

Best Practices
National Awards 2017
Publications





Its time to **decorate**
the state with your **v●ote!**

Cover Picture (above): 'Unity in Diversity', next-gen voters herald a silent revolution, Puducherry 2016.

Cover Picture (below): Ariel view of mega logo formation undertaken by 2,800 young and future voters on the occasion of State wide launch of Special drive on Enrolment of 18 to 21 years, Meghalaya 2017

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MESSAGE

CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER OF INDIA



Voter Education is vital investment in the well being of democracy. In view of significance of voter education as an essential connect between the voter and the electoral participation, world over the innovation has been shaped up into well designed and systematic initiatives. This view of things has demonstrated tremendous scope for sharing of knowledge and experience in voter education and consequent gains in the form of enhanced electoral participation and enrichment of democracy.

Our view on the above premise is confirmed from the initiative in launch of VoICE International on the eve of last year's National Voters' Day celebrations. Four Issues of the VoICE International have been shared on VoICE.NET since then with the democracies of the world.

Encouraged by this experiment, the Commission had conveyed the need to have a similar publication collating experience from across the districts and states aimed at domestic audience. I am happy to see that it has been taken up in such a short time and it is a matter of pride for us that we are launching the Inaugural Issue of VoICE India on this National Voters Day, precisely in one year of the launch of the VoICE International.

The Inaugural issue of VoICE India carries an impressive contribution in terms of experience, good practices and knowledge from experts and also from different States of the country. Articles on special initiatives launched by the ECI in this Inaugural Issue would reach a larger audience and stakeholders across the country and abroad.

While I thank CEOs, experts and others for their contributions to the Inaugural Issue, I congratulate Sh Umesh Sinha, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner, Sh S D Sharma, former State Election Commissioner and now associated with the Election Commission of India as Senior Fellow and their entire team for their dedicated and significant contribution to make this initiative a success.

I am sure that this voter education resource would evolve and emerge as an important source of connect with the voters of our country.

O.P. Rawat

MESSAGE ELECTION COMMISSIONER OF INDIA

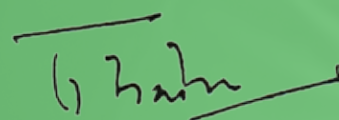


Democracies across the world attach high importance to voter education and its relevance to the electoral participation. The common resolve at the October 2016 international conference at New Delhi on 'Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical Participation' further emphasized the significance and import of voter education for larger participation in elections. Expressed in terms of an innovation through launching of VoICE.NET, an e-Platform, ECI presented VoICE International for knowledge sharing of global experience and essence of voter education on the aforesaid e Platform on the last year's National Voters' Day celebrations.

I am indeed happy to see that the tradition has been kept up and the Inaugural Issue of VoICE India is being launched on the National Voters' Day, 2018. The Issue presents a rich experience of voter education and outreach from different parts of the country. Expert articles on new initiatives of the Commission further enrich the content and would help in a larger connect with the voters in the country.

I congratulate Sh Umesh Sinha, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner and his team for this significant contribution. I thank the CEO's and all others for their contribution to the Issue.

I am confident that this contribution will be valuable for continued knowledge sharing experience for the election managers and other stakeholders across the country.



Sunil Arora

MESSAGE ELECTION COMMISSIONER OF INDIA

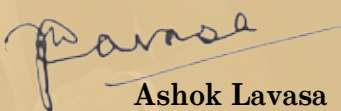


Voter Education is a vital connect between the Voter and the electoral processes. World over, the Election Management Bodies have worked on this premise and have invested in development of the Voter Education Resources for enhancement of electoral participation. The common Resolve at the October 2016 International Conference at New Delhi on 'Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical Participation' saw an innovation in the form of global Knowledge Exchange in voter education expressed in the form of the e Platform VoICE.NET. The knowledge, practice, experiences and innovation of the participating EMB's and the International Institutions have been shared through the VoICE International launched last year on VoICE.NET during the NVD celebrations.

I am happy to note that VoICE India is being launched at this year's NVD celebrations. The Inaugural Issue carries articles on rich experiences of voter education and innovation from across the country. Expert articles on new initiatives of the Commission further enrich the content and would help in developing a larger connect with the Voters and other stakeholders. The experience of learning through sharing of voter education Knowledge resources grows.

I congratulate Sh. Umesh Sinha, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner, Sh. S D Sharma, former State Election Commissioner and now associated with the Election Commission of India as Senior Fellow, Ms Padma Angmo, Director, SVEEP Division and their entire team for this valuable contribution to voter education in India. I thank the CEOs and all others for their contribution to the Inaugural Issue.

I am sure that knowledge sharing on voter education through VoICE India would go a long way in learning from each other for all the stakeholders across the country.


Ashok Lavasa



EDITORIAL

Dear Colleagues,

After the wide appreciation that we got from all stakeholders regarding the four issues of VoICE International – the quarterly global magazine on voter information, communication, education and participation, the Commission directed for a similar publication collating experience from across the districts and states for national audience.

And it is with utmost pride and satisfaction that I introduce to the readers, the inaugural issue of the biannual magazine **Voice India**, which brings forth stories of success, truly effervescent ideas, knowledge derived from practical experience and initiatives of the Indian election machinery that works in every corner of the country.


The cover story for the edition revolves around a challenging mission undertaken as per the last year's theme '*Empowering Young and Future Voters*'. Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy through setting up Electoral Literacy Clubs. The ELC concept is an extension of the very successfully implemented Interactive School Engagement (ISE) programme adopted in the year 2017. The pages of this magazine cover experiences of the pilot ELCs set up in the country and SVEEP teams' field tests which aided our resource development. The recently conducted National Elections Quiz which saw an astounding participation from around 13.5 lakh students from 38,000 schools gave us immense satisfaction with the level of interest shown by the young students and the same finds a place in this issue.

The theme for the 8th NVD is '*Accessible Elections*' and this shall be one of the focus of the Commission for the year. The interventions at Kanpur Nagar in the recent Assembly Elections have won for the DEO the National Award for innovation, and the same has been included in this issue. Interventions by CEO Goa for making elections accessible have also been taken as a good case to study and emulate.

Some of the best practices of 2017 which have been selected to be conferred with the National Awards are covered under the special section. This shall work as a reference material for the election managers in upcoming elections in Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland and later in Karnataka. Keeping with the upcoming elections in North East, the cover of this edition features the photograph of the record creating event organized by CEO Meghalaya.

The aim behind the publication is to share knowledge and experience so that good practices can be emulated and challenges and concerns can be shared. Voice India would also serve as a platform for bringing forth stories and experiences from the grass roots so that the exchange of information and learning is not just uni-dimensional. I would therefore invite articles from officials right down to the BLOs and also agencies who partner the election machinery in the field of voter education and outreach.

I hope this magazine serves its purpose. Happy Reading!


Umesh Sinha

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CONTENTS

06-09

National Voters' Day (NVD)



10-29

National Awards Winners, 2017:

- Vadodara
- Ludhiana
- Ahmedabad
- Imphal East
- North 24 Parganas
- Kanpur Nagar



30-35

National Awards 2010–2017

56-64

Reaching Out to Future Voters:

- ISE and NEQ
- #NEQIndia

36-41

Accessible Elections

42-55

Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELC) :

- Overview
- Trial at Community
- Trial at Schools
- Workshop
- Pilot ELC



105-107

National and State Icons

88-100

Initiatives by ECI:

- ETPBS
- Service Voters' film
- Community Radio
- International Conference film
- Antaragini (IIT–K)
- Social Media



66-87

Initiatives by States:

- Tamil Nadu
- Manipur
- Goa
- Punjab
- Gujarat
- Meghalaya
- Mizoram
- Bihar

India celebrates its Eighth National Voters' Day on January 25, 2018

The National Voters' Day (NVD) is celebrated all over the country on January 25 every year since 2011 to mark the Foundation day of Election Commission of India, which was established on this day in the year 1950. The main purpose of the NVD celebration is to encourage, facilitate and maximize the enrolment, especially for the new voters. Dedicated to the voters of the country, the day is also utilized to spread awareness among voters for effective participation in the electoral process.

Constitutional Mandate of the Election Commission

Article 324 of the Constitution vests the Election Commission with the powers of superintendence, direction and control of preparation of electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State and of elections to the offices of the President and Vice-President. Article 326 provides that elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies of States shall be on the basis of adult suffrage. Other provisions under Part XV of the Constitution spell out comprehensive framework of provisions relating to aforesaid elections. The law that flows from the 'Part XV Elections' of the Constitution casts the obligation on the ECI for conduct of free, fair and inclusive elections based on adult suffrage. The Commission has demonstrated fulfillment of its mandate through successful conduct of successive elections in the country right from 1950 onwards. The strength of its electoral processes is seen



both with awe and respect among democracies of the world. Today the electoral processes of India are the largest in the world covering almost **one million polling stations** and about **900 million voters**.

Brief History of NVD

Established on 25th January, 1950, the

Election Commission of India celebrated 60 years of its illustrious journey on January 25, 2010. The President of India inaugurated the Diamond Jubilee celebrations on this occasion. Valedictory function of this celebration was organized on 25th Jan., 2011. Seized of the voter apathy and low enrolment among new voters (18+), the Commission decided to take up a vigorous exercise to identify all the eligible voters attaining the age of 18 years as on 1st of January every year, in each of the polling station areas of the country. It was also



decided to enroll youth on time and hand over their Elector Photo Identity Cards (EPICs) on the 25th January at a brief felicitation in each polling station area. The initiative was aimed at providing youth a sense of citizenship, empowerment and pride in electoral participation as also to inspire them for exercise of their newly acquired franchise on time.

Since then a series of events including public functions are organized on NVD every year in coordination with all the stakeholders through a very vibrant and robust expression of voter participation at the national, state, district and down to the polling station level along with all other stakeholders. The new electors are felicitated with EPIC and they are provided with a badge with its logo '**Proud to be a voter—Ready to Vote**' and also administered a pledge.

Citizens of the country especially the participants in NVD celebrations at all levels express their abiding faith in democracy and the electoral process through the following Pledge.

Voters' Pledge

"We, the citizens of India, having abiding faith in democracy, hereby pledge to uphold the democratic traditions of our country and the dignity of free, fair and peaceful elections, and to vote in every election fearlessly and without being influenced by considerations of religion, race, caste, community, language or any inducement".

National Awards

NVD celebration at the national level is marked by grant of National Award for excellence, proficiency and innovation in electoral process and outstanding performance. Best Practices in various components of Election Management such as Voter Education and Electoral Participation, Security management, Infrastructure Management, Expenditure Monitoring and Tackling Money Power, Use of Technology, Management of Electoral Rolls and Innovation etc are considered. The selection process is comprehensive and aims at eliciting the best of the talent and performance among stakeholders. Similarly awards are given at the State level NVD functions.



'NVD Greater Participation for Stronger Democracy'

3rd NVD 2013 'Inclusion'

4th NVD 2014 'Ethical Voting'

5th NVD 2015 'Easy Registration, Easy Correction'

6th NVD 2016 'Inclusive and Qualitative Participation'

7th NVD 2017 'Empowering Young and Future Voters'

Based on the theme of the NVD, a series of new initiatives are taken during the year that help in providing a continuity in voter education and a renewal of a citizens faith as a unit of democracy and its electoral process.

8th NVD, January 25, 2018

8th NVD is being celebrated with the theme 'Accessible Elections' across the country at State, District down to the Booth level. The national level function at New Delhi is being graced by the Hon'ble President of India. Activities taken up during the run up to NVD will have special focus around this theme. It has also been



NVD 2015

decided to felicitate Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) on this occasion with a view to encouraging and enhancing their participation in electoral process. The 8th NVD celebrations have the following components in addition to such other components as may be decided by the CEO's/DEO's:

(i) Basic Activities:

- NVD celebrations are organized at State, District and the Booth levels in the country in association with the Panchayats, academic institutions, Media and Youth volunteer organizations such as NSS, NCC, Scouts and Guides, NYKS, Corporates etc. State Election Commissioners are also involved with functions at the State level.
- New electors are provided with badge with its logo and the slogan 'Proud to be a Voter – Ready to vote' during the felicitation ceremony along with their EPIC.
- Roles of the different election officers at different levels have been clearly demarcated as also the stakeholder

participation in organizing the celebrations. Training of BLO's is done for effective and efficient celebrations.

(ii) Millennium Voters

Millennium Voters identified during the Summary Revision will also be felicitated during the NVD functions during the celebrations.

(iii) Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELC's)

ELCs are being launched on the 8th NVD.

- 'Young Voter's Festival' held every year ahead of NVD in Colleges and Universities are being taken as launch pad for the setting up of Electoral Literacy Clubs (New Voters) in identified institutions for the first phase of ELC roll out and all subsequent voter outreach activities in these institutions will be conducted under the aegis of the ELCs.
- Similarly, school engagement are being carried out for launch of ELC (Future Voters) in identified secondary and senior secondary schools.

(iv) National Election Quiz 2017-18

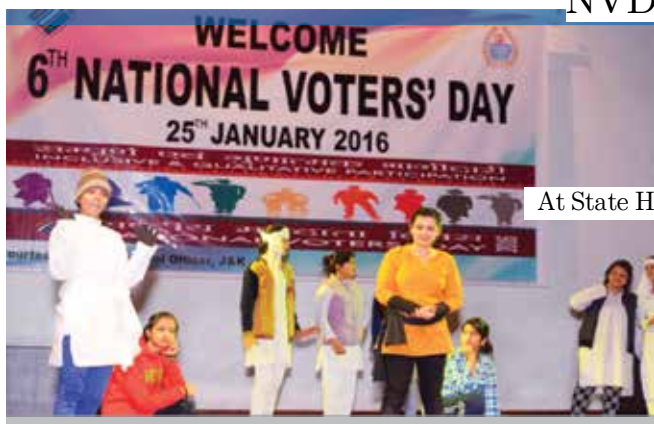
The winner of the national Election Quiz will be felicitated during NVD at New Delhi. Further the winners at district and state level will be



At Delhi



NVD 2016



At State Headquarters





NVD 2017



felicitated at the NVD functions at District and State levels respectively.

(v) **Service Voters**

Special awareness drive are being undertaken for Service personnel utilizing the Army Day that falls on January 15, just ahead of the NVD. Service personnel are being associated with the NVD celebrations as well.

(vi) **Environment Building**

Environment building is carried out through engaging various forms of media such as print, audio-visual, outdoor advertisement, troupes etc. Services of FM and Community Radio will be widely utilized. SMS's, e-mails, messages on social media etc. for propagating the NVD theme as also through schemes and programmes run by the Government for non-election going states. The NVD theme and related messages in form of posters and banners will also be prominently displayed in the offices of the CEO, DEO, ERO's and the VFCs.

(vii) **Partnerships**

NVD is celebrated in all schools and colleges and administered the NVD Pledge. Media including Door Darshan, All India Radio, Print Media, Directorate of Field Publicity, Public Sector Undertakings, Railways, Civil Society, Corporate

Houses, and Local Icons have been taken on board for maximizing the, coverage, publicity and coverage of the NVD.

(viii) **Photo Exhibition**

A photo exhibition is being organized to showcase the best photographs covering all aspects of Election Management, voter Education and Ethical Participation, Electoral Roll Management, security Management, Innovative Measures, Voting & counting, during NVD, 2018.

International Seminar on 'Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwD's) in the Electoral Processes'

ECI is organizing an international seminar on 'Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwD's) in the Electoral Processes' as a part of the run up to the NVD celebration. The invitations along with the concept note have already been sent out to about 30 countries besides the International Expert Institutions for participation and contribution of papers. The seminar will be organized on VoICE.NET Platform to maximize the knowledge and experience sharing at the international level in addition to the strengthening the practices in our country.

Epilogue

NVD initiative has been institutionalized as an annual feature for celebration of democracy and electoral participation in the country. It sets the tone for continued and vibrant participation among different stakeholders with 'Voter' as the central figure and sets the agenda for activities for the year. It also provides an opportunity to consolidate and take stock of progress of connecting the voter with the electoral processes and acts to inspire all the stakeholders especially those who have done well in the elections and related processes.

Umesh Sinha

Senior Deputy Election Commissioner



P. BHARATHI

Steps towards Effective Electioneering

One of the key roles of Election Administration is to ensure 100% enrolment of all the eligible citizens into voter's list. At the same time the administration has to ensure that those who have been enrolled in the voter's list should turn up to cast their votes on the poll day and cast their votes ethically. Now that we have been striving hard, for the purification of rolls and have succeeded to the great extent, our next step is to educate voters for ethical voting. To achieve this goal we planned out to use various recourses to educate and aware voters about ethical voting.

Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical participation through Effective use of BAGs and ISEP

BAG stands for Booth Level Awareness Group. ECI had advised composition of BAG for each and every polling station, which should include the local functionaries such as the BLO, Aanganwadi workers, Mid Day meal coordinators, Fair Price shop owners, Talati/Ward officers etc. We conscientiously followed these instructions from the ECI and created BAGs for each and every booth. To our experience, BAG proved to be a very effective tool, especially in the rural area, when it came to voter's education for both— purification of rolls as well as the Voter turnout in rural areas. The members of the BAG have significant influence among locals as they are respected and known to all. The BLOs in the rural areas are mostly teachers, and along with Talatis (Patwaris), they are able to encourage citizens to enroll and vote in a positive way. All EROs during roll

revision and ROs during electioneering kept the close coordination with BAGs.

Thus ground level issues/queries raised and resolved by ERO/ RO in their capacity. The well trained BAGs had several rounds of meeting with the rural voters and educated them regarding the corrections of their details in the electoral roll. At the same time, they stressed upon the importance of citizens' right to vote. Our efforts made through the BAG paid back very well as we were able to record **75 to 80%** voter turnout in our 5 Rural Assembly Constituency.

Extended ISEP

Interactive School Engagement Programme is another innovative initiative envisioned by the Election commission of India, in which all the DEO and ROs had to visit a Secondary or Higher Secondary School and interact with the students of age group of 14 to 17 years regarding the electoral process. The objective of this programme was to bring awareness about electioneering and their role as future voters of India.



The first round of ISEP was organized in the beginning of the year 2017 followed by the second round in July 2017. We realized the potential of this programme to reach out not only to the future voters but also to the existing voters through them. i.e. their parents, relatives, neighbors. So, we decided to extend this programme and involve all the class 1 officers of the District. We got all the Secondary and Higher Secondary schools divided into small groups called clusters, and each of these clusters were assigned



to one class 1 officers. These officers along with their office staff visited these schools, interacted with the students and talked about the importance of voting in the elections. This effort paid handsomely and we could reach out to 1,50,000 students of the Secondary and Higher Secondary schools of Vadodara district and through them we could convey message to at least 5,00,000 voters. As a result the voter turnout of our district reached **72.59%**.

Booth Management Plan (BMP)

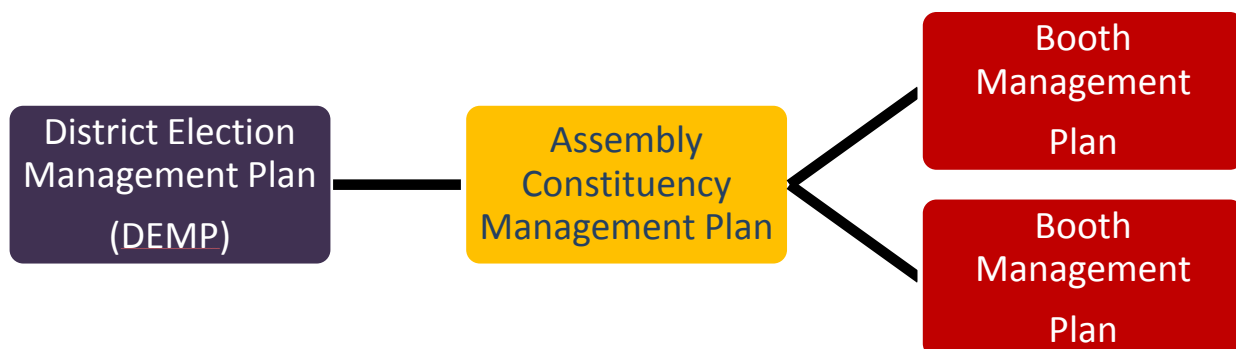
For Effective Electioneering, District level election management plan has been prepared; similarly AC level plan has been prepared. Same way we devised

Booth Management Plan as part of micro planning of election process so it may provide all necessary information of particular booth in exigency.

Booth Management Plan contained all required details like:

- District Name, Assembly Constituency Name
- Booth Number and Name, Booth Address, Latitude – Longitude
- Police Station Area of Booth, PIN code
- Route No. Name and Number of Sector Officer,
- Name and No. of the Booth Level Officer
- Details of Male, Female, Total Voters
- Details of PwD Voters including requirement of assistance
- Voter Turnout of previous two elections
- Weather Critical Booth?
- Previous history of Expenditure Sensitive or Political Sensitive (Polling Station)
- Weather booth have Assured Minimum Facility (AMF)
- Details of Communication numbers of local assistances per communication plan

It proved ready reckoner for Election Observer, Returning Officer, Sector Officer, Booth Level Officer as it provides single page information. So, we can analyze various parameters of polling station like, PwD data, Wheel Chair requirement, Critical and Expenditure Sensitive PS data. As the Voter turnout figures of last two elections the available, it helped us to plan out strategy for SVEEP to increase



જાહેરાતનું નામ : વડોદરા						
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voter turnout. It also provided booth wise communication data which helped us for prompt response.

The major challenge for us was to maintain the high voter turnout that we had achieved in the previous elections. There had been many factors that could have hindered us in achieving this as new changes came with the commencement of VVPATs which consumed seven more seconds for each vote cast.

Compared to the previous elections the voter registration had also increased by 3.5 lakhs. So it became all the more difficult to maintain the voter turnout.

With the interventions mentioned above and the other novel initiatives, we managed to achieve a voter turnout of 72.59% which is one of the highest voter turnouts in the state among metro cities.

