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Govt. increases  
poll spend  
ceiling by 10%

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The Law Ministry has increased the ceiling on poll expenditure for Assembly and Lok Sabha elections by 10%. The move follows a recommendation by the Election Commission in view of curbs imposed during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The notification on Monday will help candidates contesting the Bihar Assembly polls and bypolls to 59 Assembly seats across 11 States and one LS seat.

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Government hikes poll  
spend ceiling by 10%

The ceiling on poll expenditure varies across States, with candidates in Assembly elections in bigger States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu now allowed to spend up to ₹30.8 lakhs as against ₹28 lakhs earlier.

For a candidate contesting a Lok Sabha poll in these States, the revised ceiling on poll expenditure is now ₹77 lakhs instead of the earlier amount of ₹70 lakhs.

Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and a few Union Territories, based on the size of their constituencies and population, have a lower ceiling on poll expenditure. Here while the enhanced ceiling for a Lok Sabha candidate is now ₹54 lakhs, those contesting an Assem-

ly seat can spend up to ₹22 lakhs.

The last time the expenditure ceiling was enhanced was in 2014 just ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

Over a month ago, the EC had recommended a 10% increase in expenditure for all elections to be held during the COVID-19 pandemic, keeping in mind the problems that candidates may face while campaigning under the various COVID protocol laid down by the poll panel.

The notification that amended the Conduct of Elections Rules, however, does not mention that the limit has been increased in the wake of the pandemic or if it is only for the COVID-19 period.

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