

PRESS RELEASE

Cooling-Off Day and Polling Day

In previous General Elections, campaigning and election advertising was disallowed on Polling Day.

In this General Election, 7 May 2011 is Polling Day. The day before Polling Day, i.e., 6 May 2011, is designated as Cooling-off Day.

Cooling-off Day is a day when campaigning is disallowed and election advertising must not be published or displayed. This is to let voters reflect rationally on various issues raised at an election before going to the polls.

The following campaign and election advertising activities are prohibited on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day by the Parliamentary Elections Act:

- (a) Publication and display of election advertising (including on the Internet and by SMSes/MMses) not already lawfully displayed or published before the start of Cooling-off Day;
- (b) Canvassing and visiting homes and workplaces of voters in connection with elections;
- (c) Wearing, carrying or displaying any political insignia or propaganda (such as badge, symbol, rosette, favour, set of colours, flag, advertisement, handbill, placard, poster or replica of voting paper); and
- (d) Holding of election meetings.

The above prohibition does not extend to the following:

- (a) Party political broadcasts on television;
- (b) News relating to elections published in newspapers or broadcast on radio or television;
- (c) Approved posters/banners lawfully displayed before the start of Cooling-off Day;
- (d) Other election advertising (including Internet election advertising) lawfully displayed or published before the start of Cooling-off Day;
- (e) Distribution or promotion of sale of any book if the book was scheduled for publication independent of the elections and the book is not sold at less than its commercial value;
- (f) The transmission by any individual of his personal political views to another individual, on a non-commercial basis, using the telephone, Internet or other electronic means; and
- (g) Wearing of party badges or symbols by candidates.

Candidates and supporters are reminded to refrain from visiting their constituents or attending public events within their constituencies on Cooling-off Day

and Polling Day. Attending religious ceremonies or worship services, or attending functions in the course of work or employment would still be permissible but this is subject to the general rule prohibiting campaigning and election advertising on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day.

The Parliamentary Elections Act also prohibits the publishing of election survey results on Cooling-off Day and Polling Day, and publishing of exit polls on Polling Day before the close of all polling stations.

Please refer to the Parliamentary Elections Act (in particular sections 77, 78B, 78C, 78D, 80 and 80A) on the prohibitions relating to campaigning and election advertising during Cooling-off Day and Polling Day.

Contraventions of the prohibitions are offences punishable by fines and/or imprisonment.

ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
5 May 2011