P. Bharathi
DEO & Collector, Vadodara



PUBLICATION

VoICE International

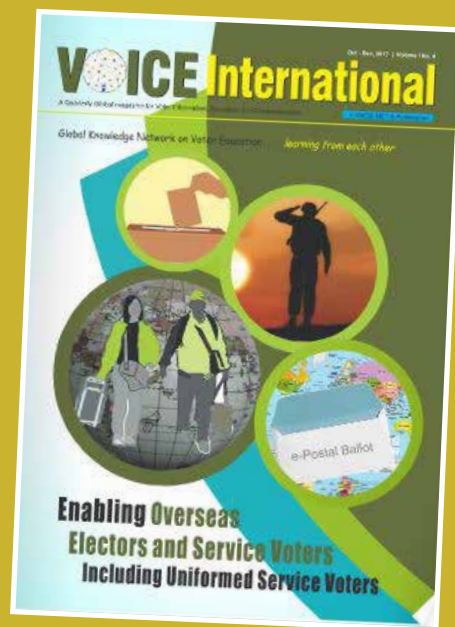
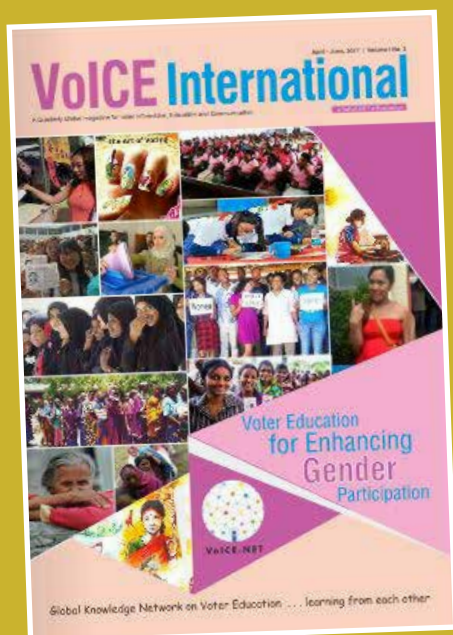
VoICE International is a quarterly global magazine for voter education and participation. It is an E-publication of VoICE.NET (Voter Information, Communication and Education Network). VoICE.NET is a global knowledge network on voter education with 28 members which includes Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and other international institutes such as International IDEA, UNDP and IFES. VoICE.NET emanated from the collective resolve of participating EMBs, international institutions and experts in the form of the Delhi Declaration, the two laudable achievements of the October 2016 International Conference on 'Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical Participation' held at New Delhi.

The entire idea behind VoICE International is to bring forward knowledge derived through practice by EMBs from all across the world in the area of voter education and facilitation through write ups ranging from reports, success stories, and research articles along with updating the world democracies

about the most recent events, publications, reforms and initiatives taken in the arena of Electoral Empowerment. Till now, four issues of the magazine have been released: Issue 1 was titled *Empowering Young and Future Voters*,

Issue 2 focused on *Voter Education for Enhancing Gender Participation*, Issue 3 discussed *Special Initiatives for Enhancing Participation of Persons with Disabilities* and Issue 4 talked about *Enabling Overseas Electors and Service Voters including Uniformed Service Voters*.

<http://voicenet.in/voiceinternational.htm>





RAVI BHAGAT

How to strategise electoral process?

The work of the District Election Officer is quite widespread over a large number of areas starting from the time when the run up to the election process is going on, and it becomes more intense when the electoral process culminates on voting day. This includes tasks such as SVEEP activities to increase voter awareness and motivate the people to cast their vote in a free and fair manner selection and training of officials for conduct management of the polls in the manner prescribed in the election handbook and liaising with different field formations, engaging Police and other Departments to maintain the law and order and affirm the peoples' belief in the integrity of the election process. Further the DEO has to be vigilant and geared up to deal with any contingency arising on a day-to-day basis. Thus various initiatives were taken up in each of the myriad arenas of the electoral process to ensure smooth elections.

Voter awareness and electoral participation campaigns

To uphold the democratic institutions, it is vital that maximum number of eligible voters cast their vote on the election day and do so in an informed manner, without fear or favour. To achieve this objective, a massive drive of voters' sensitisation and awareness was carried out throughout the district. In doing so, the means employed were chosen keeping in mind the specific profile of the area of district Ludhiana, which is the biggest District (with 14 constituencies) in the State of Punjab and also considered the Financial Capital of Punjab.

Whereas various initiatives such as voter awareness seminars (reached out to 40,000 people), candle marches, air balloons, poster making activities, banners and hoarding displayed with innovative messages, skits and nukkadnataks, bicycle and motor bike rallies, stickers on three wheelers and cycle/auto rikshaws, gas cylinders and milk packets (Amul and Verka) were used to target the general populace, specific voter groups such as women and youth, including first time voters, were motivated by measures specially designed for them such as Jaago and women rallies,

youth festivals, marathon of first time voters, mock parliament, mobile polling stations etc.

Especially, three novel and noteworthy initiatives amongst these which were peculiar to Ludhiana were: the painting of an entire long city wall called the Democracy Wall which carried election related graffiti and messages; Flash Mobs in different parts of the city to catch the attention of the youth through music and dance on songs which were specially compiled for the election purposes and their CD was also released, and a voter Rath i.e. a mobile van carrying awareness slogans and playing motivational songs was plied through the District specially the rural areas.

Furthermore, PWD (Physically Disabled Persons) voters were made a special focus area by providing them free pick-up and drop service, along with young volunteers who greeted them with rose buds and an invitation letter.

All the above initiatives bore good results and the district witnessed a record turnout of **78 %** voters in the State Elections, 2017.



Path breaking Use of Innovative technology

To conduct free and fair elections and to coordinate with field formations and other State agencies, the use of technology to help the DEO and his field office to communicate and maintain discipline in his area is paramount. That is why the undersigned thought of the need of comprehensive software to control the field processes and develop better coordination between the Nodal Officer at the cutting edge level during elections i.e. the Returning Officer. The experiences of the gained during the conduct of previous State and Lok Sabha Elections came in handy and led to the development of the RONET.

Also, to provide an all-round picture of the constituencies, to apprise the electorate of the information of candidates and counting process on the counting day and declaration of result, a novel initiative in the form of a software application which was aptly called ECI 360, was developed. It provided a holistic view on the ongoing electoral process to the voters. A brief Synopsis of the software is given below:

RONET– Election made easy:

The Returning Officer (RO) is pivotal to the entire election process. To ease his work this mobile application was developed during the Vidhan Sabha Elections in Punjab, 2017 which enabled the RO to know exactly what he is required to do and when; flagging the issues for supervisory authorities such as DEO, CEO, ECI to oversee and intervene but only when necessary. RONET was implemented as a pilot project for four constituencies in Punjab involving three from District Ludhiana and one from Jalandhar. This software has a bundle of web and mobile applications for PRO, Sector Officers, RO, DEO, CEO and ECI.

The mobile application was provided to the PRO, who sits at the booth. The app has the timely activities listed for PRO to perform and check on completion. The same status was passed on to the respective Sector Officers and their RO on their mobile apps.

This enabled them to monitor the activities real time without having present at the Polling Booth. It provides hourly updation of poll percentage and voters in queue. All this enabled the smooth execution of the election process without having to take physical rounds of Polling Booths.

The accompanying apps such as supervisor app, the RO/DEO Web and mobile apps helped them to ensure timely flow of information by PROs on P-1 and Poll day as well as to track supervisors and PROs in real time efficiently.

ECI 360

This web application was a very innovative measure, which was designed to provide factual and accurate real time information to all the stake-holders in the election process. This was enabled by the following features in the app:

- Voters—Voters could login using their EPIC number and view their polling stations with directions and photographs, list of candidates contesting from their constituency and hourly election results. Details of their RO, DEO and CEO were also available.
- PWD –To make PWD (Persons with Disability) an important stake-holders in the electoral process, PWD could request facility to enable them to vote and provide any additional service which could be monitored online.
- Candidates— Approved candidates shall granted access to the Candidate App who can then view list of polling stations and Polling Booths in their constituency.
- Results— Any user can see the final result party-wise, all candidates Constituency-wise and trends Constituency-wise.

Ravi Bhagat
DEO, Ludhiana

AHMEDABAD

AWARD CATEGORY :



AVANTIKA SINGH

An Electoral Challenge

Ahmedabad is the largest district of Gujarat state and also a challenge for any Election Management machinery owing to its huge scale. Ahmedabad district's population (78.93 lakhs) is more than population of 132 countries of the world. Ahmedabad has 21 ACs and 5451 polling stations. The number of electors (52.75 lakhs) is more than that of entire State of Himachal Pradesh. The number of electors of Ahmedabad district is roughly equal to the combined total of electors of 10 other districts



of Gujarat. Ahmedabad is also the economic capital of the state and the hub of all the political activity. During Election, it witnessed a heavy traffic of star campaigners, high media attention and also the task of managing large number of VVIP voters.

Apart from this, some other unique challenges include:

- 84% urban population
- High mobility within the city from one area to another creating a nightmare for Electoral Roll managers
- Large number of migrant laborers
- Ever changing geography with rapidly developing out growth areas in all directions with many residential units coming up every month

Despite the above challenges, DEO Ahmedabad Team worked tirelessly and ensured 100% free, fair, peaceful and inclusive Election with a high turnout of 66.74%.

Some of the key achievements and highlights of Ahmedabad District election Management efforts are provided herewith.

Electoral Roll Management

Exemplary work was carried out by the entire Ahmedabad team during the two Summary Revision drives followed by the Continuous Updation Period. The fast developing out growth areas within the periphery of Ahmedabad city were paid special attention for enrolment of the left out citizens. Intensive SVEEP activities were carried out to reach out to left out electors. Large number of enrolment camps was organized at different Industries, Industrial Associations, Kadiya Nakas, Organizations working with PwDs, Old Age Homes, Resident Welfare Associations, Educational Institutions, UCD Centers, Anganwadi Centers etc. Variety of activities like Young Voters' Festival, Rallies, Folk Media

programs, Signature Campaigns, Skits etc. were carried out for awareness. The BLOs put in exemplary efforts by reaching out door-to-door to every household, even in distant and remote areas. Total 39 lakh bulk SMS were sent to the citizens in Continuous Updation period appealing them to check their names and get enrolled if left out.

Key Achievements

- At the end of Continuous Updation Period, Ahmedabad achieved a net addition of 141,894 new voters including 90,865 young voters.
- Ahmedabad achieved a Roll EP Ratio (66.83) almost equal to the Census EP Ratio (66.80) reflecting the well planned targeted efforts by the Ahmedabad DEO team.



- The Roll Gender Ratio improved from 902 at the start of the year to 910 by end of Continuous Updation, as compared to Census Gender Ratio of 903 indicating inclusion of a large number of women electors.

Photo Voter Slips (PVS)

The 52,75,062 pages of the PVS were generated through software, which was gigantic task in a record time. The printing of PVS was also completed in record time. The distribution of PVS started on 1.12.17 and was completed on 7.12.17 by visiting approximate 19 Lakh families, which tells the story of proper planning, hard work and dedication.

Polling Station Management

One of the major accomplishments by Ahmedabad district was how impressively the Polling Station Rationalization was implemented.

82 polling stations had to be shifted due to damages by heavy rains. Due to the increase in number of electors, 21 auxiliary polling stations were created after Special Summary Revisions and 17 auxiliary polling stations were created after Continuous Updation. The final count of the total polling station in the district thus was 5451 at 1878 polling station locations. Total 83,389 electors in 692 sections that were found to be situated at some distance from the polling station were shifted to the nearest polling stations on the basis of the field survey made by the BLOs and Sector Officers after obtaining approval from the Commission. Each and every elector was informed in writing by the BLOs regarding all these changes in the polling station locations.

All the 5451 polling stations were provided all prescribed amenities under the AMF including electricity, furniture, drinking water, ramp etc. Proper bedding for the polling party and police personnel were provided for making night halt on the pre-poll night.

Total 5451 Voter Assistance Booths were set up at each and every polling station, which were found to be very useful for assistance of the voters.

46,500 A3 size posters showing the relevant polling station and its location were pasted by the BLOs at all the Societies/Apartments entrance gate/notice board for information of the residents.



Ahmedabad district established 21 'Sakhi' polling stations. All the functionaries in charge of conducting elections like Presiding Officer, three Polling Officers, Micro Observers and Security personnel were women.

EVM/VVPAT Management

7696 BUs and 7046 CUs were acquired from Punjab and 7800 VVPAT units were acquired from BEL, Bangalore, which is almost equal to the 7525 VVPAT units used in the entire State Assembly Elections of Himachal Pradesh. The entire exercise of shifting was carried out with extreme security in GPS enabled closed-body trucks and was completed without any hassle despite the monsoon time and heavy rains.

With such a large number of EVM and VVPAT units, the process of First Level Checking of the EVMs was a huge exercise which continued for a long period of two and half months starting from 19th August 2017 till November 1, 2017. All the protocols of Randomization, Allotment, Transportation of EVM-VVPATs were followed scrupulously.

One of the challenges was that 4 ACs required 2 BUs, which was managed successfully without any errors.

EVM/VVPAT Awareness

Since this was the first time VVPAT were being used at all polling stations, EVM/VVPAT awareness and demonstration programs were carried out on a very large scale across the district to cover maximum number of electors through a systematic schedule. House-to-House distribution of 19 lakhs pamphlets on EVM/VVPAT through BLOs was made. 5 EVM Rathes were used. Demonstration camps were organized at industries, with PwDs, at Old age homes, with women,

with youth, with migrant laborers at industries & kadiya nakas etc.

SVEEP

Ahmedabad implemented an all-encompassing and all-pervading SVEEP covering all different sections of society and a variety of activities. One of the unique interventions was appointment of special Nodal Officers of SVEEP in different Departments/Agencies for ensuring inclusion of different groups of electors.

Some of the major highlights of SVEEP intervention were as follows:

- Proactive involvement of PwD District Icons and State Icons
- Large number of awareness camps with women, youth, PwDs, senior citizens, third gender people and other voters
- Variety of activities carried out for youth enrolment by 39 Campus Ambassadors, 127 Designated Officers and NSS volunteers
- Partnership with Radio City with number of innovations and unique initiatives like Vototsav Anthem, Flash mobs, Vote a Party, Vototsav Concert
- Development of large number of locally contextual creatives including festival based creatives, creatives aimed at PwDs & senior citizens and creatives targeted at enrolment
- Wide reach through social media platforms
- Reaching out to large number of electors, particularly youth with SVEEP activities at Garba grounds during Navratri including special Voting Garbas, announcements on enrolment & VVPAT awareness, help desks at Garba grounds, Nine Vows of Democracy etc
- Innovative activities like Human chains, Happy Streets, Women bike rally, PwD tricycle rally and hot air balloon
- 4 lakhs Sankalpa Patra
- 50 lakhs bulk SMS sent as Poll Day reminder

Major Highlights of other Aspects of Election Management

- 45,180 civil personnel for various election duties and 24,590 security forces mobilized, trained and managed successfully. Customized comprehensive training modules developed in vernacular language
- 39,083 postal ballots issued and postal ballot facilitation centers set up
- Methodically planned dispatch and receiving Centers with principles of Kaizen and 5 S

- More than 1500 vehicles requisited/hired for the conduct of election
- Within 48 hours of MCC enforcement, 1,27,793 defacements on Public Property and 1166 defacements on Private property were removed
- Minimal number of 54 complaints regarding MCC violation, all of which were resolved promptly
- Expenditure monitoring activities in all 21 ACs conducted very efficiently with 126 FSTs, 134 SSTs, 40 VSTs, 21 VVTs, and 27 Accounting Teams & 33 AEOs. Only 29 complaints related to expenditure were received, addressed and solved. No complaint regarding any harassment by the Expenditure Monitoring Teams was reported
- Smooth coordination and maintenance of peace even with a large number of Star Campaigners. No complaints of untoward incidents related to law and order reported
- Live Webcasting done at 442 polling stations on Poll day
- Food packets organized for all polling staff and security forces on Poll Day
- VVIP Voters casting their votes in the district managed without any untoward incident or complaints



- A State-of-the-Art Model Counting Center established at Polytechnic College, Ahmedabad. All DEOs were asked by ECI & CEO Office to visit and implement it in their respective districts
- Total 3 counting centers were established to accommodate 21 ACs
- 8236 PwDs registered, which was the highest in the state. 2072 provided assistance. 178 wheel chairs organized at different polling stations
- High turnout of PwDs and Senior Citizens

Avantika Singh
DEO, Ahmedabad

PUBLICATION

Unfolding Indian Elections : Journey of the Living Democracy

Unfolding Indian Elections – Journey of the Living Democracy, is a coffee table book that has been put together painstakingly by the Election Commission as a tribute to the nation and the people on the occasion of its 70th year of Independence and has been published by the Publications Division.

It is an Election Memoir celebrating the spirit of participative democracy and capturing memories through the years. The book traces the long

journey of the evolution of elections bringing to light through rare photographs, not just how Election Commission planned and conducted the elections, but also emphasizes the uniqueness, conceptual development and people's enthusiasm for them. Thematically organized in 11 sections, with a set of photos and a concise chapter, it takes the reader through the journey of elections.



Unfolding Indian Elections Journey of the living democracy Independence heralds Universal Adult Suffrage

The first general elections to the Lok Sabha and the elections to the state assemblies were held during 1951-52. Both were conducted on the basis of universal adult suffrage. Article 324 of the Constitution of India, adopted on 26th November 1949 by the Constituent Assembly, empowered every citizen above 21 years of age, on a qualifying date, to vote in territorial constituencies. But implementing the ideal was a challenging task for an inexperienced and newly independent nation. Therefore, the idea evolved, and, under and over adaptation to both home and abroad. Finally, it was a mammoth task to administer elections at that magnitude. The size of the electorate was 173.3 million voters. Initially, it was a huge task to administer elections at that magnitude. Finally, given India's poor adult literacy, the vision of adult franchise was challenged to meet every adult citizen. The first of the elections was 173.3 million voters. Initially, it was a huge task to administer elections at that magnitude. Finally, given India's poor adult literacy, the vision of adult franchise was challenged to meet every adult citizen.

But the political philosophy behind India's freedom struggle made universal adult suffrage unavoidable. The freedom movement was conducted to the tune of every Indian person. That all inclusive ideal was upheld by the Constituent Assembly.

Two sets of legislation under the Representation of the People Act were notified in 1950 and 1951. The process of election began on September 10, 1951, with testing of registration. It concluded on June 4, 1952, when election of West Bengal Legislative Council was completed. In 499 seats to be filled by the election (out of 499) in the 1st Lok Sabha, 72 seats were reserved for candidates of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A total of 1,874 candidates were sent into the fray. A total of 13,361 candidates contested for an aggregate of 3,285 seats of legislative assemblies in the states.

The global community witnessed the elections with great interest. The governments of Nepal and Indonesia had sent their official teams for extensive study of the elections from administrative and legal angles. Numerous enquiries were received from nations in Africa, the Middle East and South America on the elections. Based on the success of the Indian experiment, Sudan in November-December 1953 held elections on the basis of adult franchise. The first Chief Election Commissioner of India, Biju Patnaik, ICS, chaired the International Conference that oversees the elections.



Waiting through snow, Himachal Pradesh, 2014



Polling parties carrying EVMs traverse the farthest, highest & toughest terrains....



Heading on elephant back, Assam 2014

IMPHAL EAST

AWARD CATEGORY :



KABIB K

Management of Law and Order

Manipur, the Jewel of India is a land of various colourful communities, religions, languages and cultures. But it is also known for its problems of insurgency, drugs, human trafficking, ethnic crises, separatist movements, etc for the last few decades.

Imphal East is one of the valley districts with 10 Assembly Constituencies (1/6 of total assembly seats in Manipur). Along with majority Meitei community, it has a large number of tribals (Nagas, Kukis), Pangal Muslims, Nepalese and Non-Manipuris, who normally play a major decisive role in the elections.

Challenges before District Administration:

Though any election in Manipur normally witness some problems from underground militants and Political fights, some activities and incidents that occurred just before announcement of SAE-2017 has created an unsecured atmosphere for vulnerable voters and made SAE-2017 as the most challenging election,

1. Economic blockades (139 days) & Counter Economic blockades called by UNC (United Naga Council) and other community organizations on National Highways, the life line of Manipur created a shortage of essential commodities, restricted movements of public in valley and had created a enmity between the communities of Hills & Valley during Election time.
2. Last minute creation of 7 new districts before announcement of election has created the fear of displacement of people and land, and made some sections of society vulnerable from election point of view.

3. The infamous riot incident that took place at Heikru Makong in Imphal East, in which 32 vehicles and huge properties of one community were burned. This incident has created an atmosphere of communal tension and made minority voters as most vulnerable.
4. ILP (Inner Line Permit System) movement, which was aimed to protect the rights of indigenous people, took a turn and lead to many violent incidents in Imphal East district and made the Non-Manipuri population as vulnerable voters.

Action Plan:

Considering the challenges for conduct of free, fair, and peaceful election, an elaborate action plan was prepared and put in the action.

1. Elaborate District Security plan was prepared, which consist of various sub-plans including Zonal Deployment Plan & Sector Deployment Plan, Communication Plan, Airlifting Plan, Contingency Plan, Pre Poll area Domination Plan, Transportation Plan, Accommodation/ Logistic Plan, Induction – De-Induction Plan, ROP Plan, Dispersal Plan, EVM Guarding Plan, Counting Arrangement Plan, Winter Management plan, Traffic Management Plan, Post-poll L&O maintenance plan, etc. along with this a separate pre poll "confidence building measures" plan was prepared and executed for free, fair and peaceful poll.
2. Training for PC/HC/ASI/SI/Insp/GOs was organized 3 times on MCC, FS and SST for proper



Meeting vulnerable voters



Checking the surrenderees camp alongwith the observers



Community liasoning at critical polling station



coordination and team work. Vulnerability mapping exercise was carried out meticulously with the aim of identifying vulnerable voters and critical polling stations. Separate action plans worked out according to the requirements.

3. 29 Static Check—posts including 6 district border check posts were created for frisking and checking to ensure people's free movement and free campaign. The borders were sealed on the polling day and checking for filtering the entry of unnecessary men was done 2 days prior to poll day.
4. Various Militant camps i.e. MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) Camp at 7MR Khabeishoi,

and SoO (Suspension of Operations) camps were regularly visited to check the attendance of surrendered UGs. Postal ballots for UG Cadres also arranged to avoid their movement on poll day. Security coordination meetings organized and Regular CI ops conducted to flush out the militants from the district.

5. Daily Area domination Plan with 36 cluster points for covering all polling stations 3 times before the election was carried out.
6. FS/SST/CCTV/ Vehicle Checking were undertaken. CCTVs were installed to monitor the movement of men and vehicles.

