

CHAPTER XXVIII

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The conduct of general elections on adult franchise in a large country like India with its teeming millions cannot but be an expensive undertaking. Wherever possible, elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assembly are, therefore, held simultaneously in the interests of economy.

The Central and the State Governments share on a half and half basis all expenditure on the following items :—

Apportionment of election expenditure between the Centre and the States.

- (1) expenditure in connection with the preparation and printing of electoral rolls;
- (2) expenditure on the conduct of elections to the House of the People and the State Legislative Assembly whenever they are held simultaneously;
- (3) expenditure incurred on the preservation and storage of polling materials like ballot boxes, ballot papers, etc.;
- (4) travelling and daily allowances of Government employees placed on election duties; and
- (5) expenditure on election staff employed in the office of the Chief Electoral Officer and District Officers.

If no simultaneous elections are held, the Central Government bears the entire expenditure incurred in respect of elections to the Houses of Parliament while the State Government bears the entire expenditure incurred in respect of elections to the Houses of the State Legislature.

The Union territories of Delhi, Tripura, Manipur and Himachal Pradesh are directly administered by the Central Government. All election expenditure in respect of these areas is, therefore, met entirely by the Union Government.

The expenditure incurred on every election tribunal is initially debited to the relevant Central Head of Account and the share thereof chargeable to the State is recovered at the end of each financial year. The expenditure on an election tribunal constituted solely for the trial of election petitions arising from elections to Parliament is entirely borne by the Central Government, while that on a tribunal constituted solely for the trial of election petitions arising from elections to a State Legislature is entirely borne by the State Government concerned. Sometimes the same tribunal is appointed for the trial of election petitions relating to elections both to the State Legislature and to Parliament. In such a case, the expenditure incurred on the

Expenditure incurred for election tribunals.

tribunal is ratably shared by the Central and the State Government concerned, the share of each being determined in proportion to the number of election petitions arising from elections respectively to the Parliament or to the State Legislature.

Expenditure incurred for Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections. The expenditure incurred in connection with the Presidential and Vice-Presidential elections is borne entirely by the Central Government.

Expenditure for police arrangements. The Government of India have not agreed to share the extra expenditure incurred by a State Government in the mobilisation and employment of the police or the Home Guards in connection with election duties on the ground that the maintenance of law and order is primarily the concern of the State Government.

Travelling and daily allowances of the polling staff. During the first general elections held in 1951-52, considerable difficulties and delay were experienced in some States in respect of the payment of travelling and daily allowance to the polling staff on duty. In a few instances a long period elapsed before these charges were paid. During the last general elections, however, no serious difficulty was experienced in this respect by the polling staff on duty. Suitable advances had been allowed to them for meeting the major portion of their travelling expenses. In Assam and Tripura, daily allowances were sanctioned to the polling staff at rates higher than normal in view of the special difficulties in regard to transport in many of the areas.

Accommodation for storage of election materials. Considerable difficulty has been experienced at many places in respect of accommodation for the storage and preservation of election materials and records. In most places they are kept or stored in private buildings hired for the purpose and one or more whole-time chowkidars have to be employed at each such place for watching the premises. The Commission is satisfied that it will be cheaper in the long run to have suitable buildings constructed for the purpose on an austere scale. The capital cost of such buildings will be less than the capitalised value of the present recurrent expenditure on this account by way of house rent and incidental charges.

Expenditure for the Election Commission. The expenditure on the Commission's staff is met out of the Consolidated Fund of India.

Total expenditure on general election. The total expenditure incurred during the first general elections amounted to Rs. 10,45,47,099. The expenditure during the general elections 1956-57 amounts to Rs. 5,90,21,786. This figures excludes the routine recurring expenditure on the annual revision of electoral rolls from 1953 onwards. The detailed State-wise figures are given below :—

Name of the State or Union Territory	Total expenditure
	Rs.
1. Andhra Pradesh	72,02,189
2. Assam	17,05,410
3. Bihar	62,69,861
4. Bombay	52,22,384
5. Kerala	13,47,000
6. Madhya Pradesh	34,62,111
7. Madras	58,86,472
8. Mysore	34,59,625
9. Orissa	34,89,293
10. Punjab	26,15,512
11. Rajasthan	30,91,464
12. Uttar Pradesh	86,37,035
13. West Bengal	52,74,021
14. Delhi	1,75,024
15. Himachal Pradesh	3,06,732
16. Manipur	1,17,850
17. Tripura	2,59,803
GRAND TOTAL ..	5,90,21,786

The overall expenditure on each voter in respect of each general election (Parliamentary and Assembly) comes to 2.4 annas as compared to 4.8 annas during the first general elections in 1951-52. It is gratifying to note that the general elections continue to be cheaply conducted. This is as it should be in a poor country like India.

An approximate amount of Rs. 21,08,660 has been realised on account of

- (a) forfeiture of deposits of candidates,
- (b) receipts from sale of electoral rolls,
- (c) inspection fees,
- (d) fees for applications for inclusion of names of electors in the electoral rolls after their final publication,
- (e) copying fees etc.

The Collectors, Returning Officers, and other local officers on election duty like Tahsildars, Deputy Tahsildars etc., were provided with suitable permanent advances to enable them to meet all contingent expenditure.

Permanent advances to election officers.

No instance has come to the notice of the Commission where election work was held up for want of funds. All State Governments had made adequate provision in their budgets for meeting election expenditure. The existing financial arrangements have proved quite satisfactory and may be continued in the future.

Smooth working of the financial arrangements.