

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Other state mattersಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: The Hindu ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE 28/1/2021

SEC censures two IAS officers, A.P. govt. objects

He says they did not update rolls and failed in discharging their duties

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The Andhra Pradesh government has "objected" to the censure notices issued by State Election Commissioner N. Ramesh Kumar to two senior IAS officials over preparations for the local body elections.

Mr. Kumar said Principal Secretary (Panchayat Raj) Gopal Krishna Dwivedi and Commissioner M. Girija Shankar had failed in discharging their duties related to the gram panchayat elections. Addressing mediapersons here on Wednesday, Mr. Kumar said he had done no great harm by censuring them and that he may rethink the decision on being satisfied with their functioning hereafter.

Mr. Kumar said he had

reached the conclusion that the two senior IAS officers were responsible for the adoption of old (2019) electoral rolls which jeopardised the right of nearly 3.6 lakh youth who attained 18 years as on January 1, 2021, to vote, and there was nothing personal about it.

"Having come from the same all-India services to which the two officers belong, why will I act in a vindictive manner against them," he asked.

In a letter to Chief Secretary Aditya Nath Das, Mr. Kumar stated that Mr. Dwivedi and Mr. Shankar "displayed total lack of sensitivity to the tenets of empowerment of grassroots democracy and institutions as laid down by the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution," citing their al-



Poll position: State Election Commissioner N. Ramesh Kumar addressing the media in Vijayawada on Wednesday. •K.V.S. GIRI

leged failure in updating the electoral rolls, which forced the commission to adopt the voter lists that dated back to 2019. He mentioned that the "censure will form part of their service records".

Mr. Das has reportedly written to the SEC raising an objection to the censure of Mr. Dwivedi and Mr. Shankar on the ground that certain procedures were not fol-

lowed. A government source told PTI: "The State government would not be considering that censure. It is one-sided. The SEC did not seek explanation from the officials before issuing the censure. The SEC is not the competent authority."

When contacted, Mr. Kumar said he was yet to go through the communication.

(With PTI inputs)