Table showing Preventive Actions taken before poll day:

Action plan	Status on poll day
Confidence building measures on Vulnerable hamlets	53/53 (mostly minority population)
NBW execution	Execution =38 (all) , Pending = NIL
Arms Deposition	Deposit =1500, Exempted = 155 , Total= 1655/1780 = 92.97%
Illegal Arms seizure	Arms=2, 9mm pistol= 1, 9mm rounds= 7, Bombs=2, AK-47 ammunition= 224.
Drug Seizure and destruction	Poppy destruction=@ 67 acres Value @ 2.6 crore , Heroine No. 4= 144 gms value @ 4.32 lakhs, SP Capsule = 1620 value @ 16,430 rs, WY= 120 value @ 7450 rs Tablets, Opium=1500 gms value @ 1.5 lakhs, N-10 tablets= 13 value @ 130 rs._
Money Seizure	Rs. 10,300
Gold Seizure	3.9 gms of 2 ear rings
Liquors Seizure	13,638 Ltrs of DIC Liquor, 136 bottles of IMFL, 18 can & 17 beer bottles value @ 13, 52, 500 Rs.
Nakas/Police pickets	Operational = 29, CCTV = 09, Sniffer dog = 2
History Sheetters	53/53
Action against Identified, Potential, Probable, Suspected trouble Mongers	1067/1344
FIRs and MCC complaints	Totally 7 FIRs taken up and 5 charge sheeted and 2 under investigation.

Confidence Building Measures:

To increase the confidence among vulnerable voters and candidates, the following steps i.e., visits by DM and SP to Vulnerable Hamlets and Critical Polling Stations, Community Liasoning Group meetings at polling station level, establishment of contact points at village level, one to one meeting with candidates, preparation of worry list by polling station wise, frequent patrolling on vulnerable routes and camping of forces at vulnerable hamlets, etc were taken up.

Conclusion:

By following the guidelines of ECI, to uphold the spirit of democracy, the above measures were taken up in the Imphal East district, and a peaceful atmosphere was created before the election for voters to exercise their franchise freely. These steps have enabled the conduct of elections in a peaceful, free, fair and satisfying manner.

Kabib K
SP Imphal East

NORTH 24 PARGANAS

Serving the Service Voters



ANTARA ACHARYA

With the motto of No Voter to be Left Behind as our source of inspiration; the guidelines for The De Novo inclusion of Service Electors issued by the Election Commission of India and the distinctive opportunity for optimum possibility of achieving the same in the district North 24 Parganas due to its unique location (spatially and strategically).

We had taken up a set of initiatives and to ensure that not only all the eligible Service Voters present in our district have their names included De Novo in their respective Electoral Rolls; but also to ensure that all eligible Service Electors of the District who have been included in the Electoral Rolls are duly informed about their inclusion.

Background Seams:

As we are aware, this time Election commission of India has undertaken the task of De novo preparation of the Last Part of the Electoral Roll relating to Service Electors with a view to make it completely error free.

As a part of this exercise, the potential pockets and areas of intervention were assessed with respect to North 24 Parganas district with the objective of maximising the coverage of service personnel presently posted in our district.

This exercise carries even greater significance for North 24 Parganas due to following factors:

- Long international border with Bangladesh thus significant presence of BSF
- Significant presence of Indian Army personnel in Barrackpore Cantonment area
- Considerable number of Air Force Personnel in Air Force station at Barrackpore
- Proximity to International water in Bay of Bengal, thus presence of Indian Navy and Coast Guard
- Netaji Subhas international Airport and other important places under coverage of CISF
- Presence of Service Personnel belongs to NDRF

Considering the given factors, it was important to undertake the given activity with utmost seriousness in the district, so as to ensure that no eligible Service Personnel is left out.

Marching Ahead:

In North 24 Parganas, we have devised separate strategies in twin roles of Host District and Recipient District for fulfilling this objective:

- A) As the host district for all the eligible Service Personnel who are presently posted or residing in our district and fulfil Service Qualification under sub section (8) of Section 20, RPA 1950
- B) As the recipient district for all the eligible voters of our district who are serving outside the district and are eligible to be included in our district E-Roll

Host District Approach:

- To create direct liaison with all unit heads of the concerned unit heads
- Direct interaction with eligible voters, their sensitization and awareness generation about the De novo exercise
- Developing a periodic reporting mechanism to



District Election Officer Conducting Meeting with Senior Officials at BSF Sector HQ at Alambazar, Kolkata



track the progress of form received and their due dispatch to respective Record Offices,

- Periodic review of the progress and
- Resource sharing and assessment of progress.

Recipient District, Approach :

- Timely disposal of all forms received by EROs in due time.
- Intimation to the newly enrolled Service Voter in electoral roll with respect to Assembly Constituencies of our district.
- Providing necessary information and details to him/her regarding their respective EROs for any further clarification and assistance.

Challenges :

During our journey towards attainment of these objectives we have faced following challenges:

- Limited information with the DEO regarding the exact number of probable Service Electors in the district
- No clear name listing of probable eligible voters



DEO, North 24 Parganas; SDM, Barrackpore & Col. Tripathi answering the queries of Service Personnel at Army Station Hq., Barrackpore

- The floating nature of the Service Personnel present in the district at a given point of time
- Lack of clear information about the Record Offices for necessary follow up
- During discussions with the officials from Armed forces, it was found that a significant portion of probable Service Elector is apprehensive about getting enrolled as service elector as it does not entail them from availing Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) which is considered to be an important document for establishing citizenship, besides Elections

Win-Win Strategy – GST

To overcome these issues, following approach has been adopted:

- Compiling the database of Unit Heads/ Commanding Officers (with figures of Eligible Service Personnel under their Command) attached with different units for the District at the time of Special Summary Revision
- Identifying the exact numbers of probable service electors who wishes to be enrolled in our district.
- $G(\text{General voter}) + S(\text{Service Voter}) = T(\text{Total Voter})$ approach: check and ensure 100%

Office of the District Election Officer
North 24 Parganas
Administrative Building, Barisal
Pin - 746124, Phone: 033-2564433
e-mail: deo24p@gmail.com

Memo No: _____ / Elec (S) Date: ____ / ____ / 2018

To,
XYZ
Thorough Record Officer/Commanding Officer
ABC BN BIF, JPL
COMPLEX, PO LAKSHMIPUR,
KURAPUT, UDIPRA

Subj: Greetings from District Election Officer, North 24 Parganas

Dear Elector,

Congratulations for enrolling Yourself as service elector in the last part of electoral roll related to service personnel at your native place. We appreciate your interest and initiative for being a part of democracy. You are now enrolled as an elector for BSB-Barrackpore (Gen) Assembly Constituency. Your Serial No in Last Part is 2.

For any kind of Assistance you may contact your Electoral Registration Officer.

Email: deobarrackpore@gmail.com
Phone: 033-25620610
Electon Helpline No: 1978

Always exercise your voting right for building strong democracy.

District Election Officer &
District Magistrate
North 24 Parganas

Greater Participation for a Stronger Democracy

Sample Greetings sent to newly enrolled Service Electors of North 24 Parganas District

- Inclusion of all Probable Electors into Electoral Roll by facilitating their inclusion as either Service Elector or as General Elector (as per choice opted by the elector)
- Marking of already enrolled voters
- Ensuring that the rest of the probable electors fill up either form 2 or form 6 through sensitization of the Officials of the units including the Unit heads through face to face discussion

Mapping of Outcome and Innovations:

- To make the entire exercise more objective and meaningful, we have devised some special monitoring formats for periodic report compilation from the unit head
- We have given emphasis on seeking clear information about the local nodal officers for each unit for timely liaison and updating of reports.
- Focus on monitoring the inclusion of ALL ELIGIBLE names in last part of ACs of our district as per forms received
- Welcoming the newly enrolled voters by giving them due intimation and providing all necessary information for correspondence and

- Celebration of NVD with Service Personnel through innovative means for their participation in the district programme

Future Strategy:

Based on our experience in the previous rounds, following steps are proposed to be taken to make this exercise more meaningful :

- Fixing nodal officers in all Sub Divisions to coordinate personally with the unit heads for timely uploading of forms and periodic monitoring of the progress
- Seeking names of Nodal Officers from Armed Force Units
- Focus on more awareness programmes with the eligible Service voters for the inclusion of their names
- Letters shall be despatched between 05/01/2018 to 25/01/2018 to all newly enrolled Service electors.

Antara Acharya
DEO, North 24 Parganas



Service Personnel with their wives in a sensitisation programme at Army Station HQ, Barrackpore

Creatives from Gujarat



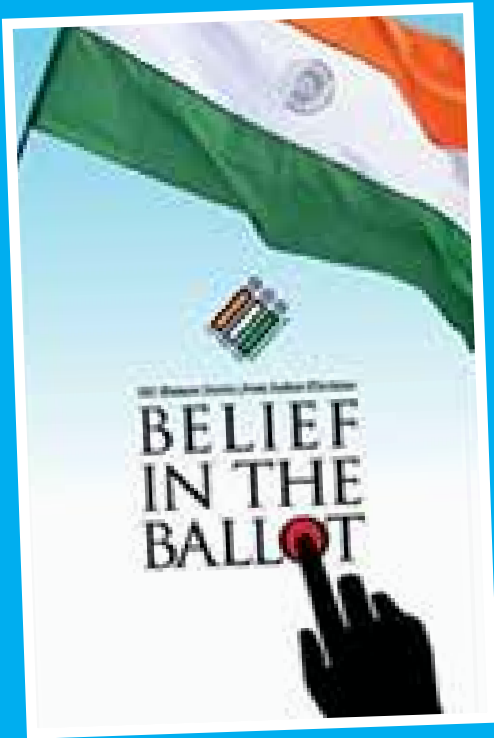
PUBLICATION

Belief in the Ballot

Conducting elections in India is a mammoth task, compounded by the sheer scale, size and diversities in this country. Millions of people are involved in ensuring that this exercise is conducted smoothly. *Belief in the Ballot* is an anthology that presents 101 real life stories of grit, sacrifice, hope, creativity, enthusiasm, and the diversity of experiences that showcase the picture of the story of elections in India. These stories are a mix of experiences, both from the point-of-view of citizens as well as election officials, covering all the longitudes

and latitudes of the country. Packed with emotions and carrying a resolve of their own, these stories can easily ignite, in any Indian citizen, a belief in the ballot.

On the January 6, 2018, the Hindi edition of the book *Matdaan Mein Vishwas* was launched in the World Delhi Book Fair organised at Pragati Maidan, Delhi.



101 Human Stories from Indian Elections

मतदान में विश्वास

101 Human Stories from Indian Elections

BELIEF IN THE BALLOT



Election with a human touch: Facilitating Divyang Voters



KAUSHAL RAJ SHARMA

For a healthy democracy it is necessary that all the organs of the society participate in its democratic processes. It is failure of a democracy if any of its community fails to participate in the process of electing its representatives. Generally in a run up to prepare for the elections, the whole election machinery try to galvanise people for active participation but most of the times, the process becomes so mechanical that people who need special attention get overlooked.

For Uttar Pradesh General Assembly Election 2017, district Kanpur Nagar decided that the upcoming election will be an election with a Human touch and special focus will be on facilitation of Divyang voters.

Voter list revision for Divyang voters: The fundamental task to identify Divyang voters started

in September 2016 when all BLOs were asked to identify Divyang people through door to door verification. Later list of 23357 Divyang pensioners was taken from on Divyang Welfare Department and provided to all BLOs area wise to supplement their search. BLOs could hardly identify around 8000 Divyang people despite repeated efforts. When this did not succeed in city area, employees, Zonal Officers of Municipal Corporation, Civil defence volunteers, ICDS workers were combined in ward wise teams and deployed for door to door survey of Divyang people. In rural areas this was done through teams of VDOs, ICDS workers and Shiksha Mitra. The purpose was to identify Divyang people by surveying each household and confirming whether their names exist in Voter list or not. Their whole detail was noted in following format:

SN	Address	Name of Divyang person	Father's/ Husband's Name	Mobile	Age	Enrolled Voter (Yes/ No)	If Yes			
							Name of AC	PS No.	PS Name	Voter ID No.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11



To further supplement the door to door search, whole data of Divyang certificates from Chief Medical Officer was computerised with the help of student volunteers of a private engineering college. This data had 25813 people who were above 18 years and whose medical certificates were issued between 2005–2016. It was segregated ward or village wise and given to surveying teams for search facilitation. The whole survey was done in a time bound fashion between January 9 to 15, 2017.

Registering left out Divyang people as Voters: Through door to door survey 26043 Divyang people could be identified using pension and medical certificates data who were voters. Immediately thereafter the exercise of voter registration of left out Divyang people was started. There were 1960 such people whose detail was collected on the survey format from whole district.

For this Divyang welfare NGOs, associations, civil defence were roped in to help BLOs. Their frequent meetings were conducted and they were requested to take up the task with motivation. For all 26043 voters, the registration details were collected from them and from ECI website if they were not found physically. To enrol 1960 identified Divyang people and other unidentified, the SMS were sent through NIC to 12 Lac residents to help Divyang people in voting. Letters were written to all Universities, Educational Institutes, Traders Associations, Govt departments and Village Headmen etc. to get Divyang people enrolled as voters.

Maintaining the data base: After registering all the left out voters, a control room comprising 10 people established was at Vikas Bhawan building in Panchayati Raj office to feed the details of all Divyang voters AC wise. A new survey was made through BLOs to identify the type of disability of each Divyang Voter and this information base was also prepared in that control room.

SVEEP for Divyang voters: Special SVEEP activities were carried out with the help of Divyang associations,



NGOs, Education departments, NSS and Civil defence. The main emphasis was on awareness rallies, street plays, EVM training and pledge taking.

Deployment of Divyang Assistants: District level officers of Panchayati Raj, Health, Revenue departments and In charge of NSS, NCC, NYK, Civil defence were called to depute their employees or volunteers as Divyang Assistants. They were assigned the responsibility of Divyang voters for smooth voting. They had to contact Divyang voters before 2–3 days of poll, ask their vehicular requirement, get the vehicular support as decided by administration, take the voter to the polling station, get his vote casted without hassle of queue and leave him back to his house. They had to act as volunteer and use their own vehicle for Divyang voters in case they had it.

They were identified between February 8 to 10 and trained on February 15 to 16, 2017. Polling station wise details of Divyang Assistants in following format was also compiled and put in Control Room.

SN	Polling Station No.	Polling Station Name	Elector's Serial	Elector's Name	Father/Husband Name	Mobile No.	Address	Type of Disability	Divyang Assistant			Ambulance/E-Rickshaw
									Name	Dept	Mobile	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11			

Earlier it was decided to deploy two Divyang Assistants on each of 3344 polling stations of District but later the number of Divyang Voters was found zero on many polling stations so finally 5003 Divyang Assistants were identified. Also, 300 Divyang Assistants were also provided by Amar Ujala foundation that had joined hands under its social initiative.

Due to scattered polling stations in rural areas, Village development officers and Village Level Revenue employees (Lekhpal) were deputed as supervisors over Divyang Assistants to guide them and to collect data.

Training of Divyang Assistants and distribution of Voter lists and dress kits to them:

On February 15 and 16, 2017 detailed training was provided to Divyang Assistants in university auditorium and all poll day arrangements were explained to them. To make them distinctly visible, a fluorescent jacket and cap were provided to them to be worn on polling day. They were also briefed about control room set up and method of data collection for Divyang polling. For each AC different landline and mobile no. were provided in advance which was shared during training for their respective AC. Polling station wise voter list was distributed to them which also had mobile no. and address of Divyang voter.

Special facilities for Divyang voters: These were arranged after a thorough consultation with Divyang Associations for their special needs. Wheel chairs were arranged from ALIMCO factory but they could provide 300 against a request of 500. In addition to this 100 available with district health dept, all 400 wheel chairs were distributed to 496 polling centres of City area thus making almost 1 chair at each centre. Total 3 mini trucks, 20 small loader vehicles and 30 people staff were deployed to distribute and later collect these wheel chairs from ALIMCO factory to all polling centres. They were provided to BLO of 1st polling station on polling centres one day prior to poll and collected from him in the night of polling day on February 19, 2017.

With the help of Chief Medical Officer, IMA and Nursing Home Association, 125 ambulance data base was prepared which could be used for three hours in morning of poll day to carry Divyang Voters from home to polling station who were unable to walk. Out of them 34 ambulances were divided Police station wise



in city area and were used to carry Divyang voters who were unable to walk.

Auto Rickshaws and E-Rickshaws were used as 'Divyang Rath (Chariot)' to carry Divyang voters to polling stations. E-Rickshaw union provided 135 E-Rickshaw and including them total 430 Auto and E-Rickshaw were arranged on voluntary basis. They were distributed on 496 polling centres so that Divyang Assistants could collect them from there and use it for Divyang voters. Only fuel worth Rs 200 was arranged through some NGO for each auto rickshaw which was deployed voluntarily like this.

Control Room and collection of Divyang Polling Data:

A control room was set up initially at Vikas Bhawan to feed and compile data. Later on it was shifted to District Election Control Room at Collectorate building. Two operators, 1 hunting land line phone and 1 mobile phone were provided for each of 10 ACs in Divyang Control Room. These AC wise landline and mobile numbers were provided to Divyang Assistants during their training. On February 19, 2017, the day of poll, the control room helped Divyang Assistants find vehicles, ambulances, wheel chairs, Divyang Rath where ever required. It also collected data through phone calls by Divyang Assistants. It also helped Divyang Voters who called for assistance.

The result of whole exercise was very overwhelming wherein 80.78% Divyang voters actually voted in a hassle free manner using all provided facilities and a human touch of administration and Divyang Assistants.

Kaushal Raj Sharma
DEO, Kanpur Nagar

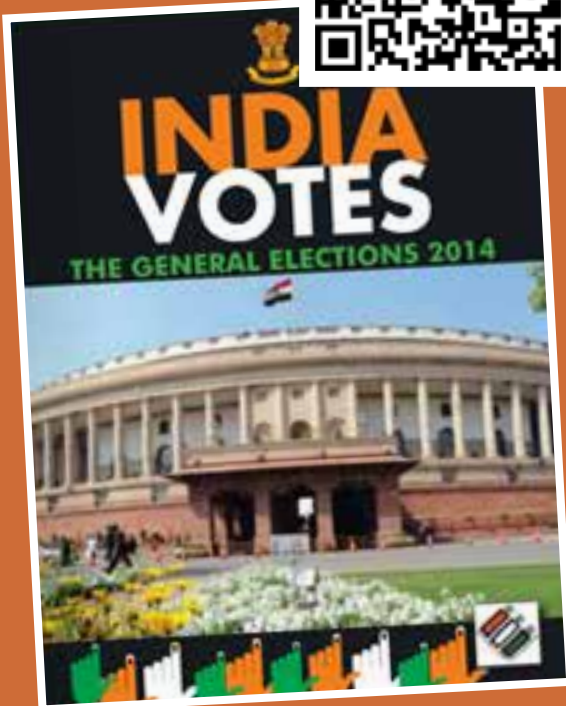
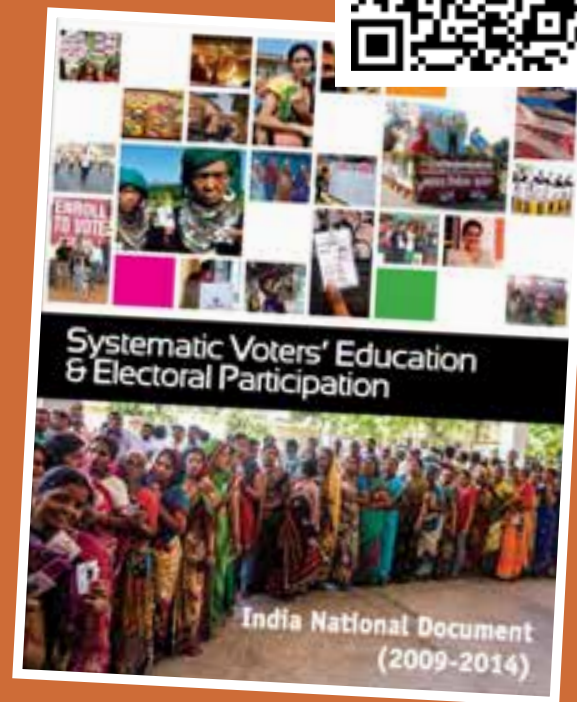
PUBLICATION

SVEEP India National Document

Started in 2009, the mission of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme of the Election Commission of India, is to increase electoral participation, promote qualitative participation in terms of ethical and informed voting and provide continuous electoral and democracy education with the help of

partners and stakeholders.

The SVEEP India National Document discusses the program's history, its need, its aims and objectives, clearly defines its expectations, shares evidence of its importance, lists out its challenges and opportunities and further discusses the way forward to build a long-term as well as sustainable voter outreach program.



India Votes

The 2014 General Elections have been called the largest democratic exercise on earth. From the preparation of electoral rolls to voter education and motivation, from security management to the setting up of polling stations, from expenditure control mechanisms to counting, the process demanded an unprecedented mobilization of resources, manpower, technology and vigor.

Votes archives the salient features and extraordinary highlights of the Indian elections. In its various chapters, the book discusses the Planning of Elections, the Constitutional Mandate, Model Code of Conduct, the sheer number of polling stations in the country, Poll preparations, voter education and awareness, use of technology and expenditure along with staggering figures in compiled statistical reports.

