

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE

1. It has been communicated to us that the present committee has been constituted to hold the election to the posts of President and other office bearers of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

2. The Executive Committee of the SCBA by a unanimous resolution has mandated that the election to be held in January 2021. It has recommended that the election be held on a virtual platform.

3. Since the election is required to be held in January of 2021 when the Supreme Court premises is expected to remain closed due to the pandemic, we in the first meeting have consider the recommendation that the election be held virtually.

4. At the outset, it may be noted that there are four possibilities that we have considered for holding the election in January, 2021.

(i) A physical election

(ii) An election in both modes, namely physical and virtual will be made available to the voters as per their preference.

(iii) The entire election be held virtually using a platform like NSDL.

(iv) The entire election be held virtually on NSDL but with a limited number of computers being made available in the Supreme Court premises for the convenience of those who may not have access of computer/phone.

6. Since election had been mandated for January 2021 and the Supreme Court premises are not open to lawyers in general and since the total number of effective voters is usually in the range of 2000, it is felt that it would not be possible to hold a physical election in the month of January 2021. Even the process of counting physical votes require a large number of volunteers and agents of candidates and such arrangement also cannot be made safely during the pandemic.

7. As far as the second option is concerned the same difficulty applies because the total number of persons who want to cast their vote physically cannot be estimated in advance and, therefore, full arrangement would have to be made both for casting vote and for counting as would be required in the case of first option.

8. As far as the third option is concerned, the Committee has inter-acted with NSDL and has found that it offers a fool-proof method of holding the election virtually in a completely safe manner.

9. As far as the fourth option is concerned, providing a limited number of computer terminal does not seem to be necessary because the voters would have access to computer terminal across the city or even outside. Providing computer terminal in the Supreme Court compound apart from requiring the presence of a large number of voters and support staff would also require for the proper sanitization of the computer equipment after each voter has cast his or her vote. As is well recognized, the virus can spread by touching surfaces that have been used by infected persons recently. Such recourse would therefore defeat the purpose of having a safe elections, by avoiding any form of physical contact.

10. In the above circumstances a decision has been taken that the third option is the most suitable option for the purpose of holding the election if it is to be held in the month of January 2021.

11. The draft list of voters is not prepared yet. The schedule for holding the election will be decided as soon as draft voters list is ready.

Sd/-
Jaideep Gupta, (Sr.)
Chairman, Election Committee

Sd/-
Harin P. Raval, (Sr.)
Member, Election Committee

Sd/-
Nakul Dewan, (Sr.)
Member, Election Committee