

No campaigning by SMS 48 hours before polls

The Election Commission Friday banned the distribution of bulk mobile text messages soliciting votes for candidates 48 hours before polling in the forthcoming assembly elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

'There will be no bulk SMS campaign 48 hours before the polling,' Chief Election Commission N. Gopalaswami told reporters. The ban was announced after the Election Commission's meeting with poll observers Friday.

The poll panel already has had two rounds of meeting with mobile service providers to track down senders of any banned SMS. The mobile service providers have reportedly said that they will be able to track the senders within 30 minutes of receiving information from the Election Commission.

This is the first time the panel has turned its attention towards mobile text messages in order to plug a loophole in its ban on any political campaigning 48 hours before opening of polls.

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