As a tribute to democracy the bedrock of the elections India

<http://ecisveep.nic.in>

NATIONAL AWARDS

2010

NATIONAL AWARD

Sh. Rajesh Yadav	DEO Ajmer, Rajasthan	Online Banking Payment System
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ZONAL AWARDS

Sh. Navin Kumar Singh	SP Kolhan Division, Jharkhand	Foolproof Security in Naxal infested areas	East
Dr. Saumitra Mohan	DEO Birbhum, West Bengal	Use of MIS/GIS in Electoral Management	East
Sh. Nishant Tiwari	SP Bettiah, Bihar	CPF Management in Elections	East
Sh. Jayakumar Susairaj	SP Gadchiroli, Maharashtra	Security Management in Naxal Affected Area	West
Sh. Vijay Nehra	DEO Vadodara, Gujarat	Voter's Education & Awareness	West
Dr. P.B. Salim	DEO Kozhikode, Kerala	Voter SMS System	South
Sh. D.Vijay Kumar	DEO East Garo Hills, Meghalaya	GIS for Electoral Management	North-East

2011

NATIONAL AWARD

Sh. Mayur Maheshwari	DEO Ramabainagar, Uttar Pradesh	SVEEP	First
Sh. Pravan Kumar	SP, Bankura, West Bengal	Innovations in security and infrastructure management	Second
Shri Amit Singla	DEO, North West Delhi	Special enrolment initiatives and voter awareness	Third
Smt. S. Sangeetha	RDO, Tiruchirapalli, Kerala	Expenditure monitoring and Black money	Special

2012

NATIONAL AWARD

Smt. Kamini Chauhan Ratan	DEO, Bulandshahar, Uttar Pradesh	SVEEP	First
Shri Surendra Singh	DEO Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh	SVEEP	First
Smt. Avantika Aulakh	DEO, Bharuch & Anand, Gujarat	Inclusive and Participative Electoral Process	Second
Shri Pravin Bakshi	DEO West Garo Hills, Meghalaya	Management of electoral roll	Second
Shri Ram Krishna Bhardwaj	SP Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh	Innovations in security and infrastructure management	Third
Ms Jaishri Kiyawat	DEO Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh	Special enrolment initiatives and voter awareness	Third
Ajit K Shrivastava,	Addl Director of Income Tax, Ranchi, Jharkhand	Expenditure Monitoring	Special

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE TO STATES

Gujarat

Uttar Pradesh

West Bengal

NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD

Zee News	Electronic Media
Amar Ujala	Print Media

2013

NATIONAL AWARD

Shri. Joga Ram	DEO, Kota, Rajasthan	SVEEP	First
Ms. M. V. Savithri	DEO, Chamarajnagar, Karnataka	Use technology & infrastructure management	First
Ms. Alarmelmangai D	DEO, Kanker, Chhattisgarh	Inclusive and Participative Electoral Process	Second
Shri. Kundan Kumar	DEO, Saran, Bihar	Management of electoral roll	Second
Shri. R N Dash	SP, Kanker, Chhattisgarh	Innovations in security and infrastructure management	Second

Dr Ashok Kumar Bhargava	DEO, Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh	Voter awareness and education	Third
Shri Simrandeep Singh	DEO, Leh, Jammu & Kashmir	Special enrolment initiatives and voter awareness	Third
Shri. Jaideep Govind	CEO, Madhya Pradesh	Voter Education and Electoral Participation	Special
Capt. Pradeep Shoury Arya	Jt. Commissioner IT, Karnataka	Expenditure Monitoring	Special
Dr Priyanka Shukla	CEO Zila Parishad, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh	Voter Education and Electoral Participation	Special

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE TO STATES

Delhi
Karnataka
Rajasthan
Tripura

NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD

Doordarshan Girnar	Electronic Media
Rajasthan Patrika	Print Media

2014

NATIONAL AWARD

Dr. Shahid Iqbal	DEO, Reasi, Jammu & Kashmir	SVEEP
Mohd. Suvez Haque	SP, Gachiroli, Maharashtra	Security Management
Ms. Smita Pandey	DEO, Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal	Infrastructure Management
Shri. C.V. Anand	Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad, A.P.	Expenditure Monitoring and Tackling Money Power
Shri. Vikram Kapur	DEO, Chennai, Tamil Nadu	Use of Technology
Shri. Abhishek Prakash	DEO, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh	Management of Electoral Rolls
Ms. Kinjal Singh	DEO, Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh	Inclusion of Women, PwDs and Senior citizens

SPECIAL AWARDS

Shri. Anil Kumar	CEO, Chandigarh	Use of Technology
Dr. Vikrant Pandey	DEO, Valsad, Gujarat	Voter Education and Electoral Participation
Shri Amrendra Kumar Tiwari	DG Income Tax (Investigation) Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh	Expenditure Monitoring
Shri Ashok Terenia	Excise Commissioner, Cuttack, Odisha	Expenditure Monitoring
Ms. Sonal Giri	ADC, Bhatinda, Punjab	Use of Technology

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE TO STATES

Jammu & Kashmir
Madhya Pradesh
Sikkim
Andhra Pradesh

NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD

ETV Andhra Pradesh	Electronic Media
ETV Telangana	Electronic Media
Times Of India, Mumbai	Print Media

National Service Scheme	U.P. Odisha, Gujarat	Voter awareness, <i>Jagurakta Raths</i> and <i>Srijan</i> exhibits
National Election Watch	M.P., U.P., Odisha, Maharashtra, Bihar	<i>Mera Vote Mera Desh</i> Campaign
Volunteer for Better India	Multiple states	<i>I Vote for a Better India</i> campaign
Let's Vote	Andhra Pradesh	Development of mobile apps
Janagraha	Karnataka	Proper Urban Electoral (PURE) Roll Management System
Mahatma Gandhi International School	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Spreading voter awareness

2015

NATIONAL AWARD

Shri Sanjay Kumar Aggarwal	DEO, Gaya, Bihar	Inclusion of Women and PwDs in Naxalite affected area
Shri Aboobacker Siddique	DEO, West SinghBhum, Jharkhand	Voter Education and Electoral Participation
Shri Lokesh Kumar singh	DEO, West Champaran, Bihar	Voter Education and Electoral Participation
Smt. Antara Acharya	DEO, Purbo Medinipur, West Bengal	Electoral Management
Sh. Manu Maharaj	SSP, Gaya, Bihar	Security Management

SPECIAL AWARDS

Shri Balamurugan	DEO Purnea, Bihar	Innovation
Shri Shekhar Channe	DEO, Mumbai, Maharashtra	Voter Education and Electoral Participation
Shri Shirish Mohod	SVEEP Nodal Officer, Maharashtra	Voter Education and Electoral Participation
Sharat Kumar Sinha	DCP, Delhi	Security Management

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE TO STATES

Bihar	Management of Elections & Innovative IT Use
Delhi	Initiatives for PwDs & Electoral Roll Management
Tamil Nadu	Technological Innovation

NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD

Hindustan, Bihar edition	Print Media
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CSO AWARDS

Young Mizo Association	Mizoram	Efforts in Voter Education and Electoral Participation
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GOVT. DEPARTMENT/AGENCY/PSU AWARDS

Jeevika	Bihar
Gujarat Education Department	Gujarat
Department of Posts	Delhi

2016

NATIONAL AWARD

Sh. Saumitra Mohan	DEO, Burdwan, West Bengal	Election Management
Sh. K. Veera Raghava	DEO, Madurai, Tamil Nadu	SVEEP
Sh. Tanmay Chakrabarty	DEO, Purulia, West Bengal	SVEEP
Sh. Keerthi Jalli	DEO Titabar, Assam	SVEEP
Sh. Mukesh Bansal	DEO, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh	Electoral Roll Management
Dr. K S Palanisamy	DEO Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu	Electoral Roll Management
Sh. P Balakiran	DEO Kannur, Kerala	Innovative Measures
Sh. P Mohan Gandhi	DEO BirBhum, West Bengal	IT Initiatives
Sh. Kailash Karthik N	DEO Rangia, Assam	IT Initiatives
Sh. A K Gawas	SSP Karaikal, Puducherry	Security Management
Sh. A Saravanan	SP Dindigul, Tamil Nadu	Security Management
Sh. Hari Sankar	SP Kannur, Kerala	Security Management

SPECIAL AWARDS

Sh. S N Singh	IG Assam	Security Management
Sh. Chandra Bhushan Kumar	CEO Delhi	Innovative Measures
Sh. B R Balakrishnan	Principal Director, Income Tax, T.N.	Expenditure Monitoring
Sh. Gopi Swaminathan	Technical Advisor, NIC Puducherry	IT Initiatives

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE TO STATES

Tamil Nadu	Election Management
Assam	Security Management
Kerala	IT Initiatives
Puducherry	SVEEP
West Bengal	Electoral Roll Management

NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD

Thanthi TV, Tamil Nadu	Electronic Media
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CSO AWARDS

Shillong public School	Meghalaya	Efforts in Voter Education and Electoral Participation
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GOVT. DEPARTMENT/AGENCY/PSU AWARDS

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation	Delhi	Voters' Education and Awareness
IT Mission	Kerala	Election Management

SPECIAL FELICITATION

Mr. S.K. Mehendiratta	Legal Advisor, ECI
Prof Rajat Moona	Technical Expert Committee (TEC)
Prof. A.K. Agarwala	Technical Expert Committee (TEC)
Prof. Dinesh K Sharma	Technical Expert Committee (TEC)
Prof D.T. Shahani	Technical Expert Committee (TEC)

2017

NATIONAL AWARD

Ms. P. Bharathi	DEO Vadodara, Gujarat	SVEEP
Sh. Ravi Bhagat	DEO Ludhiana, Punjab	IT Initiatives
Ms. Avantika Singh	DEO Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Election Management
Sh. Kabib K	SP, Imphal East, Manipur	Security Management
Ms. Antara Acharya	DEO, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal	Electoral Roll Mangement
Sh. Kaushal Raj Sharma	DEO, Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh	Innovative Measures

SPECIAL

Ms. Ritu Suhas	DDC, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh	SVEEP
Ms. Ranjana	DEO Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand	SVEEP
Sh. Vipul Ujwal	DEO SBS Nagar, Punjab	IT Initiatives
Smt. Nila Mohanan	DEO, North Goa	Election Management
Sh. Vivek Gogia	IPS, Goa	Security Management
Sh. Om Prakash Bunkar	ERO, Udaipur, Rajasthan	Electoral Roll Mangement
Shri. Paresh Fal Desai	ERO, Ponda Goa	Electoral Roll Mangement
Sh. Lalit Narayan Singh Sandu	ERO, Gujarat	Innovative Measures
Sh. Jatinder Singh Aulak	DCP, Punjab	Innovative Measures
Sh. Amrit Tripathi	DEO, Sitapur, U.P.	Innovative Measures

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE TO STATES

Uttarakhand	Electoral Roll Mangement
Uttar Pradesh	Security Management
Punjab	IT Initiatives
Manipur	SVEEP
Himachal Pradesh	SVEEP
Goa	Innovative Measures
Gujarat	Election Management

NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD

Hindustan, U.P.	Print Media
Facebook	Social Media Platform

CSO AWARDS

Bharat Scouts and Guides	Uttar Pradesh	Voter Awareness Campaigns
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GOVT. DEPARTMENT/AGENCY/PSU AWARDS

CEO Team	Delhi	Learning portal on Electoral Awareness & Democracy
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ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS

Accessible Elections in India

One of the laudable features that the Founding Fathers of the nation embedded in our Constitution is Part XV Elections; that provides for an Independent Election Commission, Universal Adult Suffrage, maintenance of electoral rolls and all the other fundamentals for conduct of free, fair and inclusive elections. These features have helped the polity evolve into a vibrant and a rich democratic culture marked by faith of Indian People in the electoral exercise, its non partisan nature, and with the basic tenet of 'No Voter should be left behind'—a perfect blend for inclusion and the consequent everlasting determination and endeavor for maximizing of the base of democracy in India.

Guiding Principles for Accessibility

Article 324 of the Constitution provides for the Election Commission, its powers and functions for maintenance of the Electoral Roll and conduct of elections in a free and fair manner. Article 325 provides that no person shall be ineligible for inclusion in the electoral roll on the grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or anyone of these. Article 326 provides for the Universal Adult Suffrage to be the basis of elections. The concerned provisions of the Constitution and the law that flows there from cast an obligation on the ECI for conduct of free, fair and inclusive elections based on adult suffrage.

While the scope of Part XV Elections of the Constitution is very large, this article intends to focus on the 'Accessible Elections' that has been selected as central theme of this year's National Voter's Day celebration. The theme, that seamlessly integrates into the underlying philosophy of universal adult suffrage and the concept of 'No voter to be left behind.'

A larger recognition to the rights of 'Persons with Disability' came from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that stress upon respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy and independence of voter, freedom to make one's own choice, full and effective participation and inclusion

in society, respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity, accessibility etc.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 defines a 'person with disability' as a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others. This would in effect mean inherent barriers to inclusion of such persons in the electoral process.

Elections Provide Choices

Elections provide for exercise of choices by the voters to elect their representatives based on adult suffrage and it calls upon the Election Machinery to provide for that (i) eligible citizens are registered as voters in the electoral roll and (ii) voters are empowered to make choices for their representatives by casting the vote. Persons with Disabilities (PwD) constitute a special section of society that requires an affirmative action where in the electoral machinery has to reach out to them for registration as voters and provide suitable facilities at the polling stations to enable them exercise their franchise.

Barriers and Redressal

The barriers in access to electoral participation that may be perceived by the PwDs relate to difficulties in voter registration, inaccessible registration materials or facilities, inadequate or inaccessible voter education and related materials, difficulties in physical access to polling stations, inability to vote independently and privately, absence of or inappropriate assistance from poll workers etc. The list is only illustrative but in effect it means discouraging PwDs from exercise of their right to franchise.

Barriers do dissuade persons with disabilities from voting

In a democracy in true spirit of universal adult suffrage, every vote matters, every vote counts. Given this fundamental premise, equal access is vital to

participation for PwDs. The Barriers can be obliterated if they are addressed appropriately and effectively under a well designed Policy Framework.

ECI's Broad Policy Framework

ECI's broad policy framework on Accessible Elections emanates from the guiding principles and the mandate as discussed above. Further, its Strategic Plan for 2016–25 spells out long term the strategic interventions and the current focus of in a continued endeavor for enhancement of inclusion of PwDs as an integral part of its election management including voter education.

Directions and Guidelines of the Commission

Directions of the Commission on the subject focus on the following broad areas in Election Management and Planning:

- Identification of PwDs including polling station wise lists;
- Facilitation in filling up voter registration forms;
- Assured Minimum Facilities at Polling Stations, preference in obtaining facilities at polling stations, Matdata Sahayata Kendras and other election offices in the field;
- Involvement of NGOs, CSOs/DPOs, RWAs;
- System Sensitization and Training;
- Use of technology to provide help to PwDs;
- Cooperation of Political Parties;
- Building a comprehensive

Statistical Data Base;

- Utilising the services of volunteers;
- Training and Sensitization of Officials handling the work relating to PwDs.

SVEEP

Voter education and Outreach for PwDs is an integral part of the SVEEP Plans. Broad areas of coverage are as below:

- An officer well versed with provisions of facilities for PwDs, shall be designated for each of the Assembly Constituencies.
- Wide publicity through various modes shall be ensured. Basic publicity material shall be prepared with simple language, sign language, Braille.
- Special/Mobile camps should be organized to educate and motivate PwDs
- Efforts should be made to prepare volunteers from NCC, NSS, NYK etc to motivate and create awareness among PwDs.
- Publicity regarding services offered by CSC, MSKs should be enhanced.
- Efforts shall be made to have renowned PwDs as District Ambassadors and District, State icons.

Lok Sabha Elections 2014

During the Lok Sabha Election 2014, ECI initiated several measures that made registration process voter-friendly.

- Online registration & name search facility in Electoral Roll on ECI's & CEOs' website.

Strategic Plan of the ECI 2016–25

Strategic Pillar 6; Persons with Disabilities

Goal 1: Inclusive –Special facilitation for registration of certain category of voters including –..Differently-abled electors, etc.

Activity 1: Electoral Roll to be made PwD friendly by identifying such voters in a dedicated section of ER, within each part. It envisages constitution of a Working Group on Facilitation and Inclusion of PwDs.

Goal 2: Accessible – Improving and strengthening accessibility for electoral registration with envisaged outcome of Barrier free electoral registration.

Outcome: Barrier –free electoral registration.

Activity 1: Making available one voter's facilitation center at every District Head quarters.

Activity 2: Making available one Voter Facilitation center at every Block Head quarters.

Activity 3: Integration with CSC's– Integrating the facility of Common Service Centers voter related services throughout the country by adopting service area approach.

Strategic Pillar 5:Election Management

Goal 1: Strengthening planning processes–

Activity 3: Strengthening Basic Minimum Facilities in Polling Stations.

Activity 4: Lowering Physical and administrative barriers for voting.

Strategic Pillar 8; Electoral Literacy and Education

Goal 1: Activities 1 and 2 cover information, motivation and facilitation inter alia for PwDs.

- SMS based services for searching name and polling booth.
- Information on election laws, guidelines and details regarding ROs, AROs, BLOs on CEOs' website.
- Voter Facilitation Centers (VFCs) for E-Roll issues and EPIC.
- Forms 6, 7, 8 & 8A at prominent places including banks, post offices, colleges, universities & schools.
- Nation-wide Special registration camps held in weekly haats, during festivals and through mobile vans to facilitate voters for checking their details on the voters' list.

ECI has implemented several measures to ensure basic facilities at the polling stations making them conducive for PwDs to cast their vote. Some of them are as below:

- Braille signage on the Ballot Unit of EVM.
- Construction of ramps – temporary installed where permanent ramps had not been provided.
- Entering polling stations without waiting in the queue.
- Facility granted to take wheel chairs inside polling stations.
- Polling personnel briefed about the provisions of Rule 49 N of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, for permitting a companion to accompany a blind/infirm elector.
- Electors with speech & hearing impairment were given special care as in the case of other disabled persons.
- Poll personnel were trained & sensitized regarding special need of PwDs.
- Special Directions of the Commission were given for providing adequate facilities to the PwDs .

Provided Basic Minimum Facilities (BMF) at the Polling Station, such as

- Location of polling stations preferably at the

ground floor in good quality buildings with separate entrance and exit,

- Drinking water,
- Toilets,
- Provision of first aid,
- Adequate space with ventilation, sufficient lighting & amenities like chairs, benches & covered shelter.

Voter information and Awareness

Wide publicity to all available facilities by means of print and electronic media including social media has been given besides holding meetings with political parties and candidates.

Initiatives in the Year 2018

During the year, the Commission has launched the theme '**Accessible Elections**' on the eve of the National Voter's Day 2018. An international seminar has been organized on 'Inclusion of the Persons with Disabilities in the Electoral Processes'. The seminar is hosted on the VoICE.NET platform for knowledge sharing across the world.

The Commission has already set up a Steering Committee to deliberate on the major challenges faced by the PwDs with a view to consolidate the status of facilities and address the challenges in this area. A series of guidelines have already been issued on the subject. We intend consolidating our efforts on accessible elections during the year.

A Premise for Way Forward

ECI directions and guidance is based on the premise that the PwDs have the right to full electoral participation, on basis of equality and shall not be discriminated against on any grounds. The rights of PwDs have to be respected, protected and promoted as per the mandate. In this context '**Accessible Elections**' and enabling environment for the same provide an opportunity for electoral participation. ECI continues support in its endeavor to provide effective and

efficient information, awareness, facilitation for enhanced participation for PwDs. And as such ECI is committed to ensure that PwDs feel encouraged and confident to enjoy their rights of electoral participation without any discrimination whatsoever.

Umesh Sinha
Sr. DEC, ECI

S D Sharma
Sr. Fellow, ECI



ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS

Enhancing Participation of PwDs

A Person with Disabilities (PwD) is defined by Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 as 'a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his/her full and effective participation in society equally with others.' The United Nations Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities stressed on respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including



Voter Icon: Ms Tania Fernandes from Raia under Courtorim Constituency

freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons, full and effective participation and inclusion in society, respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity, accessibility etc.

General elections provide for exercise of choices by the voters to choose their representatives through adult suffrage and it calls upon the Election Machinery to ensure:

- (i) All eligible citizens are registered as voters in the electoral roll and

- (ii) All voters are empowered to make choices for their representatives by casting the vote. Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) being special section of the society which requires a positive action wherein the electoral machinery reaches out to them for registration as voters and creating proper facilities to enable them to cast their vote.

Since the very beginning, planning for elections to the Legislative Assembly of Goa stressed on inclusivity by ensuring effective participation from all sections of the society. The leading association of Persons with Disabilities, Disability Rights Association of Goa was consulted in strategizing to ensure effective enrolment and education of PwD voters.

Enrolment & Enumeration of PwD Voters

During Special Summary Revision of Electoral Roll steps were taken to:—

- i. Enroll PwD voters by visiting special homes run by Government & NGOs
- ii. Special Focus was given on enrolling persons with mental disabilities, who, due to general ignorance were left out from enrolment. It was stressed to the Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) that mentally unsound criteria has to be proved by following due procedure. Merely a fact that a person is staying in special home does not bar him/her from registration under the Representation in People's Act, 1950 unless a competent authority certifies him/her as being of an unsound mind.
- iii. Booth Level Officer (BLO) registers were modified by including a column indicating types of disability if any, so that during house to house verification a comprehensive list can be maintained to assess the quantum of PwD voters.

Provisioning of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at Polling Stations

The Election Commission of India has changed the concept of providing facilities at the polling stations from Basic Minimum Facilities to Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) which includes — provision for



ramps, drinking water, separate toilets and electricity. The AMF provisioning is a positive action from the election machinery to ensure that voters are provided with adequate facilities when they come to cast their votes. This calls for proper assessment of all the polling stations and planning to ensure provisioning of facilities before the date of actual poll. Two-way monitoring system was adopted for creation/upgradation of AMF at polling stations, one by Returning Officers another by Engineering Officers. The land-owning agencies were instructed to upgrade the facilities to meet AMF guidelines. Weekly follow up was taken up by the District Election Officer and Chief Electoral Officer and progress of the same was reported to the Election Commission of India. The Assured Minimum Facilities were in place by the time elections were announced and wherever, permanent AMF were not possible, temporary arrangements were planned and completed 3 days before poll.

Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP)

Goa planned to go for usage of Voter's Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in all polling stations which called for effective education for all voters especially PwD voters. The VVPAT Demo teams went to all special homes to impart VVPAT usage

training. Further, special sessions were organized for blind voters to impart training in casting of vote. The message of inclusive election was further emphasized by inclusive election theme paintings on the walls of the Chief Electoral Officer's Office. The social media was used for promotion to ensure high participation from PwD voters by posting special info-graphics.

Special Operating Procedure (SOP) for PwD Voters

Mapping of PwD voters was done by BLOs during house to house survey. A polling station-wise book was prepared enumerating all PwD voters who were willing to take assistance of election machinery in casting votes. The book also contained phone numbers of PwD voters. The Sector Offices were given responsibility to pick and drop the voters from their home at the designated time to ensure the PwD voters face least difficulty in exercising their voting rights. The Returning Officers arranged for wheel chairs and volunteers to help PwD voters in casting their votes. The SOP contained list of around 2700 PwD voters. The SOP was also shared with leading NGO Disability Rights Association of Goa.

