



## ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

**RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA, MLA**  
INCHARGE, COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

24, Akbar Road,  
New Delhi-110 011

16.9.2015

1. Dr. Nasim Zaidi,  
Chief Election Commissioner
2. Shri A.K. Joti,  
Election Commissioner
3. Shri Om Prakash Rawat  
Election Commissioner  
Election Commission of India  
Nirvachan Sadan,  
New Delhi.

**Subject:-** Putting an embargo on 'Mann Ki Baat' programme by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2015 being in violation of para-VII (iv) as also other parameters of Model Code of Conduct and instructions of Election Commission of India issued from time to time.

Respected Sir,

1. Hon'ble Election Commission of India has announced general elections to Bihar Assembly in a 5-phased election starting from 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2015 and ending on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2015. Model Code of Conduct has come into place from the date of announcement of the election schedule by Hon'ble Election Commission on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.
2. Pursuant to the announcement of polls by the Hon'ble Election Commission on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2015; Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, on 13<sup>th</sup> September has announced holding of his radio programme 'Mann ki Baat' on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2015. This programme is relayed through All India Radio, Doordarshan and most other public and private FM radio stations and TV channels. This programme is essentially political with Prime Minister giving out his thought on various political and governance issues.
3. Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) is fighting the Bihar elections in an alliance with other parties. BJP alone is contesting 160 seats. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi is the key campaigner of BJP and is himself holding nearly a dozen rallies. In light thereof, permitting the Prime Minister to organize the programme 'Mann ki Baat' would be giving a completely unfair advantage to BJP and will upset the level playing field essential to uphold the neutrality and majesty of the electoral process. Even otherwise, BJP and its Union Government have been misusing Government machinery, instances of which have already been brought out to the notice of Hon'ble Election Commission.



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4. Model Code of Conduct prohibits any such intervention by the ruling Union Government. Para VII (iv) of the Model Code of Conduct is reproduced herein below for your kind reference:-

“VII (iv) Issue of advertisements at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media and the misuse of official mass media during the election period for partisan coverage of political news and publicity regarding achievements with a view to furthering the prospects of the party in power shall be scrupulously avoided.”

Hon'ble Election Commission has been so strict that even video conferencing between officers and the elected functionaries has been stopped vide its letter dated 30.12.2004.

5. **'Mann ki Baat'** is a radio programme by the Prime Minister of India, Sh. Narendra Modi which is totally funded by the Government and the Government machinery is being used to broadcast the programme. It is also learnt that a team of 6 Government officials work round the clock solely to organize the programme broadcast. This telecast by a political party in power by use of Government machinery is not permissible during the operation of the Model Code of Conduct. This gives a direct advantage to BJP and its candidates at the expense of public exchequer. All Government advertisements regarding the achievements by the party in power have been removed in Bihar. However, this broadcast scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> Septmeber 2015 is substantially an advertisement relating to the propagation and campaign by a political party in power directly as well as indirectly. Such electoral campaign by the party in power at the centre i.e. BJP would vitiate conduct of fair elections and distort level playing field. It is also submitted that such programme cannot be broadcasted on any radio channel, including FM radio stations nor can there be any SMS or anything on social media or in any other form relating to the programme in question. Broadcast of such a programme would also infringe the various instructions issued by the Hon'ble Commission including pre-certification.



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In light thereof, permitting the Prime Minister of India to use the official mass media with nudge to the private mass media to relay the programme on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2015 will be in complete negation of Model Code of Conduct.

We, the undersigned request the Hon'ble ECI to:-

- (i) Forthwith cancel the 'Mann Ki Baat' programme of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2015; and
- (ii) Issue any further orders or instructions to not hold similar events during the operation of Model Code of Conduct.

Yours sincerely,


  
(KC TYAGI,MP)

  
(RAVAN VERMA,MP)

  
(MANOJ JHA)

  
(R.S.SURJEWALA)

  
(ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI,MP)

  
(K C MITTAL)  
Chairman, Legal Cell, AICC