-

- (i) The personnel at the polling station must ensure that differently abled electors are given priority for entering the pooling stations, without having wait in the queue for other electors and all necessary assistance as may be required should be provided to them at the polling station.
- (ii) Full facility should be provided for such electors to take their wheel-chairs inside the polling station. In the polling stations where permanent ramps have not been provided, temporary ramps should be provided for the purpose.
- (iii) The polling personnel should be specifically briefed about the provisions of Rule 49N of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 and Jammu and Kashmir Conduct of Election Rules, 1965 which provide for permitting a companion to accompany a blind/infirm elector to assist him/her to cast the vote, if he/she so wishes.
- (iv) At the training classes for the polling personnel, they should be sensitized about the special needs of the differently-abled electors, for courteous behaviour towards them and for providing necessary support to them at the polling stations.
- (v) Electors with speech and hearing impairment should also be given care as in the case of other differently-abled person.