

PREFACE

The second general elections in India did not turn out to be so routine in nature as might have normally been expected. The numerous organisational and administrative difficulties in the way of holding elections on universal adult franchise in a country like India had been more or less satisfactorily resolved during the first general elections and it should normally have been enough for the success of the second general elections if the defects and shortcomings noticed during the first had been removed.

Serious problems were created on the eve of the elections, however, by the large-scale changes brought about in the political map of the country by the States Reorganisation Act, 1956. The solution of these at very short notice involved radical readjustments in the administrative machinery and an extensive revision of the constituencies in many of the States. Fortunately, it was found feasible to finish all the preliminaries just in time for the poll for the general elections to be held in February and March, 1957, which is the ideal season for the purpose except for a few snow-bound areas high up in the hills.

As in the Report on the First General Elections, I have taken this opportunity to review the working of the election law and procedure and to make comments and suggestions with a view to improve the same further.

I wish this Report could have been brought out at least six months earlier. The machinery in the States for collecting the basic data has worked more promptly on this occasion as compared to the last but it will have to be tightened up further in the future if such Reports are to be made available before public interest has flagged due to lapse of time.

I acknowledge with gratitude the help that I received in preparing this report from the Deputy Election Commissioners, Shri P. S. Subramanian, Dr. B. K. Bhattacharyya and Shri P. K. Shunglu and the members of the Commission's staff who worked hard in collating the vast material and in getting the Report ready for the Press. Amongst the latter, special mention is deserved by Shri A. N. Sen, now Under Secretary of the Commission.

New Delhi,

the 15th August, 1958.

SUKUMAR SEN

Chief Election Commissioner.
(on leave)