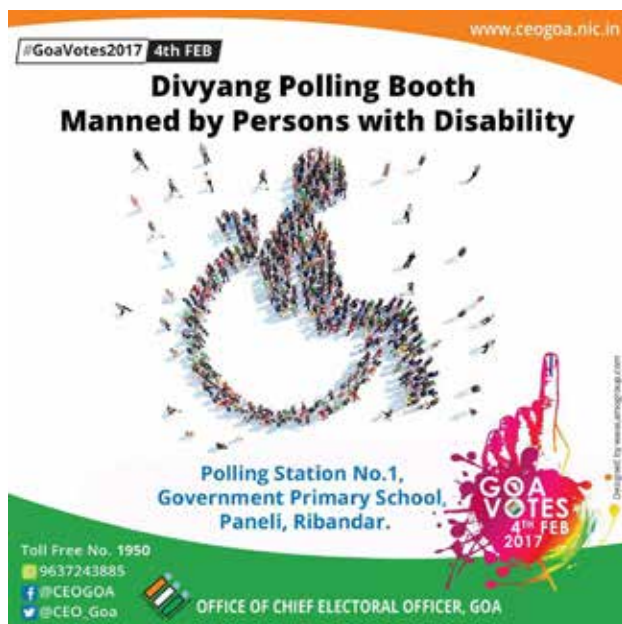
Divyang Polling Station

To showcase the capabilities of Persons with Disabilities, a general polling station for all voters was managed exclusively by PwD polling officials. It was named as "Divyang Polling Station". An affirmative action was made to give a positive message to the society through Divyang Polling Station. As a token of participation in Divyang polling station, a pen was given to all first time voters. The Times of India reported Divyang polling station as a roaring success. A special modified vehicle was used to transport the officials to the polling station from the Dispatch Centre. One distinguishing feature of Divyang Polling Station was that it did not have any PwD voter. The voting percentage of this polling station was 85.09%, above the State average and voters were also satisfied with the performance of the officials.

Inclusive Election Initiative

- All Persons with Disability/Infirm Mapped
- Telephone numbers of Voters needing pickup mapped
- Sector Officers made responsible to pick up the needy voters
- Necessary facilities at Polling Stations for Ease of Voting by PwD, Infirm, Old Voters
- Directory of 2700 PwD prepared for launch by Hon'ble ECI



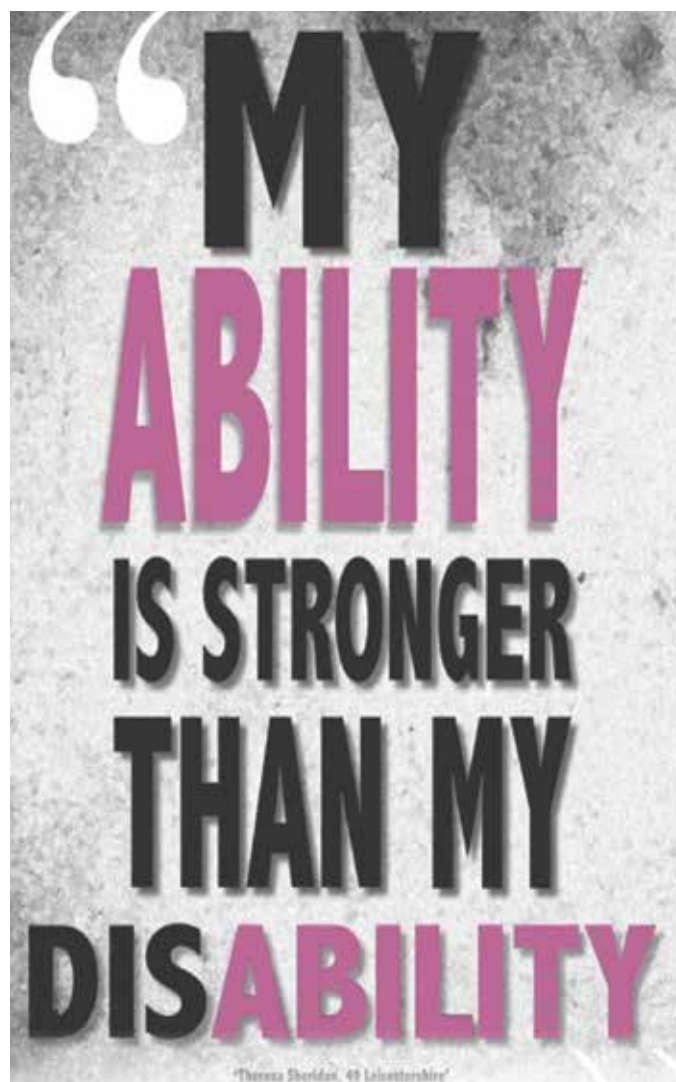


Conclusion

The General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of Goa witnessed significant steps in ensuring the creation of a proper environment for enrolment of PwD electors and exercising voting rights by them. It also witnessed enhanced usage of media for inclusive elections and showcased the potential of Persons with Disabilities by setting up Divyang Polling Stations. Persons with Disabilities participated enthusiastically in high numbers and emphasized that disability is not a hindrance in showcasing one's ability.

Kunal

Chief Electoral Officer, Goa



Divyang
Polling
Station



Electoral Literacy Clubs: An Initiative in Electoral Literacy through Extracurricular Interventions

Introduction : Development of culture of electoral Participation

A conceptual framework

The importance of developing the practice of citizenship development for electoral participation is vital to investment in future of democracy. Citizenship development in a democracy is about developing effective electoral engagement, participation, making

It is imperative to inspire young voters, remove all barriers in educating and empowering them for electoral participation. It is necessary to bring young people to interaction, listen to their voices, engage and encourage them in a dialogue with a focus on development of a culture of electoral participation. It is necessary to work on youth programs that foster an appreciation of citizens' rights and responsibilities in a pluralistic society and create a culture of engagement



informed choices and ethical ballot decisions. In the given context, one of the key goals of society is to have an active democratic citizenry originating in integrated civic and voter education and electoral participation right from a young age.

Culture of democracy and electoral participation flourishes when citizens are well informed about democratic principles and are able to translate that knowledge into action by engaging with institutions and other public structures; performing community service, and exercising leadership. It is necessary to focus on younger generation for civic education leading to robust electoral participation.

especially for the young and future voters in their communities. Voter education resources, hands on experience, incentives, tools and opportunities for new voters to participate in elections and in turn harnessing their potential for evolving a culture of informed, inclusive and ethical voting within their communities need to be encouraged, fostered and strengthened.

International Experience.

Young and Future Voters have been in focus across the democracies of the world for addressing 'voter apathy', 'My Vote does not Matter' and course correction for their electoral participation. Democracy Clubs have been established in different countries of the world as an instrument of strengthening the democratic culture.





Countries such as USA, UK, Bhutan (Democracy Clubs), Tunisia (Citizenship Clubs), Jordan (Crazy Boys Groups) and others have established Democracy Clubs or similar other groups to strengthen democratic culture amongst Young and Future Voters. Other countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand have made substantial investments in engaging young and future voters for electoral participation through innovative strategies and technology driven programmes. Young people have built networks and other public forums to discuss and debate issues of importance; trained for and served as poll workers and election observers in their communities in order to uphold principles of free, fair, peaceful and transparent elections.

Need for Curricular and Extracurricular Interventions

Curricular and extracurricular interventions are aimed at educating, and engaging the young and future voters for hands on experience so that they feel at home with the conceptual and operational framework of the electoral processes including registration as a voter. As an outcome the young people should be fully confident of how, when, where, what and why of the electoral participation. They should understand the

value of their vote, significance of sanctity and secrecy of their vote besides being confident of mature and ethical ballot decisions. They should be interested in participating for their first Ballot Decision on an ethical note leading to a regular participant.

Indian Experience

In India, electoral literacy has been in focus as an integral part of SVEEP for strengthening participation among young and future voters. In this context, while working on curriculum analysis, co curriculum and extracurricular interventions in voter education for empowering young and future voters, the concept of Electoral Literacy Clubs has emerged as an effective instrument of engaging young and future voters in schools including those who are not covered under the schools (Communities), colleges and other educational institutions.

Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy

Continuous Education in Electoral Democracy is one of the important goals under Strategic Plan 2016–25 of the Commission. In this context, the Commission had set up Working Group and Committees with representation from the NCERT, CISCE, NIOS, Educational Institutions, Experts and other stakeholders on the subject. The Commission also

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I learn.”

Benjamin Franklin, Publisher, Statesman, Inventor, and one of the authors of the US Declaration of Independence.



interacted with the EMBs across the democracies of the world through seminars and knowledge sharing on the best practices. With a view to appreciate the status of electoral literacy in the country, a systematic and a comprehensive analysis of the existing curricula and extra curricula was also taken up for coverage under Social Studies and Political Science. Recommendations based on findings related to critical gaps in curricula, co-curricula and extra curricula were presented in the report 'Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy through Educational Institutions, Organizations and Communities in India.' The Report was examined in detail and after a careful consideration on recommendations contained in the Report, Election Commission of India has decided for mainstreaming electoral literacy in schools, colleges and other institutions through curricular and extracurricular interventions as mentioned below:

- (i) Introduction of Electoral Literacy in Curricula at the School level and above (including colleges, universities etc).
- (ii) Setting-up Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELC) in all educational institutions starting from Secondary School Level and above.
- (iii) Establish ELC's for future and new voters not covered under the formal educational institutions.

Electoral Literacy Clubs:

Aims

In general the Aims of ELCs will be as follows:

- (i) To develop a culture of registration and electoral participation right from their first election once they cross 18 years of age.
- (ii) ELCs will appropriately engage the future voters and new voters as a continuous process for active learning and requisite skill development in matter of 'Elections' in general and for informed, inclusive, confident, comfortable and ethical electoral participation in specific.
- (iii) ELCs shall encourage students to understand and appreciate value of the vote and ensure that they do not miss their first vote of life.
- (iv) ELCs will facilitate voter registration for its members as they achieve the age of 18.
- (v) ELC shall function as a mini election office to

conduct simulated elections, organize events and activities that promote understanding electoral system and processes, electoral institutional structure, organization and electoral participation.

Objectives

The overall objectives of establishing of Electoral Literacy Clubs in schools and educational institutions, Communities, Government and non government institutions etc are to ensure that future and new voters:

- (i) Educate the targeted populations about voter registration, entire electoral process and related matters by engaging them through well designed attractive resources in hands on experience, simulated elections;
- (ii) Capacity building for generating/locating information on what, when, where and how of the elections and electoral process right from a young age of around 14 years (Class IX onwards).
- (iii) To engage in activities for appreciation of the value of their vote and exercise their suffrage right in a confident, comfortable and ethical manner.
- (iv) Enhanced voter turnout;
- (v) To understand the constitutional, legislative and legal provisions besides the technological innovation and integration in elections;
- (vi) Nature and role of the Election Commission, Courts, Media and other stakeholders. And the;
- (vii) Harness their potential for carrying the electoral literacy in communities.

Institutional Coverage and Target Populations under the ELC's

Each school, educational institution and all other institutions, mentioned as below, shall establish an Electoral Literacy Club that will initiate, coordinate and implement activities that promote and sustain electoral literacy through engagement in hands on experience. The ELC's shall be established as per the following pattern:

- (i) ELC Future Voters; for Classes IX to Class XII (Secondary and Senior Secondary Level).
- (ii) ELC: New Voters: College, University, all other educational institutions including professional



and technical educational institutions.

- (iii) ELC (Communities) 'Chunav Pathshala': For all those students who are not a part of the formal education system.
- (iv) Voter Awareness Forums : For Government Departments, Organizations, Autonomous Bodies, Semi Government and all non government and the private sector.

Activities in the ELC's

Learning through hands on experience or engaging young people is vital to success of the ELC's. Based on an analysis of the good practices across the democracies of the world, the following generic activities have been suggested for the ELC's. The list is only illustrative.

- Mock Vote
- EL week at the time of the NVD
- Debates relating to Electoral Literacy may step into domain of the civic education
- Essay Competitions in EL and Democratic Governance
- Voter Registration camps or innovative programmes for voter registration; a list of such programmes will be separately provided
- Interactive School Visitor Programme
- Engaging with nearby communities for EL programmes
- Poster competitions
- Games, Puzzles, Cartoons, Scrabble, **Pathfinders**
- Visitors including Elected Representatives, Election Officials; Interactions FAQ banks
- Youth Parliaments and debates on relevant electoral participation issues
- Technology driven initiatives including Social media, Student Blogs

The engagement as per requirements will be in local languages for effective interactions. **The entire engagement will be non-partisan and strictly neutral in nature** with the sole objective of enhancing electoral participation amongst the young and future voters.

Expected Outcomes

As an expected outcome, the Future and New Voters should be fully confident of how, when, where, what and why of the electoral participation. They should be

able to understand the value of their vote, significance of sanctity and secrecy of their vote, confident of mature, competent and ethical ballot decisions. They should become interested in participating for their first Ballot Decision on an ethical note as soon as they become 18 years old. In quantifiable terms the expected outcomes would mean larger electoral registration and enhanced Voter Turnout.

Student Teacher Resources

Work on several aspects such as development of Student Teacher resources, Training, Communication and other related matters is progressing well. **Teacher Resources** are being prepared along with the student resources for each of the tools for appreciation and prior comprehension of the teachers in charge.

Training

Training of Resource persons will be done at the state level in coordination with State Education Departments and the institutions under it. Master trainers for each state will be trained through the ECI, IIIDEM framework.

Pilot Electoral Literacy Clubs

Three Pilot Electoral Literacy Clubs established at St Xavier's College, Ranchi, Department of Political Science, Panjab University Chandigarh and Shiv Nadar School, NOIDA have found tremendous response from students. The activities include robust and vibrant interactions, visits of election officials and interactions, debates, voter camps, debates, setting up of Wall magazines, and above all the harnessing of the potential in the form of guidance to other institutions for setting up of the ELCs. Separate articles in the issue discuss these ELCs.

Epilogue

ELCs are envisaged to serve as a vibrant hub of Electoral literacy direct interaction in education institutions in the country for strengthening electoral participation among young and future voters. The programme has the potential of becoming largest electoral experiment in the world with over a million ELCs in the Country. ELCs form a vital investment in encouraging new and future voters for electoral participation and as such the future of democracy.

S D Sharma
Senior Fellow, ECI



Community responds positively

It was a crisp morning on November 4, 2017 when members of Election Commission of India's SVEEP team set out for its very first field trial of tools developed for its novel project, Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs). Our focus for the day was testing out tools for *Chunav Pathshalas* that have been planned to function as ELCs for rural communities to enable systematic spread of electoral knowledge. Considering the socio-economic as well as cultural diversity of a country like India, designing learning games and activities was indeed a challenge for the SVEEP team who had worked on their development for months. And so, on that morning of early winters, the members of SVEEP were buzzing with excitement and nervousness to finally have the opportunity to test out the fruits of their hard work.

Two neighbouring villages were selected for this very special field trial – Aurangabad Ristal and Mevla Bhatti. Chosen to conduct the field trial were four very enthusiastic members of the team – the wise and experienced, senior consultant, Dr. Aarti Agarwal, with an eye for keen observation SVEEP executive, Vinayak Sen, I, Simran Sachdeva, also a SVEEP executive and our intern with great communication skills, Payal Nagpal.

Our first stop was Ristal village, which is situated 20 kms from Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, with a population of 3,435 people. Approaching the venue, which was a large open courtyard of a village school building, we found our audience of about 50 already assembled waiting for us. As expected, majority of the

participants for this trial were male members ranging from 16 – 60 years of age. Veiled women sat on chairs in a separate row. The gender division was not lost on us. This initial observation later led us to make important changes in our activities in order to make them more gender inclusive.

Our agenda was to test out 4 major activities designed for ELCs. Of these, we were testing out two activities in Ristal that we had fondly named *Soochi Ki Tayyaari* and *Model Matdaan*. While the former included play and a dummy's voter list to educate the community members about the Booth Level Officer, Electoral Roll and Form 6, the latter was an election simulation exercise in which the members would elect the animal mascot for their Pathshala.

To set the ball rolling, Dr. Aarti introduced the concept of Chunaav Pathshala and communicated our purpose for visiting Ristal which immediately caught the attention of the citizens who were extremely active in local politics and citizenry. Introducing our first activity, *Soochi Ki Tayyari*, we asked for 4 volunteers to act as the BLOs of their village. Very enthusiastically four young adults came forward, took a blank copy of the dummy voters' list, and went about to 'enroll' the present members in their list. As everyone observed the engaged 'BLOs', we explained to them the role and function of a BLO

and the importance of having one's name on the voter list to be able to vote. In the background, Vinayak and Payal could be seen setting the stage for the next activity. With thoughtful nods, the rapt members asked us on what comes next. Here is when we introduced them to our second activity, *Model Matdaan*.

The District Consultant assisting us, Mr. Mohd. Farooq, chose 5 youngsters from



Community watch



Creating the



The Volunteers who donned the roles of mascots

the assembled group and each was given an animal character. These animal characters, or mascots, were now the candidates of a mock election which we were about to conduct. As the volunteers donned the roles of their mascot characters and stepped forward to give their campaign speeches, ballot papers were brought out, a polling booth was set up and the dummy voters' list was compiled amidst the enthused laughter and



es the movie on elections

applause of the Pathshala members as they cheered on for the candidates. Soon after the campaigning, the members were instructed to check their names in the voter list, sign against their names, collect their ballot paper, get their fingers inked and proceed to go behind the voting screen to cast their vote. They were taught how to mark the ballot, and the matdaan really began. The SVEEP team members now adopted the roles

of various polling officers and the poll was conducted in an orderly fashion even when members tried to rush in their fervour to vote. Everyone could feel the electric excitement hanging in the air.

Post matdaan, the counting of votes was conducted. It is at this point that we realised that the women who had gathered had started leaving and while a few had not voted at all, most had dropped empty ballots. The winning mascot was announced, and the gathered members applauded the victory, but the exclusion of woman from participation was seriously picked

up for discussion by the village adults. It was heartening to see that the male members of the village who had stayed back, realised the importance of every individual's vote and vowed to encourage their wives, daughters and sisters to exercise their franchise and educate them about the electoral process.

Our second stop, the neighbouring village of Mewla Bhatti was a pleasant surprise to our team. Bright, twinkling eyes and earnest smiles welcomed us and we took in the harmonious sight of both men and women along with teenagers sitting together awaiting our arrival.







Perhaps, having a woman as the village pradhan, made the difference here. Accompanying us was her husband who proudly declared that the village had a 98% voting rate in local elections. However, the same could not be said about the Legislative Assembly Elections.

Running through our route of introductions, we quickly proceeded for our activity for this community – Nirvachitra, the film screening. Huddling around our laptop screen, the assembled members watched ECI's film Masti, Dosti Aur Matdaan, an animated short film that covers the electoral process. Following this we requested the members to form groups and write a story, real or fictional, about their own voting experience. One member from each group was called forward to read out their stories which was an amusing experience in itself. While at one point we found ourselves giggling at the story of a pehelwan who had ironically fainted of heat stroke while waiting in the voters' queue, at another instance we listened with rapt attention, as a young boy relayed what he imagines his first voting experience to be like. Following this we played a quick game named Nota Ko Janey aimed at educating electors about the NOTA option. A short discussion following the game, led to another more serious one where all members discussed the importance of making an informed and ethical decision in elections.

That day, amidst laughter and solemnity, we all went

home having learnt something new. The immense satisfaction of knowing that our tools worked effectively encouraged us to refine them further. At the same time the insights we gained in the social and behavioural realities as well as diversity, only made our tools richer with knowledge. We returned home that evening, even more motivated for the ELC project. The field visit had proven beyond all doubt that democracy was a cause worth putting in every effort for.

Simran Sachdeva
Executive, SVEEP

Chunav Pathshala Mascot Election BALLOT PAPER		
Mr. Buffalo		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Camel		<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Dog		<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Horse		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ms. Rabbit		<input type="checkbox"/>
None Of The Above		<input type="checkbox"/>

The Ballot paper for Mock Elections

ELC activities a hit with Schools

Mid–November 2017, the SVEEP team set out on another winter morning for a field trial with the aim to test out its tools developed for ELCs for schools. A previous trial had been conducted in the month of October 2017 in Gurgaon's Gems International School. However, to ensure that the activities were comprehensible by students of all backgrounds we found ourselves that morning at the gates of Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya Vidyalaya in Delhi's East Vinod Nagar, zealous as ever and this time, with new members with just as much passion.

Dr. Aarti, Vinayak and Simran had the experience of two field trials as far as the ELC project was concerned.



Students play the Step Up game

This was going to be our third and the most intense trial yet. Accompanying us were two more members of the SVEEP team, and Shazia Ali Khan along with Mahima Mathur from the India International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Management (IIIDEM).

Dividing ourselves into groups of two, we had 1 hour with a section of class IX, X, XI and XII each. I was especially looking forward for this field trial. We were told by their Principal, that the students of RSKV were brilliant young girls coming from very humble backgrounds. They represented a section of the society that understood barriers to opportunities all too well and had faced exclusion either in a social situation or in the society itself at some point or the other. We had the perfect opportunity to test out, for the very first time,

our game Step Up, which revolved around the issues of accessibility and inclusion.

While Shazia and I, along with Dr. Aarti moved to the classroom of Class X, Aradhana and Vinayak with Mahima moved to Class IX to test out a fascinating card game developed by Mahima named *Vigilant Voter* that detailed on the 6 basic steps of the electoral process, from filling form 6 to finally casting a vote, that a voter must follow. We were pleased to find a class full of 50 young girls who greeted us with a bright 'good morning' as soon as we entered the classroom. After exchanging introductions, we gladly engaged with the girls in a short discussion covering topics like the Indian democracy, role of elections, importance of voting and how to get enrolled as voters. There was not a shadow of a doubt in our minds that we were in the presence of intelligent young girls who would grow up into women of great potential.

Step Up is an interactive, no–contact game that aims to help build an understanding among the students about challenges that may be faced by certain sections of society in accessing services and also encourage students to suggest solutions. The game has 6 character roles and 6 student volunteers are assigned a character role each. They are then asked simple yes–no questions which they are to answer by empathizing with their assigned character. The game aims at experiential learning as the participants shall visualize the challenges/assets of the roles they would be playing. Through the questions learners may take





cognizance of the fact that there are certain sections of society, who face difficulties that require facilitation.

