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EXTRAORDINARY

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(Published by Authority)

PART IV (A) – PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

Provincial Councils Notifications

RULES GOVERNING THE SELECTION OF BRANCH COMMITTEES, FORMULATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE REGISTERED BY-LAWS OF LIMITED PRIMARY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES OPERATING WITH BRANCH COMMITTEES WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION OF THE NORTHERN PROVINCE.

BY virtue of the powers vested in me under the provisions of the by-laws governing Multi-Purpose Cooperative Societies(Ltd), Palm Resource Development Cooperative Societies(Ltd), and other primary level limited Cooperative Societies operating within the administrative jurisdiction of the Northern Province, I, Nadarajah Thirulinganathan, Commissioner of Co-operative Development and Registrar of Co-operative Societies for the Northern Province, do hereby revoke the rules pertaining to the selection of branch committees as published in the *Extraordinary Gazette* of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka No. 297/7 dated 28th December 1977 and No. 1028/06 dated 19th May 1998, insofar as they apply to the Northern Province, with effect from 15.08.2025 In substitution thereof, the Rules No. 01 to 24, as set out below, shall come into operation and be deemed to have full force and effect within the said Province with effect from 15.08.2025.

NADARAJAH THIRULINGANATHAN,
Commissioner of Co-operative Development and,
Registrar of Co-operative Societies,
Northern Province.

1. Short Title:

These Rules shall be cited as the Rules for the Selection of Branch Committee Members of Multi-Purpose Cooperative Societies (Ltd), Palm Resource Development Cooperative Societies (Ltd), and Primary Limited Cooperative Societies with Branch Committees Operating within the Northern Province



2. Societies with Branch Committees shall finalize the membership lists and conduct elections for Branch Committee members in strict compliance with the general instructions issued by the Commissioner from time to time governing the selection of Branch Committee members.
3. The officer designated by the Commissioner for the purpose of selecting Branch Committee members shall possess the authority to convene branch general Body meeting.
4. The authorized officer, as referred to in Section 3, shall issue notices of Branch General Body meetings to all members entitled to attend and vote, in accordance with Section 11B. of the Co-operative Societies Act, No. 5 of 1972, as amended by the Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Acts, No. 11 of 1992 and (Amendment) act No. 32 of 1983.
5. The quorum for a meeting of the Branch General Body meeting shall be one-fourth ($\frac{1}{4}$) of the total members entitled to attend and vote, or twenty-five (25) members, whichever number is lesser.
6. A list of members entitled to attend and vote at the Branch General Body meeting shall be prominently displayed at the respective branch and at the Head Office of the Society for inspection and for the purpose of lodging objections. This list shall also serve as the official register of members entitled to vote, as prescribed by the registered by-laws of the respective cooperative societies.
7. The venue and time schedule for convening the Branch General Body meetings shall be determined by the Commissioner, who shall notify each member individually by letter, in accordance with the membership list referred to in Section 6.
8. The authorized officer under Section 3 shall convene the Branch General Body meeting as the Chairperson at the place and time schedule determined by the Commissioner and shall explain the procedures relating to the selection of the branch committee at that meeting and shall conduct the elections in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 9.
9. The Chairperson shall invite the General Board to select members to the Branch Committee from among those present at the General Board of the relevant branch. Such selections shall be conducted in accordance with the registered by-laws of the Society, including the selection of at least two members aged between eighteen (18) and thirty-five (35) years in each applicable category. Furthermore, selections for women members to the Branch Committee shall be held by direct selection from the women members present at the Branch General Body meeting, notwithstanding any contrary provisions in the registered by-laws of the Society. Selections for other categories shall be conducted similarly. In the event that members of any relevant category are not duly selected, the selection for that category shall be remains vacant.
10. If the Nominations received from the Branch General Body are received in excess of the number to be selected in each category as required by the registered by-laws of the Society, the Chairperson shall conduct the election by secret voting. Upon the Chairperson's decision to proceed with a secret voting, no further nominations from the General Board shall be accepted.
11. Procedure for Conducting Elections by Secret voting
 - i. The names of the duly nominated candidates shall be displayed in the order in which their nominations were received.
 - ii. Each candidate shall be assigned a unique number for the purposes of the voting, and ballot papers shall be issued accordingly for the conduct of the election.

