

Introduction

With the possibility for snap elections and by-elections during the tenures of the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) must be ready to mobilize to conduct elections nation-wide or in individual constituencies at any time. While the preparations are easier to anticipate when elections are held on the regular schedule, there are many aspects of the process that cannot be completed until elections are officially scheduled. Some aspects of the election preparation process, such as updating electoral rolls, procurement of ballot boxes, and voter education take place ahead of the announcement of elections. However, Pakistan's main electoral timeline runs from the announcement of elections through the end of the results appeals process.

Varied Electoral Timelines

Depending on the timing of the election announcement, there are two possible timelines for elections. If the National and Provincial Assemblies complete their terms and elections are held on a normal schedule, the Election Commission has 60 days from when the National and Provincial Assemblies are dissolved to announce the official results of the Elections. In the case of snap elections, the Election Commission has 90 days to conduct elections and certify the results.

While the timelines vary, several aspects of the pre-election timeline are static:

- The complete nomination process will be completed and the final list of candidates released 27 days after the Election Commission publishes the official election schedule in the National Gazette.
- The polling scheme must be published at least 15 days before Election Day.
- Polling staff must be appointed at least 15 days before polling.

Tables 1 and 2 on the following pages illustrate the timeline for the **2013 General Elections**, focusing on pre-election day and post-election day procedures.

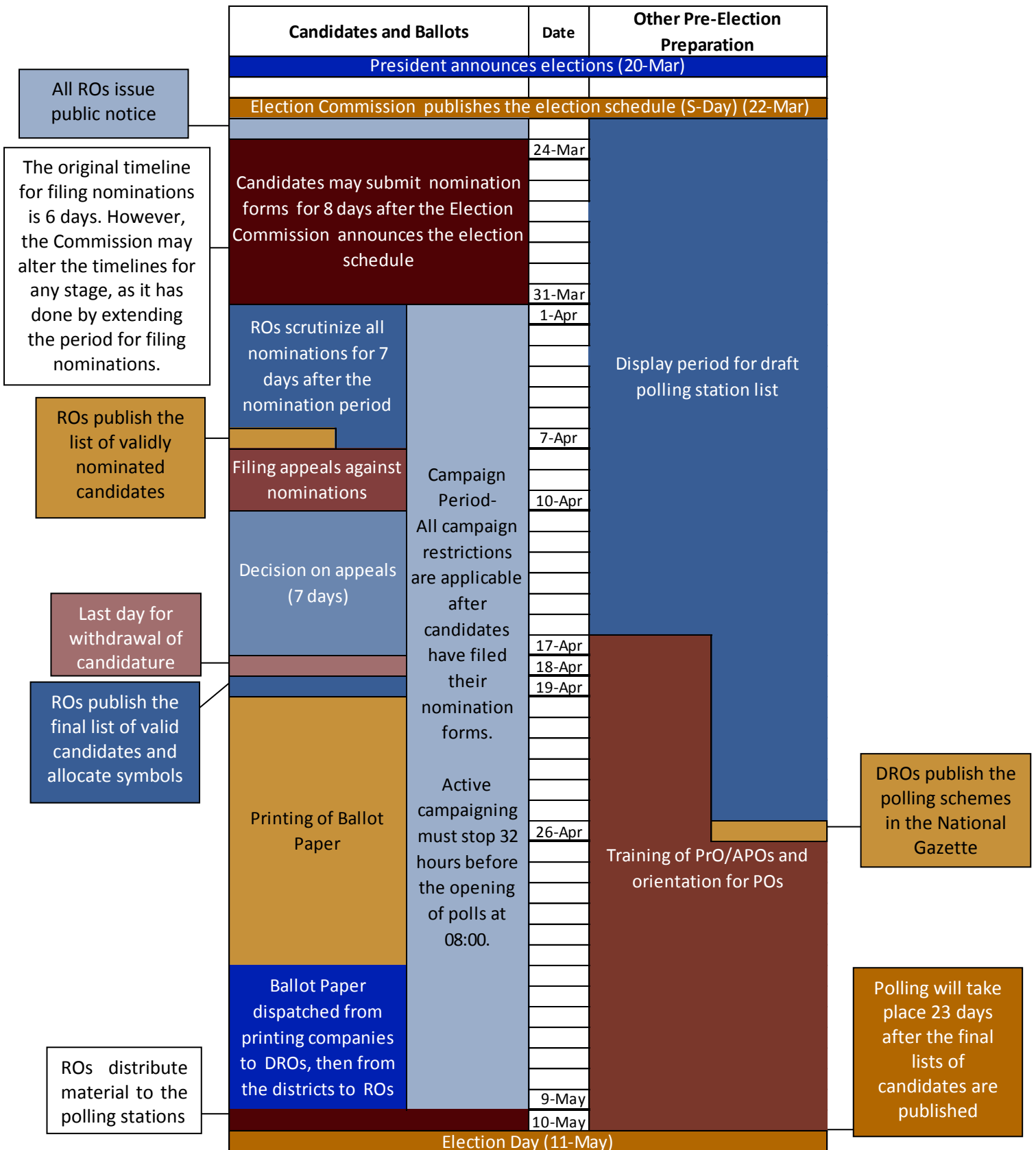
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Pre-Election Day procedures

Table 1 illustrates the timelines for two separate pre-election tracks. One track follows the candidate and ballot production process, starting with nomination and ending with the distribution of ballots to the polling stations. The second track illustrates other important aspects of election preparation. The milestones marked in the “Days” column will remain the same, regardless of whether elections are called early or held on time.

Table 1: -General Elections 2013- Pre-Election Day timeline



Post-Election Day procedures

Table 2 below shows the post-election process, including the count and certification of results, complaints adjudication and the by-election process necessitated by candidates' ability to contest more than one seat. The days in bold note the various deadlines.

Table 2: General Elections 2013- Post-Election Day

		Election Day (E-Day) (11-May)	
The Election Commission announces the official results no later than 14 days after Election Day	May	21-May	Vote count/consolidation
		25-May	Candidates submit election expenses
Reserved seats for women and minorities are allocated about 7 days after the official announcement of election results	June	31	Allocation of reserved seats
		5	Contesting candidates have 45 days after results are certified to file petitions with the election tribunals
		10	
		15	
		20	
		24-Jun	
		30	
		5	
		9-July	
		July	
20			
25			
30			
4			
9			
August	14	Tribunals have 120 days to rule on petitions	
	19		
	23-Aug		
	29		
	3		
	8		
September	13	Tribunals have 120 days to rule on petitions	
	18		
	23		
	28		
	3		
	8		
October	13	Tribunals have 120 days to rule on petitions	
	18		
	23		
	28		
	2		
	6-Nov		

Returning candidates have 10 days to file their statement of election expenses with the RO

ROs compile the unofficial results after receiving results from PrOs at each polling station and send it to the ECP for announcement.

Then, ROs again consolidate the results as soon as possible in the presence of candidates or party agents. After receiving and counting, the postal ballots ROs then send the results to the ECP, either directly or through the DRO.

The ECP then consolidates the nationwide results.