A start line was drawn where all the 6 characters stood, representing how every vote is equal and holds the same value. The students were asked questions like whether they were literate, whether they could take a day off to cast their vote etc. and depending on their character, they took a step forward if the answer was yes or a step backward if the answer was no. The rest of the class simply observed. At the end of the game, the entire class watched in awe, as all characters that had initially started out at the same line were now seen scattered at different positions, with a few far ahead the others. The visual impact was immense and the message had hit home. They spiritedly tried to work out solutions and eventually concluded that barriers will always exist, and one must make every attempt to overcome them, especially when ECI already is trying to facilitate voters in every way.

The card game *Vigilant Voter* was a great hit with the children, however we realized, that the messages of voter education were somehow lost in the general rules and conduct of the game. This was an important feedback that helped us re-design the game. In the second hour, students of class XI, were shown an animated movie *Masti, Dosti aur Matdaan* followed by the *NOTA ko Janey* game. A pop-quiz at the end of the



Students play the cards game

session ensured that the very attentive students had understood each and every concept well. Meanwhile, students of Class XII, filled the actual copies of form 6 and were encouraged to submit the same to their Booth Level Officer once they turned 18, if they weren't already.

The teachers in the school too gave a positive feedback regarding the different activities. They suggested some minor edits, which were noted by us for incorporation in the activities.

Our final field visit to RSKV was not only fruitful but also filled us with wonder as we gave thought to the capability each and every young lady possessed. An educated woman teaches 10 others, such is her potential. We pulled into the portico of Nirvachan Sadan with a sense of certainty that the project will serve its purpose.

Aradhana Sharma
Executive, SVEEP



Students listen about Electoral process with rapt attention

Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy

With the roll out date of Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy programme fast approaching, the Election Commission of India organised a two day workshop on December 19 & 20, 2017. The workshop was aimed at concentrating efforts for a final review of the tools prepared for the Electoral Literacy Clubs which will be set up in schools, colleges and educational institutions all across the country. For this purpose, ECI invited Chief Electoral Officers, Master Trainers, representatives from Civil Society Organisations, educators from schools and colleges as well as development communicators from different corners of the nation to the two day workshop, where their suggestions were sought to further refine the tools, check their viability and deliberate on an effective roll-out plan to set up the ELCs.

Studies suggest that participation in the first one or two elections of an elector's lifetime helps to inculcate the habit of voting and makes participation in future elections more likely. Thus, getting the younger population interested and engaged in the democratic processes would be potentially very fruitful in registration and voting. It is important to keep voter education relevant, practical and renewed every time through a host of curricular and co-curricular and

extra – curricular methods. Keeping this in mind ECI is committed towards inclusion of Electoral Literacy in school curricula and setting up of Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs) in educational institutions. Through the ELCs, ECI aims to educate every young and future voter falling in the age group of 14–17 years about their voting rights and prepare them to be the responsible voters of tomorrow. The project is with the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) team of the ECI.

ELCs is proposed to be established in the 0.2 million Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools covering around 70 million students in the age of 14–17 years, with focus on activities based learning. ELCs is also proposed to be set up in more than 25000 colleges, university campuses for engaging around 16 million students in the age group 18–22 years in hands on experience in electoral literacy. However, a point to note here is that about 2.8 crore Indian children falling in the category of 14–17 are not enrolled in the formal education system. While about 4 crore children are enrolled in the rural areas, dropout rates are way too high resulting in a rural populace that has studied only till class 5th on an average.



The Commission at the Workshop



A special initiative is thus being taken under the ELC project, where the SVEEP team will try to reach out to these future voters falling out of the formal education system along with adult members of their communities by setting up 'Chunav Pathshalas' at the polling station level throughout the country. Chunav Pathshalas thus will function as ELCs for rural communities to enable systematic spread of electoral knowledge. Under this, peer group effect would also be built in and may include even existing adult voters who are interested in Electoral Literacy.

The December Workshop had two agendas to fulfill on the first day of the workshop. The first was to review all tools developed for ELCs by the SVEEP team. Over a period of 6 months, the SVEEP team worked to develop these tools, that essentially include games and activities which focused on students in schools from Class IX – XII, the youth in colleges and citizens in communities. A total of 25 activities were thus prepared which were reviewed by the 40 participants of the workshop. The second agenda was

for the CEOs and Addl. CEOs participating in the workshop to deliberate on the roll out plan of the ELCs.

The proceedings of the first day began with a welcome address by Padma Angmo, Director, SVEEP who gave a presentation briefing the attendees on the background of the project and communicated the expectations at the conclusion of the presentation. This was followed by an address by the Senior DEC, Umesh Sinha who expressed his views on this endeavour of mainstreaming electoral literacy. Soon after, the learned and zealous participants got to work on their respective tables.

Each table was allotted a specific ELC target group and each participant on the table was further given a specific activity designed for that particular target



to work on. The 40 participants were thus divided in 4 tables, each working on one of the four targets – Communities (Chunav Pathshala), students of Class IX & X, students of Class XI & XII and College students. The participants carefully assessed each allotted activity and engaged with each other in a healthy discussion that deliberated on possible changes for further improvement of the tools. Setting up ELCs all across the country is no easy task, hence, the CEOs along with other nodal officers conferred upon the best way for implementing the programme, talking about the structure, format, roll out, conduct and training of conveners of the clubs.





On the second day, each table shared the fruits of their discussion through short and insightful presentations. The first technical session of the day was chaired by Election Commissioner, Mr. O.P. Rawat, Senior DEC, Mr. Umesh Sinha and Chairperson, CBSE Ms. Anita Karwal. Addl. CEO, Rajasthan, Dr. Rekha Gupta and Professor, Lady Irwin College, Dr. Aparna Khanna, presented on ELCs for communities i.e. the Chunav Pathshalas. Their presentation was followed by CEO Jammu & Kashmir, Mr. Shaleen Kabra who talked about ELCs for colleges. Interesting highlights of this session were the experiences shared by Professor Navjot from Punjab University and Shalini Saboo from St. Xavier's, Ranchi, of the first ELCs already set up in their respective colleges.

The second technical session, chaired by Election Commissioner, Sunil Arora, Senior DEC, Umesh Sinha and Senior Fellow, S.D. Sharma observed experience

sharing by Ms. Nitina Dua from Shiv Nadar School Noida where the first ELC for school students has been set up. CEO Karnataka, Sanjiv Kumar shared the deliberations conducted on his table on ELCs for Class IX & X while CEO West Bengal, Dr. Aariz Aftab presented on ELCs for Class XI & XII. The session was concluded by comments from the DEC and EC who expressed their appreciation for all the participants along with their observations.

The workshop came to an end with a presentation by Director SVEEP, Padma Angmo, summarizing the major points discussed by every table. This was followed with the address by the Chief Election Commissioner, Mr. A. K. Joti in which he stressed upon the great importance of this ambitious endeavor. The session closed with CEO West Bengal, Dr. Aariz Aftab presenting two SVEEP publications with the Commission that compiles the best electoral practices

of the state and Drawing in Delight, a collection of paintings by young school students on the topic of voting and empowerment.

Post workshop, the SVEEP team made the required changes to the developed content and ECI is now aiming at pan India roll out starting from January 25, 2018 on National Voters' Day.

Simran Sachdeva
Executive, SVEEP



The SVEEP team

Experiential Beginnings of ELC

In India we do not prepare future voters, and therefore they find themselves cut-off from India's socio-political realities and the election system. There is no carefully constructed programme to develop a sense of facts and structures to enable a child to negotiate with democracy. For a democracy to work, it is important to understand the processes and structures that are in place and to understand how and why they function. With this clarity in mind, setting up an Electoral Literacy Club in the school was an obvious next step.

We are proud to be students of Shiv Nadar School, Noida, where the first Electoral Literacy Club of the country was inaugurated by the then Hon'ble Chief Election Commissioner of India, Dr. Nasim Zaidi, on May 19, 2017 in the presence of esteemed guests – Ms. Padma Agnmo (Director, ECI), Mr. S.D. Sharma (Senior Fellow, ECI), the District Magistrate, City Magistrate, ECI officials and others. Celebrating democracy in our own way by electing the members of student council, it was a pleasure to have our guests as a part of the Investitures Ceremony of the school which was followed by the inauguration of the club.

The ELC wishes to work towards empowering school students by educating them about the electoral processes and imbibing within them the values of making informed and ethical decision. Per the ex-CEC's advice, the children from Nursery to Grade 2 have been designated as Little Champs, while children of grades 3–11 have been named Future Voters. The very first thing that has been developed by Shiv Nadar's ELC is a Student Council Rulebook modelled

on India's Constitution. Of the projects that are being planned for the ELC, the most ambitious is an Electoral Museum to document the process of democracy in India, and featuring electoral maps of neighbourhoods, among other artefacts.

The ELC functions in conjunction with the other extra-curricular activities and clubs already in place in the school. We, as ELC members look forward to developing conversations on the side-lines of the Model United Nations through online campaigns, surveys and online debates. We have set up a regular blog to educate children on India's political structures in a language that is accessible. We co-hosted the Inter-House Debate along with the Literary Club and the Public Speaking Club, and we wish to conduct an Inter-School Youth Parliament on every National voters' Day. As a part of our outreach programmes, we look forward to a workshop to be conducted by officials from the CEC's office, arranging internships with local administrative bodies (min 5 days, max 2 months) and conducting interviews with elected local officials. Giving back to society is a value we strongly believe in; hence we have tried to expand the ambit of the ELC's work to our neighbouring village schools – Chhaprauli School, Utpal Valley School (twice a month).

Students like us are the future of tomorrow, and an investment in us today, is an investment in the country, and more importantly, the democracy we will build tomorrow.

Ananya Arora & Rudra Sen
Prefects, ELC



Dr. Nasim Zaidi, the then CEC motivates the students of Shiv Nadar School.



ELC Success Story at Punjab University

The Backdrop

Department of Political Science, Punjab University (PU), is one of the most active, vibrant and innovative centres in the discipline of political science in the country today. Excited by the prospect of spreading voter education, on September 16, 2017, a pilot Electoral Literacy Club (ELC) was set up in PU with great enthusiasm under the valuable guidance of Mr. S. D. Sharma, Senior Fellow, ECI.

The ELC, being the first of its kind in North India, has been established as a neutral, non-partisan club under the SVEEP program of the Election Commission of India. The underlying concept of the Club is to educate young voters about electoral participation through interaction, engagement and hands on experience.

Around 180 students of Masters Programme and Research Scholars have already joined the club with Dr. Navjot, Chairperson of the Department and Prof Pampa Mukherjee as the acting Nodal Officers of the club.

Wall Magazine

Through the concept of the wall magazine, PU ELC shares essential information related to voter education in an engaging format. A wall magazine typically consists of four parts, each displaying a different set of facts relating to the Indian electoral process, eligibility criteria to be a voter in India, different notices of ECI regarding the Voter's list, press coverage on ELC etc. The wall magazine also displays the topic to be discussed in the next ELC meeting.

Harnessing the Potential

In one of its very first meetings, the ELC members were briefed about the club's purpose and discussed in detail about the initiatives taken by ECI to mainstream the Electoral Literacy in India in general and young voters in particular. Constitutional provisions relating to the elections is to were discussed. It was decided that



interactive meetings be held at least once a month, on various issues and themes related to electoral literacy under the aegis of ELC.

The second interactive Session of the Club involved the S.D.M.(C)—cum—AERO, Joint CEO and other election officials from U.T. Chandigarh who sensitized the students about the need of electoral participation and apprised them on the online procedure for voter registration, encouraging them to enroll themselves and motivate others to get enrolled as voters. Adding a little entertainment to the interaction sessions, the film 'Newton' was screened in the ELC, which was followed by an intense discussion, by the members of the club.

Way of Forward

ELC, Department of Political Science is currently assisting CEO, Punjab to open around 570s ELCs in the schools and colleges of Punjab including 100 ELCs in the schools and colleges of Chandigarh. The activities of the ELC will be streamlined strictly in accordance with guidelines of the ECI. Participating in the December workshop at Nirvachan Sadan on the way forward with ELCs had been an insightful experience where we shared our own experiences with setting up a pilot ELC. Working with ELCs, one realizes the importance of investing in the future of democracy through the youth.

Department of Political Science
Punjab University (PU)

Investment in the Culture of Electoral Participation

The Electoral Literacy Club (ELC) at the Department of Political Science at St. Xavier's College (SXC), Ranchi is a pilot experiment in the state of Jharkhand. The Club established in association with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Jharkhand was started in the month of June, 2017. It is the first of its kind in the country established under the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

The ELC at St. Xavier's boasts of being all-inclusive with more than 50 percent of its members as tribal students. In a short span of six months of its establishment, the ELC developed a high level of curiosity among students cutting across streams and courses of study and the huge, positive response shown in its activities bears testimony to this fact. At the outset, the ELC started with a wall magazine. It has been educating students on fundamentals like eligibility criteria for being a voter, use of Form 6, EVM-VVPAT, etc. The magazine is receiving tremendous response in the form of suggestions and appreciation from all.



The Logo of ELC, SXC, Ranchi designed by Surabhi Suman, BA Economics.

With the intent to select its mascot, the club organized the 'ELC Logo Design' contest in August, 2017 which received 300 entries and the logo that received the highest votes was adopted by the club.

On November 11, 2017 a talk titled "Process of Voter Registration" was organized by the Club. Shri. Rajesh Ranjan Verma, DEO and Smt. Geeta Choubey, DEO were the speakers for the occasion in which

500 members of the ELC participated. The talk was followed by an interactive session with the students and a Voter Registration Camp. ELC, SXC is now also a permanent counter for distributing voter registration forms.



A large number of ELC members witnessing the talk on voter registration in the college auditorium.

Major contributions of ELC, SXC, Ranchi

The ELC at the college has done a pioneering work of developing a question bank of 650 questions on Voter Literacy developed by Prof. B.K. Sinha and Shalini Saboo. The novel idea of organizing the country's first Election Olympiad, a brainchild of Prof. B.K. Sinha, HoD of Political Science in the college, has also been conceptualized by us. A landmark meeting with Vice-chancellors of seven universities of the state was also conducted regarding the same. The ELC also rendered huge support to the office of the CEO, Jharkhand in conducting the State Round of the Inter-School National Election Quiz 2018 through its question bank and team of student volunteers.

The pilot ELC at the college inspired by and established under the guidance of Shri. S.D. Sharma, Senior Fellow to the ECI, is today a model for institutions seeking to establish it. Around 10 schools and 12 colleges from the state capital have already approached ELC, SXC for a presentation defining the concept.

Shalini Saboo, Research Scholar
St. Xavier's College, Ranchi

REACHING OUT

FUTURE VOTERS

Interactive School Engagement & National Elections Quiz

As per the Census Data 2011, there are 9.68 crore children in the age-group of 14–17 years. Of these 6.97 crore were enrolled in schools. There are around 2 lakh secondary and senior secondary schools as per the Statistics of School Education 2011–12, MoHRD, Bureau of Planning, Monitoring & Statistics.



Election Commission of India, under its flagship voter education programme 'SVEEP', has taken up some activities in schools like celebration of National Voters' Day on January 25, issue of 'Sankalp Patras' ahead of elections and some competitions like drawing, quiz etc. Sankalp patras are letters issued to parents through the school students during election period whereby the parents and other eligible members of the family are asked to append their signature to a pledge for participating in the electoral process. The same pledge letter is then submitted back to the school and they further submit it to the District Election officer.

While these activities were aimed at sensitizing the school children for carrying the message to their

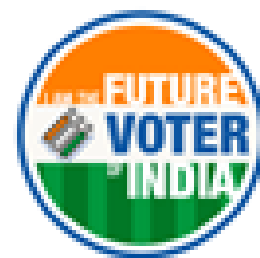
parents, there was a growing realisation in the Commission that systemic intervention need to be taken up through the existing educational structure so that continuous electoral literacy can be taken up rather than voter awareness in spurts.

Thus Continuous Education in Electoral Democracy was included in the Strategic Plan 2016–2025, under the Strategic Pillar 8– 'Electoral Literacy & Education' as one of the goals. Designing and implementing extra co-curricular activities in Schools and Colleges was one of the defined activities to achieve this goal. Taking forward this specific goal, the theme for the 7th National Voters' Day 2017 was 'Empowering Young & Future Voters' which set the tone for the interventions planned for the year.

Future voters or those in the age-group of 14–17 years became the new significant target for voter education. On one hand a comprehensive approach was being developed in terms of 'Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy' through Electoral Literacy Clubs and curriculum interventions, on the other, it was decided to initiate the first pan-India intervention into this segment through a quick pilot approach.

ISE

A brain-child of the then Chief Election Commissioner, Dr Nasim Zaidi, a plan was devised whereby each Chief Electoral officer, District Election Officer and Electoral Registration Officer were asked to have an interactive session with the students of class 9–12 in any one school within their area of jurisdiction. Rural and Urban schools were to be equitably covered under the plan. Dr Nasim Zaidi was invited by Shiv Nadar School



Noida, where he responded to the queries of the students on all topics related to election and electoral process.

A quick programme was chalked out which came to be named as Interactive School Engagement (ISE).

A kit was shared with the CEOs consisting of a presentation in English covering all important aspects of the electoral process. Informed and ethical voting and the motivational aspect was also keeping in mind while designing the presentation. Badges stating 'I am the Future Voter of India' were given to the students, the design for which was also included in the kit shared with the CEOs alongwith an edutainment film on electoral process and some games on electoral process.

Taken up in January 2017 just ahead of the NVD, around **11,800 schools** were covered across the country covering 25,11,594 students. Buoyed by the success of the programme, it was decided to conduct it in July/August ahead of Summary Revision. 16,855 Schools and 32,58,080 students were covered under the ISE programme in July 2017. Under the two phases conducted in 2017 more than 28000 schools and around 58 lakh students were covered.

The questions asked by the students during the interactive session with the EROs, DEOs and CEOs were compiled. These make very interesting reading and gives an insight into what the young students perceive about the electoral process.

#NEQIndia

Looking at the enthusiastic response of the students during ISE, and the various queries put up to the



Interactive School Engagement (ISE) activities

Election Officers during the ISE, the idea of conducting a Quiz came up. While Quizzes have been an important and regular component of various SVEEP interventions taken up by the individual DEOs especially ahead of election, there had been no precedent of a National Level Quiz programme on elections.

A detailed structure of the **National Elections Quiz – Inter School Competition**

was devised. The first round was envisioned as the round with most extensive coverage and accordingly it was decided to take up an Intra–School round as an exercise of voter education. The Intra–School round questionnaire was accordingly developed by ECI covering the basic and most important part of the electoral process from a voter's perspective. Information about registration and voting process was covered under the set of 30 questions, which was shared with the States for local translation and further sharing with Schools. Around 15 lakh students from more than 30000 participated in the Intra–School round.

The District round and the State round were conducted by the concerned DEOs and CEOs and the questions were prepared independently with increasing difficulty level. While many states conducted their State Rounds in the studios of Doordarshan for state telecast, some organized it as a stage event and invited school students to attend and cheer for their school teams.

For the national rounds, the 36 States and UTs were grouped into six zones, North, West, East, South, North–East and Special Central Zone. The six Zonal Winners qualified for the Grand Finale. Rajya Sabha TV collaborated with ECI on the national rounds and 7 episodes were shot covering the six zonal rounds

and the grand finale. The national episodes were also live-streamed on social media platforms like Facebook and YouTube.

While the State Winners were felicitated at the National Voters' Day function at the States/UTs, the National Champion – Jharkhand Team from Delhi Public School, Ranchi was felicitated by the Hon'ble President of India at the NVD function in New Delhi.

With the overall goal of citizenship development for effective electoral engagement, the NEQ was aimed at sensitizing the target audience about their role and rights in the democratic electoral process and fill the gaps in information.

While, the primary target audience for the NEQ

2018 was the more than 15 lakh future voters who had participated in the competition, the wider secondary target audience were the viewers who were reached out through the television telecast and social media live-streaming of the NEQ episodes.

The estimated population reached out to through NEQ 2018 is around 300 million Indians.

Padma Angmo
Director, ECI



Interactive School Engagement (ISE) activities



State Level NEQ Competition



72 NEQ finalists from all States & U.Ts of India at ECI

PUBLICATION

Mainstreaming of Electoral Literacy

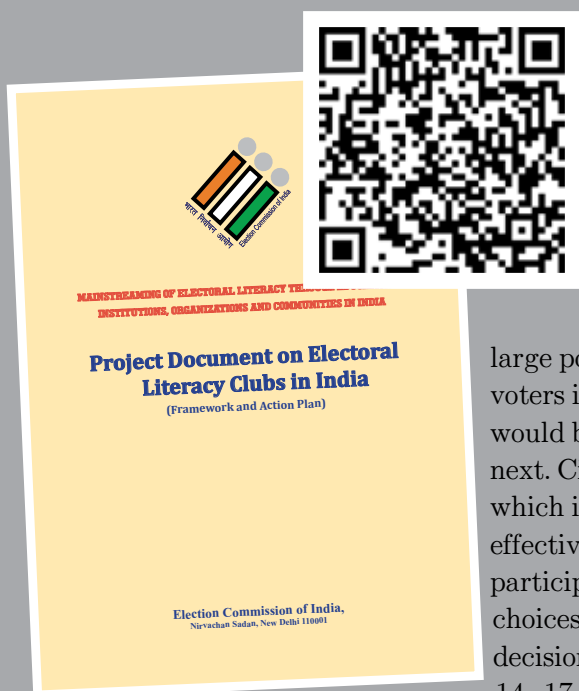
Young and Future voters constitute a sizeable part of India's democratic polity. As per the Census 2011, there were 14.2 crore young people in the age group 14–19 in India. Evidence based on international practices suggests that electoral literacy supported by civic education, if introduced at a young age, helps in confident, informed and ethical electoral participation.

Election Commission of India in due recognition of this fact

set mainstreaming of electoral literacy as a focus area under its Strategic Action Plan 2016–25. Taking forward the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan, the Commission developed a comprehensive interaction with stakeholders including the Central Government, the State Governments, National and State level Premier Educational Institutions and Experts besides setting up 'Working Group' on the subject. The outcome of all efforts is included in this publication.



