

**STATE ELECTION COMMISSION  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
ITANAGAR**

No. AP/SEC/PR/ELECT-562/2020

Dated, Itanagar, the 20th March'2020

**ORDER**

Whereas, the State Election Commission in consultation with the State Government had finalized the Schedule for holding elections to the Panchayati Raj Institutions of the State and Urban Local Bodies of Itanagar and Pasighat during April/May 2020;

And whereas, the State Govt. vide letter No. PR-779/2015 dated 16.03.2020 has requested that the schedule for holding simultaneous general elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions and Municipal Bodies in Arunachal Pradesh be announced only after proper assessment of the prevailing situation of Corona Virus in the state of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and the country in general;

And whereas, the Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh vide Govt. Notification No. GA-40/2015(Pt)/130 dated 16.03.2020 has issued directions that all Conference Halls / Multiplexes / Mini Cinema hall / Night club operation / Weekly Bazaar to be suspended to prevent the possibility of outbreak and spread of COVID-19 among the habitants / citizens of the State. Directions have also been issued to avoid any gathering on social / cultural / political / religious / academic / sports / seminar / conference and family mass gathering (except Marriages) till 5<sup>th</sup> April'2020;

And whereas, in an all party meeting held on 18.3.2020, several political parties requested the Commission to consider postponement of the local body elections, as recommended by the health department, in view of the outbreak of the COVID-19 in many parts of the country till the situation improves;

And whereas, conduct of elections would entail a large number of public gatherings at various locations in the state in the form of public meetings, campaigns and rallies throughout the election period;


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And whereas, the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 as pandemic and the Govt. of India has also declared the outbreak as a notified disaster and issued advisories to avoid large congregations;

And whereas, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its landmark judgment in Kishan Singh Tomar Vs. the Municipal Corporation of the City of Ahmedabad in Appeal (Civil) No. 5756 of 2005 dated 19.10.2006 that the elections can be postponed for genuine supervening difficulties and exceptional circumstances, such as natural calamities like floods, earthquake or manmade calamities like rioting or break down of law and order till the normalcy is restored;

And whereas, the State Election Commission is of the firm view that continuing with the scheduled election process would be detrimental and harmful for the public health at large due to the possible spread of COVID-19;

Now, therefore, the State Election Commissioner, in exercise of his plenary powers under Article-243K and Article-243ZA of the Constitution of India and after careful consideration of the above facts and circumstances, has decided to put on hold the process of elections temporarily till normalcy is restored in respect of the Corona virus epidemic facilitating public gatherings for conduct of elections. The Commission will make a further assessment in consultation with stakeholders specially the health department for taking a considered decision on resumption of the election process.

  
( Hage Kojeen ) IAS (Retd.)  
State Election Commissioner,  
Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar

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