- iii. Separate ballot boxes shall be provided for each category of election, as applicable, and the election shall be conducted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the registered bylaws of the Society.
12. If two or more members have equal votes during the secret voting, the Chairperson shall draw lots to select one or more candidates as required. In the event of an equal number of votes, if such persons are counted together with the elected candidates, if the required number of candidates can be obtained, shall not be necessary for such drawing lots there
13. Members present at the Branch General Body Meeting may submit written objections pertaining to the selection of Branch Committee members on any of the following grounds:
- (i) That a person selected as a member of the Branch Committee is not eligible for selection in terms of the provisions of the registered bylaws of the Society;
 - (ii) That the name of the person selected, or the name of the proposer or seconder, does not appear in the official list of members entitled to vote as referred to in Section 6;
 - (iii) That a person whose name appears in the said list of members was not present at the meeting, and another individual has been selected to the Branch Committee in impersonation of that name.
14. The Chairperson shall have the authority to consider and determine the objections submitted under sub-sections (ii) and (iii) among (i), (ii), and (iii) of Section 13. However, in respect of any objection made under sub-section (i), the Chairperson shall notify the General Board that such objection shall be referred to the Commissioner for a final decision. Notwithstanding such referral, the Chairperson shall proceed with the conduct of the selection process.
15. Objections as referred to in Section 13 may be submitted to the Chairperson prior to the commencement of the secret voting in the event of a contested selection. In the case of an uncontested selection, such objections shall be submitted before the names of the members of the Branch Committee are declared to the General Board by the Chairperson.
16. In case where a contest arises during the selection of the branch Committee, the election of the members of the Branch Committee shall be conducted by secret voting and the attendance of the members eligible to attend the meeting shall be taken into consideration until the commencement of the voting proceedings, and the attendance of the members eligible to attend the meeting after the commencement of the voting shall not be allowed to influence the secret voting proceedings in any way.
17. The Chairperson shall commence the counting of the votes in the ballot box after the voting for election of the Branch Committee.
- (i) The number of members present at the poll shall be equal to the number of ballot papers in the ballot box.
 - (ii) The Chairperson shall reject any ballot paper marked for more candidates than the number to be selected for each category as per the provisions of the registered bylaws of the Society
 - (iii) Where the vote cast on the ballot paper is not clearly marked for which candidate the member has cast his vote, the Chairperson shall reject such vote.
 - (iv) Where a member has marked more than one mark in favour of a candidate on the ballot paper, all such marks shall be counted as one vote.
 - (v) The Chairperson shall confirm and accept the ballot papers that have not been rejected and count the votes based on the printed tally sheets.

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18. Upon the completion of the counting of votes, the Chairperson shall declare, at the General Body meeting of the branch, the names of the members duly elected to the Branch Committee. The names so declared shall also be notified in writing to the Secretary of the Society and to the Commissioner.
19. The Secretary of the Society shall, immediately following the conclusion of the election, because the names of the selected members of the Branch Committee to be prominently displayed for public notice at the head office of the Society, at the relevant branch, and at the location where the election was conducted.
20. The decision of the Commissioner shall be final and conclusive with regard to any matter arising in connection with the manner in which the election was conducted.
21. All expenses incurred in connection with the selection of a Branch Committee of a Society shall be borne solely by the Society.

22. Definitions

- (i) The term “**Commissioner**”, as referred to in Sections 3, 7, 8, and 18, shall be deemed to refer to the **Commissioner of Cooperative Development, and Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Northern Province, and the Assistant Commissioner of Cooperative Development.**
 - (ii) The term “**Commissioner**”, as referred to in Sections 2, 14, 20, and 23, shall be deemed to refer to the **Commissioner of Cooperative Development and Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Northern Province.**
 - (iii) The term “**candidate**” shall mean a member duly nominated during the process of competitive selection.
 - (iv) The term “**bylaw**” shall mean the registered by-laws of a Cooperative Society, together with any amendments thereto, duly approved by the Commissioner.
23. In the event of any dispute or doubt arising in relation to the interpretation of these Rules, the decision of the **Commissioner** shall be final and conclusive.
 24. In the event of any inconsistency between Tamil, Sinhala, and English text of these Rules, the Tamil text shall prevail.

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