Project Document on Electoral Literacy Clubs in India



As per the Census 2011, there are 14.2 crore young people in the age group 14–19 in India. Given the registration and voting age of 18, there is a sizeable voter age population at 18–19 years besides an equally

large population of the future voters in the age group 14–17 who would become voters every year next. Citizenship development, which is about developing effective electoral engagement, participation, making informed choices and ethical ballot decisions, in the age group of 14–17 years for electoral

participation is thus a vital investment in the future of democracy.

To achieve this aim, Electoral Literacy Clubs are being set up in the country to promote electoral literacy and develop a culture for voting in the future voters of the country through interesting activities and hands-on experience but in an apolitical, neutral and non-partisan manner. The project document on ELCs in India discusses in detail the facets of this initiative and lays out a road map towards the achievement of its success.

Cracking the NEQ Code

Disregarding its use in common parlance from around the 1780s when it stood for an 'odd or, eccentric person', the most famous fable tracing the origin of the word 'Quiz' dates back to 1791. Post the day's performance, an otherwise unimpressive Irish theatre-proprietor—Richard Daly decided to make a bet with his friends that within a span of 48 hours he'd make a nonsense word popular throughout the city of Dublin. In pursuit of his wager, Daly gave cards to his staff and street urchins with the word 'Quiz' written.

Instructing them to write the word on doors, windows and walls all over the city, 'Quiz' spread like wildfire creating overnight buzz and curiosity among the people. Daly's gamble paid off. All of a sudden, the world now, had a new curio to build upon.

Notwithstanding the veracity of the legend, what it reveals about Quiz is the fact that ever since its emergence, the mind-sport has interestingly been involved as a very effective instrument of communication. Further, what works in its favour as a potent communicator is its inherent ability to be easily customizable. One can have general quizzes on a wide array of themes and subjects, as well as genre-specific niche quizzes. For some—quizzes can exude an interpersonal appeal while for others it may serve as a tool for reaching out to the masses. Extending its flexibility even further is the fact, that quizzes can be adapted into multiple environment settings. Added to this is its lure across all age groups that contributes immensely to its popularity. And lastly—aiding to its cause is its non-resource intensive nature. The only two common strands powering quizzes around the world across centuries are— an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and indomitable curiosity.

With the Election Commission of India declaring 2017 as the year of the youth on National Voters' Day with

the overall theme being— '*Empowering Young and Future Electors*', a series of initiatives were undertaken as a part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme, including— the Interactive School Engagement (ISE) endeavour (Phase I and Phase II) which saw an outreach to almost 55 lakh students from nearly 30,000 schools, the commencement of the project on Electoral

Literacy Clubs (ELCs), event collaboration with IIT— Kanpur's Annual Cultural Fest— Antaragni, launch of a new category— '*Indian*

Elections' on the mobile gaming app QuizUp and the National Elections Quiz.

Developed as an extension of the Interactive School Engagement (ISE) programme, the National Elections Quiz forms the third part of the integrated project (including— ISE and ELCs) designed to sensitize, build awareness on elections and electoral processes in order to trigger behaviour-change and inculcate habit-formation within India's burgeoning youth populace. Engaging high— school students from Classes IX to XII (in the age-group of 14–17 years) the future voters of India, in a self-learning exercise about elections and electoral processes and aid in building an aware and informed electorate of the future, the National Elections Quiz or, NEQ 2018 was planned and organized along a ladder-like framework running from the Intra-School level to the District and State Rounds followed by the National Semi-Finals arranged zone-wise, finishing off with the National Grand Finale in New Delhi in January 2018.

Leveraging the extensive machinery of the Election Commission in place, the District Election Officers (DEOs), in partnership with the District Education Department were made in-charge of the first two rounds extending from early November to the beginning of December, which witnessed teams of two

World's Largest Quiz on Elections



NEQ District Round in Punjab.

facing relatively easy to moderate functional questions on elections and basic electoral mechanisms in India in written or, on-stage format. Once the mammoth phase was over with each of the 700 odd districts having one clear winner, the batons were transferred to the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) to helm the State Round. Taking place in the State/ Union Territory capitals, the third level of NEQ, scheduled for the year-end saw multiple rounds of intense on-stage quizzing by teams to secure the position of the State Winner sealing a place in the National Semi-Finals.



NEQ State Champions of Assam – Vishal and Sarfaraz.

To render an idea of the transition in terms of difficulty across the first three levels of the Quiz, which the final 36 teams had had to tackle, take a shot at these–

Which Constitutional Amendment lowered the age of voting from 21 to 18 years?

(Intra-School Round)

Or, maybe this–

In which year did Nagaland participate in the Lok Sabha

Elections for the first time?

(District Round in Nagaland)

And, the following–

TS Krishnamurthy was the Chief Election Commissioner of India and one of his main assignments was to oversee the 2004 elections to the Lok Sabha. In 2005, he was appointed by the Supreme Court of India to conduct the elections for another organization in order to ensure free and fair polls. Identify the organization.

(Tamil Nadu State Round)

Receiving immensely valuable content support from the Quiz Societies of two well-renowned educational institutions of the city– Jesus and Mary College and Ambedkar University– the final levels of the Quiz covered subjects and themes such as– *Elections in India, the Election Commission of India, History of Democracies and Elections, Voting Processes, Voter Education and Literacy, National Voters' Day, Electoral Technology, Electoral Terminology, Model Code of Conduct, Landmark Steps and Measures, Popular Stories, Personalities, Elections across the World, Election Management Bodies, Types of Elections, International Electoral Organizations and Foundations, Popular Culture and Elections, Election Symbols, Elections to Local Bodies, Women and Elections, Constituent Assembly Debates on Universal Suffrage, Famous Parliamentary Debates on Elections et al.*



NEQ Mentors from Jesus and Mary College and Ambedkar University with Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha and Director (SVEEP) Padma Angmo.

Touching down on the evening of January 12, 2018 in New Delhi, the 36 teams had an extensive 4-day itinerary ahead involving tours to several iconic places in Delhi and the eagerly awaited Semis and Grand Finale. The endgame of the 3 month long, pan-national exercise was in the offing.

As the 72 participants started pouring in, steady stream to the brick-red building of Nirvachan Sadan



Zonal Contestants of NEQ at Nirvachan Sadan.

from the wee hours of the next morning, Sr. Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha and Director (SVEEP) Padma Angmo congratulated and briefed the NEQ acers on their accomplishment felicitating all and wishing them luck for the all-important, upcoming rounds.

However, it was now time to give the brilliant lot, a glimpse of the National Capital of the World's Largest Democracy. With a huge contingent of 170 odd people, 4 buses and 3 cars rolled out from Ashoka Road headed for the day's first stop, the Rashtrapati Bhavan. A once in a lifetime experience for many, the high-schoolers were taken on an educative guided tour of the Mughal Gardens, Ashoka Hall, the Durbar Hall, the Jaipur Column, the President's Study and several other magnificent galleries and chambers of the Presidential residence. Amazed to the brim, more, however, was in store for our State Champions in the second half. The second destination for the day was the Qutb Complex, where landmark relics from an era gone-by awaited our bunch of eager and ever-curious youngsters. Once there-out came the cameras, out came the selfie sticks and out came all the excitement of witnessing live the Qutb Minar, the Iron Pillar of Mehrauli, the Alai Darwaza and the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque. The thrill

was infectious and the awe, unmistakably apparent. Clicked to their heart's content, as the day drew to a close, the champs had everlasting memories to take home but with that, set in the nagging drive to perform incredibly well in the all-crucial Semis scheduled for the next 3 days.

January 14 had three back-to-back Semi Finals lined-up, beginning with the North-East followed by the South and ending with the West Zonals. Decked in its best, the Rajya Sabha TV studios rendered the perfect stage and ambience to kick-off the contest. As every luminaire, camera and plasma sharpened its focus on the contestants with the entire PCR team on



Participants were taken on a guided, educative city tour to popular places of attraction, like the Qutb Complex.

its toes, World Quizzing Champion (2014) Vikram Joshi took the podium as the QM for the day setting the balls rolling for the action to begin. The battle of the best minds was on.

While all the intensity was unfurling in the Studio to nail-biting finishes, our teams from the East, Special Central and North Zones, with an extra day at their disposal, made their way to the quintessential Delhi landmark- the Red Fort, and later, the Gandhi Smriti and the Elections Museum in Kashmere Gate- as a part of the second day-long city trip.



The Delhi Darshan for our 72 Semi-Finalists began with a visit to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.



An NEQ contender from Jammu & Kashmir at the Elections Museum.

At the close of the day's events, NEQ 2018 had three photo finishes with Manipur clinching a thriller against Arunachal Pradesh in the North-East Zonals, Puducherry gliding ahead of Tamil Nadu to seal the South Zone and Goa winning it for the West Zone with 70 points.

Before we proceed any further, test your Electoral Quotient and have a swipe at these, piping-hot from the recently concluded Semi-Finals :



Special Central Zone Contenders at the Rajya Sabha TV Studio.

- Elected from the Sohagpur constituency in Madhya Pradesh state's Shahdol-Anuppur district, who became the first transgender person to elected member of an Indian state legislature in 1998?*
- Twelve members of the Rajya Sabha are nominated by the President for proficiency in art, literature, science and social science. However, they are not permitted to one important function exercised by their peers. What is this?*
- What is common to the election symbols of the Samajwadi Party, the Telugu Desam Party, the National Panthers Party, the Kerala Congress (Kerala) and Manipur People's Party?*
- Which former Chief Election Commissioner is responsible for forming*

the guidelines currently followed by universities and colleges across India to conduct student body elections?

- The last western country to give women the right to vote in federal elections did so through a referendum in 1971. Which country was this?*
- Elections were held on 26th November, 2017, its first national and state-level legislature elections since the promulgation of its new constitution, in which country?*

With 3 of the 6 contenders for the title already in place, the next day posed the unraveling of the challengers from the Special Central and East Zone. Only 36 hours separated the participants from honours or, heartbreaks. As the lights dimmed, cameras went on stand-by and the teleprompter started to roll, the test of nerves commenced taking up from the cliffhanger of the last day. As adrenaline gushed inside the ice-cool studio settings, the city of Delhi refused to let go of NEQ acers. With a day off following the high-octane Semis of the day gone-by, participants from the North-East, South and West Zonals toured around the Birla Mandir and Humayun's Tomb before ending with a visit to the trendy Delhi office of NEQ 2018's social media partner— Facebook.

Shifting to the scenes in the Rajya Sabha TV studios, the day had been unforgettable and forever etched in the minds of the contenders from Delhi and Jharkhand. Stealing the thunder from everyone was the team from DPS, Ranchi, scoring a mammoth 105 thereby setting a record for being the first team to break the 100 barrier in NEQ. On the other hand, the Special Central Zonals of the Quiz would probably be best remembered in the times to come as one of the most dramatic and anti-climactic episodes with 4 teams getting a negative in the last question leaving the game wide open for anyone till the final minute. With participants upping



NEQ 2018 National Champions— Madhur and Aditya (from Jharkhand) being felicitated by the Commission.



NEQ 2018 First Runners-Up— V. Vishnu Priya and R. Mithun Krishna (from Puducherry) being felicitated by the Commission.

their game every second, this was quizzing at its best.

Five— sixth of the Finalists' table was now complete. January 16 held the key for what the North Zone had in store and more importantly the answer to the million-dollar question— Who'd be the first Champions of the National Elections Quiz?

As the final day dawned, the first half witnessed a sublime finish by Sonali and Atul representing Jammu & Kashmir edging past Chandigarh and Haryana to secure a place and complete the Top 6 of NEQ 2018. The stage was now set for the Grand Finale of an endeavour that had spanned over 3 months, involved 13.63 lakh students and more than 38,000 schools across an entire nation. As the spot luminaires beamed and the plasmas glowed for one last time before letting the PCR transmit the show opening to the QM, all was now down to just one hour. Only one more hour, and all would be over.

What took shape on the stage was nothing less of a spectacle, perfectly fitting for a Finale of such scale. Taking a huge lead right from the start, Team Jharkhand demonstrated what exemplary strategic gameplay could do when coupled with superior preparation. Close behind its heels but, never quite close enough catch up with Jharkhand at any point during the game— the teams from Puducherry and Manipur, regardless, impressed with their devil— may—care display of brave answering in such high—pressure settings. At the end of 4 rounds of insane quizzing, the scorecard read— Jharkhand: 105— the rest, didn't quite matter now. The plaques were engraved. The certificates inscribed. The cheques signed. And, memories carved for

years to come. Madhur and Aditya— two 12th graders from Delhi Public School, Ranchi, at a time with Board Exams knocking on their doors, had trumped 13.63 lakh of their peers to become the title holders of the first edition of a quiz of a lifetime, NEQ 2018.

The epilogue of National Elections Quiz 2018, an idea that had had its inception 8 months prior as a regular 12—13 slide MS PowerPoint presentation and had gone on to become a pan—Indian behemoth of unprecedented diversity— was drawn. An episode of humongous character was brought to a close with the entire Commission congratulating and extending their heartiest best wishes

to the 12 students, who had traversed great distances, smashed unthinkable barriers and countered every sort of hurdle and made it to the National Finals of what was— the World's Largest Quiz on Elections.

Come January 25 and witness the first ever pan—India Quiz Contest on Elections and Electoral Processes unravel before you across the next three weeks on national television. And, if you're a person in—tune with the trends catch all the action from NEQ Semis and Grand Finale on ECI's Facebook page— 'India Votes' (<https://www.facebook.com/EveryVoteCountsIN/>) and Rajya Sabha TV's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/rajyasabhatv/featured>). Don't forget to follow the hashtag— #NEQIndia to find more about ECI's knowledge venture for the youth and most importantly— do extend your support and best wishes for your favourite teams.

Vinayak Sen

Communications Executive, SVEEP



NEQ 2018 Second Runners-Up— Shangker and Ashmaan (from Manipur) being felicitated by the Commission.

PUBLICATION

Sentinels of Democracy – A Unique Comic Book on Voter Education

The Election Commission of India has always been emphasizing on developing innovative tools to generate awareness and educate all categories of voters, especially youth, regarding informed and inclusive participation in the electoral process. While heading a technical committee appointed for such purpose by the ECI, CEO Gujarat came up with the unique idea of telling stories through cartoons for fun filled education to the voters. The 'LAWTOONS' for voter education were developed by Research Foundation for Governance in India (RFGI), an Ahmedabad based expert agency. The agency was provided with proper understanding of the content and various experiences and illustrations were shared which were relatable and realistic. It ranged from Gujarat in the West to Mizoram in the North East, Kamala in the South to Rajasthan in the North highlighting exemplary works done by the election machinery in spite of geographical, cultural and socio-economic diversities.



The book contains interesting stories told through cartoons which include importance of enrolment as a voter, ethical voting, dedicated work by election personnel amidst various challenges and involvement of young volunteers. All stories have been narrated in a simple and lucid way that makes the book interesting and effective for the citizens and voters of all age groups.

The LAWTOONS, first of its kinds, is appropriately titled 'Sentinels of Democracy.' It has been receiving accolades from all quarters and it is aimed at making available to all through the platform of Social Media. The ECI is planning to upload stories on Facebook one by one in the near future.



Use of Technology for facilitating Voter Education

Voter education is the most important activity required in the conduct of free and fair election. SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral participation) has thus emerged as an important component of any election process. In Tamil Nadu, SVEEP made a technology driven campaign, leveraging on the growing influence of social media and mobile internet. The SVEEP activities were organized around three main themes – enrolment in voters' list, participation in voting and ensuring inducement-free voting. Building trust and confidence of voters in the electoral processes requires a two way voter interaction, continuous consultation with all stakeholders and increased transparency over the entire duration of elections. One can imagine that engaging even a small percentage of the 5.96 crore voters of Tamil Nadu continuously for a two way communication effort and receiving continuous feedback was a gigantic task. The penetration of mobile phones and a very active social media user base were the two main pillars utilized as triggering mechanism for promoting SVEEP in the state.

The following were some important features of the campaign

Interaction made easy – Mobile App – A mobile application was launched with 11 facilities. A

pattern based search facility with split second result was used on advanced automatic capacity expandable servers to facilitate users to search the names in the voters' list. Further features like inclusion, name change, address change, were simplified wherein user had to fill only minor details and all other details were collated from database. The online forms which usually took 30 minutes to fill were now changed and automatic transliteration facilities were included along with advance refresher technology for faster filling of forms within 3 minutes. The process was made mobile friendly. The feature about change your DP (display picture as in mobile) in voter ID became immensely popular amongst the youth. They had to only click their pictures in their phone and link with EPIC number and back end changes were carried out in their Voter IDs.

Enrolment facilitation centres with wifi- connectivity were deployed. In addition, mobile facilitation centres on wheels, equipped with personnel

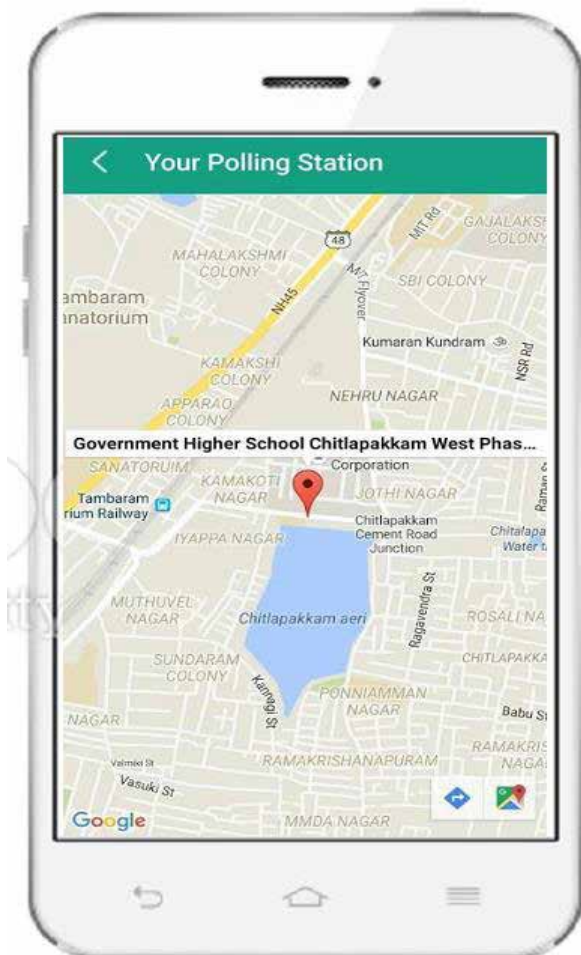
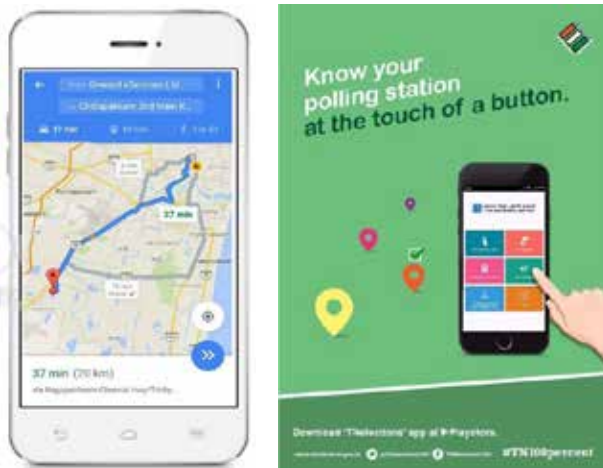


and computer with internet connectivity, offered voter services like application, status checking, application for duplicate EPIC, inclusion etc. at the people's doorsteps.



The EPIC printing and distribution was totally decentralized and one can walk into any service center and print the EPIC and walk away.

Interactive Google guide to PS – Another feature of the application was that once the EPIC



number was punched the application provided navigation services to the polling station.

For those mobile users without internet connectivity **SMS based services** were introduced.

1. Know Your Electoral registration details—Elector can SMS the EPIC number alone to 1950 for which the details are sent back to the elector.
2. Know your Queue Status – The elector can know the status of the queue at the polling stations by sending an SMS to 1950. One only had to SMS Q<EPIC NUMBER> to 1950.
3. Know your Polling Station– Electors can SMS EPIC number preceded by letters PS to get polling station details.
4. Register as Disabled Voters—Elector can send EPIC number preceded by * to register as disabled elector.



5. Any person can send an SMS to check if the vehicle used for electioneering is permitted or not. The SMS format is 'car' followed by the last four digits of the vehicle.
6. Bulk SMS were sent to all the Electors who's mobile numbers are registered with the database with the details of Candidates contesting in their Assembly Constituencies.

Facilities for the Differently-abled – A

facility was provided to the public for booking a wheel chair online for persons with disability and for senior



citizens. Volunteers were also mobilized at the polling stations to man the wheel chairs and around 13,000 wheel chairs were arranged by the DEOs, which marked the highest in any election across India.

A new website with feature for accessibility for people with disabilities has also been developed by the state.

360 degree Grievance Redressal System

The Grievance Redressal System was used as feedback channel and was automated to facilitate two way communication. By innovative use of Information Technology, the system was totally automated with integration of complaints registered in all modes – email, website, mobile app, whatsapp, social media and phone. Each complaint was mapped to the appropriate authority and the user was informed about the status of complaint. On registering a complaint in any media, an SMS was sent immediately to the flying squads, without interference from any one, so that they reach the site quickly. The response time was reduced from 3 hours to 3 minutes. More than 24000 queries and complaints were redressed through this platform. This superfast system was used innovatively to act on complaints of cash distribution and cash storage. The quick response system also acted as a virtuous loop for getting voters interested in elections.

The innovative use of social media for voter education and generating enthusiasm among the youth has become the international precedent. Tamil Nadu has a Facebook user base of 1.8 crore, roughly amounting to 31% of the total electors. In a series of firsts in India, to



reach out to 31 percent of the electorate in Tamil Nadu and to achieve 100 percent turnout, partnerships were forged with facebook and twitter thus creating a digital campaign to make the most out of social media.

Similar to the joint press conference with Ankhi Das, Director of Public Policy (India, South and Central Asia), Facebook, the Tamil Nadu Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Rajesh Lakhoni also held discussions with Raheel Khursheed, Head, News, Politics and Government at Twitter India in Chennai.

As a part of the initiative, new tools were developed by Twitter, including allowing uploading of election-related videos of large size. People tweeting with hashtag #TN100% were sent reminders to cast their votes on the polling day. The tie-ups paved way for various benefits in both the platforms. For the first



time in India, Facebook user voters saw newsfeed reminders for voting on the election date and informational links in their newsfeed. Special chats with the CEO meant that voters could directly interact with the CEO and get their queries answered.

Official and verified Facebook page of the CEO (@TN Elections CEO) and Facebook pages of the DEOs were used to converse in the language of the youth, using content that struck a chord with them. Humor laced intelligent messaging, which were either prodding, benign or cheeky and references to popular culture were recurring themes in all content targeting the urban youth.



Celebrities were used in clickbait videos ('Dhoni or Virat, Ashwin answers') and through usage of intelligent content, the campaign generated positive publicity all around.

The official Facebook page and Twitter accounts became a transparent two way communication media to inspire citizens to participate and create content, showcase the efforts taken by the election machinery for enabling 100 percent registration and polling, share SVEEP activities being conducted across the State, and address electoral grievances. While the first part of the campaign focused on voter enrolment and verification, there was a shift to the voter turnout and then on to informed and ethical voting practices after the deadline for enrolment.

Social Media Monitoring

A specialized software was put in place to monitor poll-related posts on various platforms such as facebook, twitter, whatsapp and other social media channels. The software provided social media listening, monitoring and analytics solution, to monitor posts on Tamil Nadu elections on various social media platforms.

These posts were then bucketed, based on the nature of complaints into the respective districts and forwarded to the respective district officials for action. Feedback was given to the persons. Many social media users were surprised that their feedback on their own Facebook posts was acted upon. A proactive strategy to get them interested in election was successfully executed.

SVEEP's on-ground pledge for Ethical Voting was carried on to the digital space by encouraging people to upload their pledge-taking on social media and join



the initiative. It soon became a movement where approximately **1.62 lakh people** participated and uploaded pictures from **1,07,517 locations** across the state.

Rajesh Lokhani
CEO, Tamil Nadu



Women's Participation in 11th General Election

In almost all the elections, Parliamentary as well as State Legislative Assembly, women voters outnumber male voters in the State of Manipur.

Despite the high involvement of women as voters, the representation of women in the Legislative Assembly as elected member is abysmal though women have been contesting the election through different political parties and as independent candidates. In the recently held 11th General Election to Manipur Legislative Assembly, out of total 266 candidates, 11 were women candidates and only 2 got elected. It may be noted that in 10th General Election to Manipur Legislative Assembly held in 2012 there were a total of 264 candidates including 15 women candidates and 3 women got elected.

The participation of women in the electoral process is higher than that of men. According to 2011 Census, literacy rate (female literacy inferior to male literacy) and sex ratio (987 females per 1,000 males) is not



Painting on 1.5 km long canvas, Manipur State Legislative Elections 2017

favourable to females. But the gender ratio of female electors is quite high i.e. 1046 per 1000 male elector as per Electoral Rolls of 2017.

Number of female electors in Manipur just before 11th GE to MLA 2017

District	No. of Electors			% of Female in total elector
	Male	Female	Total	
Imphal East	144047	154335	298382	51.7
Imphal West	186474	201473	387947	51.9
Bishnupur	67379	70331	137710	51.1
Thoubal	145028	154094	299122	51.5
Jiribam	14443	13695	28138	48.7
Chandel	44865	47385	92250	51.4
Ukhrul	55207	56859	112066	50.7
Senapati	130335	129245	259580	49.8
Tamenglong	45808	47667	93475	51.0
Churachandpur	94987	98905	193892	51.0
State Total	928573	973989	1902562	51.2

For the first time in the election history of Manipur state, women officials were deployed for polling duties during the recently concluded Legislative Assembly Election (LAE), 2017. "All women" polling personnel were deployed at 33 polling stations – 2 in Ukhrul, 15 in Churachandpur, 10 in Imphal West and 6 in Bishnupur districts. These 33 Pink Polling Stations set a new benchmark of efficient performance and smooth conduct of elections and it is expected that in future elections number of Pink Polling Stations will grow. Women officials were also involved in material preparations, reception of polling teams and in counting halls. Out of 38 Returning Officers 5 were women officers.

It is interesting to note that 51.2% of total registered voters in Manipur are female but when we compare the Voter turnout, women voters turned up in higher number averaging about 52.3% of total voters. Keeping in view ongoing Economic Blockade in Manipur since 1st Nov, 2016 there were serious apprehension about successful conduct of elections. However, the sustained Systematic Voters Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) campaign carried out in



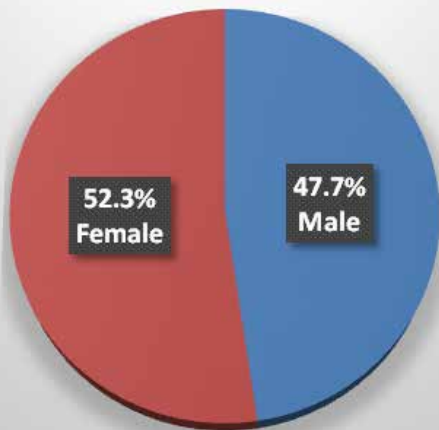
A newly registered (18+) voter gets EPIC on National Voters' Day 2017

Manipur with the help of Election Commission of India under the guidance of their esteemed Consultants, had a very positive effect. As compared to previous Parliamentary & Legislative Assembly Elections in Manipur the Voter turn out figure jumped up from about 80% to 86.4% in 2017 surpassing the records of all other poll going States of Goa, Punjab, Uttrakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Total female voters turnout in 11th GE to Manipur Legislative Assembly, 2017

District	Voter Turnout			Voter Turnout %			% of female voters in total voter turnout
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Imphal East	124937	142293	267230	86.7	92.2	89.6	53.25
Imphal West	162667	185280	347947	87.2	92.0	89.7	53.25
Bishnupur	59420	65540	124960	88.2	93.2	90.7	52.45
Thoubal	128196	144869	273065	88.4	94.0	91.3	53.05
Jiribam	11415	11524	22939	79.0	84.1	81.5	50.24
Chandel	40461	43476	83937	90.2	91.8	91.0	51.80
Ukhrul	43955	44517	88472	79.6	78.3	78.9	50.32
Senapati	112286	113377	225663	86.2	87.7	86.9	50.24
Tamenglong	36538	38836	75374	79.8	81.5	80.6	51.52
Churachandpur	64364	70011	134375	67.8	70.8	69.3	52.10
State Total	784239	859723	1643962	84.5	88.3	86.4	52.30

Voter Turnout % for SAE-2017



Challenges: One important issue that challenges the existing understanding of empowered Manipuri women comes from the fact that women continue to be either silenced or deprived in terms of political representation. While historical legacies promise a fertile environment for women's participation in the modern representative form of politics, women's role is negligible other than exercising their periodic franchise. Present prevailing patriarchal social structure do not encourage women to be active in electoral politics.

Constitutionally and legally, no barrier exists in women having equality with men, special laws to protect women from most of the socially degrading customs have been enacted and enforced. In spite of all these, the long established belief and notion about female inferiority and social prescription and prohibitions built around them have proved a hard nut to crack and

as result, women find it difficult to use the existing facilities to remove the hindrances of equality in terms of contesting elections— out of 266 Candidates in LAE 2017 only 11 were women candidates.

Positive Legacy: From time immemorial the womenfolk in Manipur are always taking an active part in the political front too despite their hectic involvement in the home front. The women of all the ethnic groups of Manipur usually contributes a lot in the day to day living by working on the field, managing their homes, keeping the kitchen fires burning, ensuring the well-being of both the husband and children while continuing to earn for a living to augment the incomes brought by their husbands.

Despite these hectic schedules the women folk continue to take part in the governance of the State. They are much aware of the existing political developments in the State, the changing political scenario and the necessity of involving in the electoral process for choosing the representatives in the modern system of governance. They continue to involve in the social issues like, male drinking problem, drug menace, crime against women education of their children, price rise, urban living problems etc.

Contribution to Women Participation: The unflinching efforts of the Election Commission to organize a successful election in the States during Assembly Elections, paid off in the State of Manipur. Such a well-informed group in the population when





given the necessary awareness campaigns, trainings and guidelines by the Commissions in connection with the elections process they always tend to take part actively in the process of choosing their representatives.

Furthermore with the recent wide spread campaign relating to voter education (*SVEEP activities*) carried out in the State in which both young and old voters (*irrespective of gender*) fully participated, the maximum number of women electors turned up for poll participation resulting in the sizable increase in the voter turnout keeping an all-time high record

of 86.4% voter turnout. With the active involvement of the women electors, the number of incidents of violence in the polling stations have been drastically reduced compared to the last election. Let us hope that enhanced electoral participation by women shall also result in higher representation by Political Parties in nominating them for contesting elections in future and eventually outnumbering male counterparts in getting elected to the Legislative Assembly.

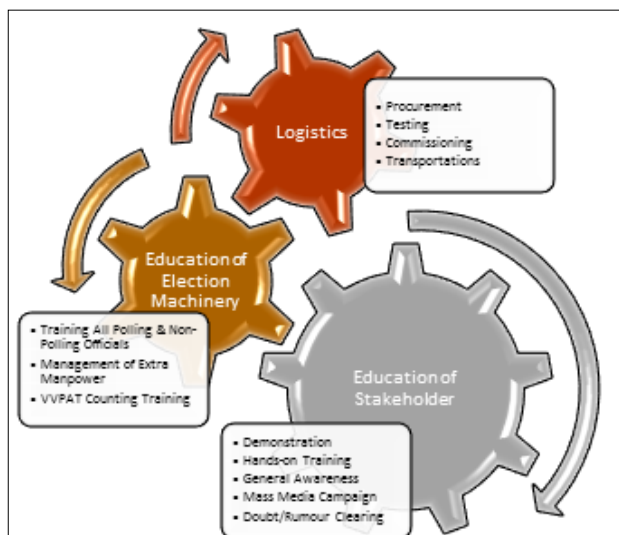
Vivek Kumar Dewangan
CEO, Manipur



Managing Change: Introduction of VVPAT

General Elections to Goa Legislative Assembly witnessed introduction of Voters' Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in all Polling Stations. This was a significant addition to the existing practices of conducting elections with the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) comprising Control Unit (CU) & Ballot Unit (BU) on which the entire election machinery and voters have been casting their vote on & have had hands on experience with.

Introduction of VVPAT with EVM calls for a Business Process Re-engineering involving all stakeholders viz. Voters, Election Machinery, Political Parties, Candidates and the Press. Tasks involved for the introduction of VVPAT Machines were unique and multifarious in nature.



VVPAT Implementation Issues

VVPAT is an electronic device which has a built-in printer to give feedback to a voter after the voter presses his/her vote on the BU. It shows a thermal paper slip for 7 seconds and then the slips cut down and fall into the storage compartment of VVPAT. VVPAT has been under use for quite some time but

only in a few Assembly Constituencies (AC) of some States. Goa has never witnessed use of VVPAT in even a single AC, so entire machinery and all stakeholders were completely ignorant about it, except for some vague ideas through newspapers/media. Initially only 142 VVPATs were allotted to Goa so, it was planned to be put in district headquarters of both the districts. Gradually, information started coming in about production and consequent supply of more VVPATs from PSUs and then it was decided by the Election Commission of India to fully equip Goa with the recent technology.

Systematic Voters Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) was properly used for education of stakeholders regarding the VVPAT. It began with education of political parties & media persons at State level with a live demo of machines. The features of machines were fully explained with the help of ECI's video-clip on VVPAT and hands-on training. The doubts regarding the slips etc were addressed for all participants. The video clip on VVPAT was also dubbed in local language and was broadcasted through local TV networks, cinema theaters & social media like Whatsapp and Facebook (<http://fb.com/CEOGoa>).

SVEEP for voters included initial deployment of about 5 teams in each district which was later increased to 50 teams all over the state. One democracy bus was deployed in each district comprising demo EVM-VVPATs and voter education materials with a display screen on its exterior playing various videos. Each Returning Officer decided the popular places in his/her AC like bus stops, crossings, bazaar, feasts, functions etc and areas inhabited by weaker sections of society. VVPAT Demo Machines were installed at State level functions having high footfall like Lokotsava. A special VVPAT 'Demo on Demand' was launched for working professionals who require demo either in their housing societies or offices. In all Taluka offices, VVPAT Demo stations were made.

More than 1500 camps were organised. Facebook Live was done for VVPAT Demo for the social media connected persons.

Several rumours floated by elements with vested interests in misguiding the voters on VVPAT paper slips came into action but they were effectively identified and countered using broadcast media and social media. Most notable rumours were: VVPAT slips would come out of machines like in ATMs which they can show to their political masters to get some cash or kind; VVPAT slips would be available for candidates to see who has voted for whom and thus they will be able to know about voting by individuals. These rumours were especially spread to create confusion among voters. Timely intervention was made to convince voters about secrecy of votes maintained by VVPAT machines and warnings were issued to deter any one from spreading such rumours.

The Goan Election Machinery was having its first ever experience with VVPAT machines, so a comprehensive understanding of VVPAT machine was required. As a first step, senior officials were exposed to functioning and features of VVPAT machine and later on, during the training sessions, all officials were trained with hands-on experience on these. Special emphasis was given on the sensitive nature of components of VVPAT machines, as in the past, high replacement rates were experienced in other states. So, Presiding Officers were



trained on setting up of machines by properly putting the wires into designated slots with care, and were told about carrying out the movement of VVPAT machines without jerks to avoid any misplacement or breakage of sensors/components. The Manual on EVM/VVPAT prescribes for deployment of additional manpower for VVPAT, this manpower was selected from the master list prepared before elections and was adequately trained on handling VVPAT under the direction of the Presiding Officers.

VVPAT Paper slips Counting Guidelines prescribes for written application before the Returning Officer (RO) by interested candidate or his/her election agent/counting agent. Special emphasis was given to ROs to pass speaking orders on requests made for counting of VVPAT paper slips. Since, VVPAT paper slips are manually counted after opening of paper slip compartment, using pigeonholes; so provisions were made for these and counting officials were explained the provisions concerning the same. A separate team of officials was deployed for opening of VVPAT compartments that have not been counted and sealing of their paperslips in envelopes the removal of paper roll and battery pack from VVPAT machines.

VVPAT machines were brought in Goa from different locations of Uttar Pradesh for which special teams were sent to bring machines. The First Level Checks & Commissioning were done under the supervision of senior officers in the presence of RO/ARO to



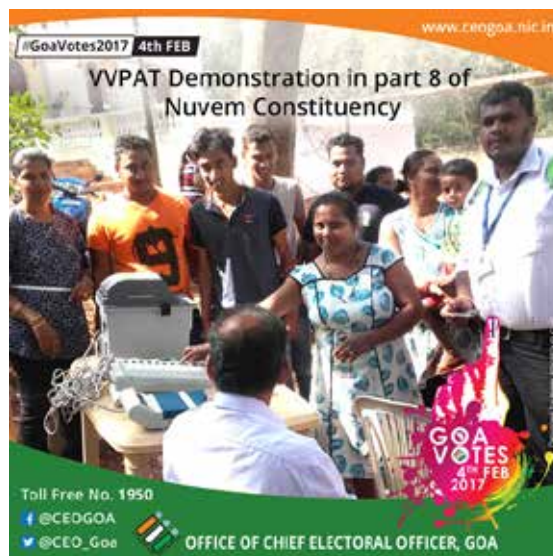
understand the working of machines. The sensitive nature of VVPAT machines was emphasised on and the officials well understood the need to handle the VVPATs with care. They were directed to preferably carry them on the seats of the vehicles or keep them at a jerk-free place in the vehicle while carrying from Despatch Centres to Polling Stations and similarly, bring these back with the same care.

The introduction of VVPAT machines to Goa Legislative Assembly Elections was welcomed by all stakeholders and it boosted their confidence in elections. Proper training and care of VVPAT machines ensured that replacement rate after despatch for election was below 5% although Election Commission provided enough machines to maintain a reserve of around 40%. Counting of VVPAT paper slips were done in 4 booths of AC 34 Cuncolim wherein the paperslips readings and EVM readings matched perfectly thereby proving the sanctity of election process.

Key Learnings:

Change Management requires complete understanding of systems and processes at higher decision-making level. The processes need to be broken into smallest possible component by micro-analysis and each component requires proper strategy to ensure holistic management of the change. It is necessary that all stakeholders are taken on board by maintaining continuous dialogue and transparency in implementation. There are many people with vested interests who try to subvert the processes by creating confusion and chaos. Any such attempt needs to be addressed at the beginning itself with a sound media and communication strategy. Apart from using traditional tools of communication, social media tools should also be applied in a parallel view of their instant and wide reach. These help in stopping the spread of rumours and turning the tide against the new change.

Change Management requires a single line of command and communication within the implementing body. If it is a new process with which the implementing machinery is not familiar with, then their education is a prerequisite before explanation of their roles. Considering the conduct of elections involve a huge number of polling and other officials, their understanding of process helps in their own clarity



during the polling and they also act as change agent for publicity of new processes. Once the team identifies itself with the goal of the organisation, it becomes much easier to adapt the change. In case of Goa Elections, proper communication on functioning and handling of VVPAT machines ensured minimum malfunctioning and replacement during the polling (below 5%).

Managing a change is a team effort involving partnerships with all stakeholders whether small or large

and requires comprehensive planning and execution from the top management with minutest detailing. It is said 'Change is the only constant in the world'. Any organisation that is not amenable to change or adapt to the changing environment, cannot survive for long. It is necessary to build a culture in the organisation to keep it open and ready for changes in technologies and processes with regular investment in human resources.

Kunal
CEO, Goa





Nowhere is too far for Election Machinery

"I never imagined that the administration would go to such lengths to ensure that we can be a part of this democratic process. After all we are located at such a far away place in middle of nowhere." exclaimed a pleasantly surprised resident of Ajad Island.

Ajad Island is a remote island in Gulf of Kachchh towards the western end of Gujarat, belonging to the 81-Khambalia Assembly Constituency of Devbhoomi Dwarka district. The island is inhabited by just 89 residents of Muslim Wagher community, living far away from the mainland. There is no regular transport, which connects the people here to the mainland, except their own boats.

The Election management machinery took up the task of reaching out to the 40 odd electors on this island and ensuring that they are included in every aspect of the election despite the odd location. The roll officials visited the island and ensured that all eligible citizens are enrolled. Just before the elections, even the



Collector and DEO carried out number of meetings and personally supervised all the preparations for ensuring complete inclusion of the Ajad Island residents. The CEO team supported the effort by providing all required support. Since transportation of the Polling Party and the equipment was only possible through boat, the CEO Office coordinated and sought support of Gujarat Maritime Board, which organized the ferry for travel of the Polling Party.



The Polling Party was properly briefed about the location and the arrangements to be made by the DEO. The Polling Party reached the Island through a boat on the previous day of Poll.

A temporary Polling Station was established with adherence to all ECI guidelines. The electors were educated about the use of EVM and VVPAT beforehand. The required arrangements were made for all necessary procedures for Poll day.

The Poll was conducted smoothly with 90% participation. The electors were very enthusiastic to see that the administration was working so hard to ensure that they are not left out in the electoral process.



Ensuring every aspect of the electoral process right from enrolment to PVS to conduct a Poll, this was an example of how the Election machinery works towards inclusion of all, irrespective of how much challenging is the task.

Lalit Padalia
Addl. CEO, Gujarat

True to its name – Hoshiarpur

The District mascot of Hoshiarpur: Hosiyaar Singh

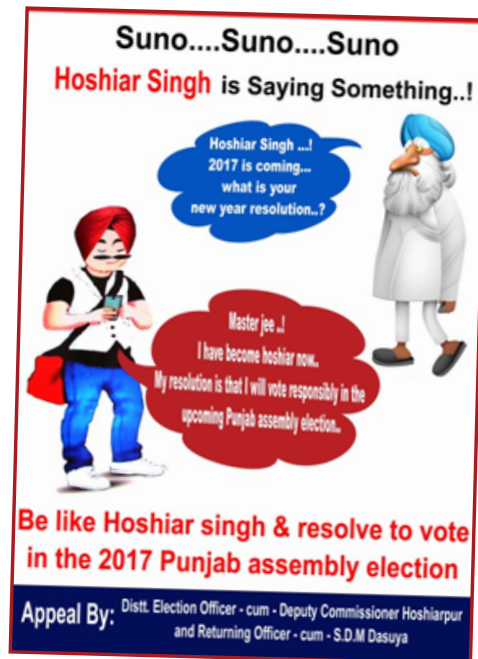
With the highest literacy rate in Punjab, Hoshiarpur rightfully boasts of its name which literally means 'Land of the Intelligent'. The smart members of the election team of Dasuya, Hoshiarpur capitalized on this fact and connected people and the name of the district by creating two mascots: Hoshiar Singh and Syana Singh.

Hoshiarpur's Mascot and Pammi Aunty encouraged 7,000 new electors from the district to enroll

Hoshiar Singh is an 18 year old young, but ill-informed

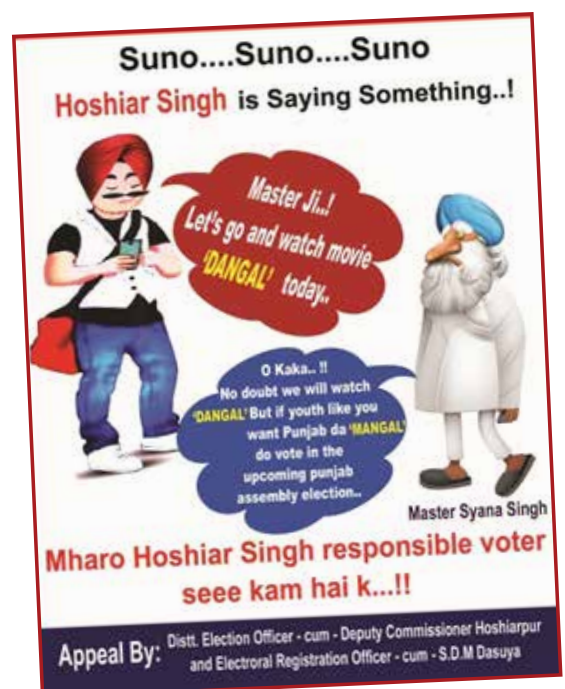
elector from Hoshiarpur who has just become eligible to vote in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha Election 2017. On the other hand, Syana Singh is Hoshiar Singh's retired school teacher. Through their conversations, communicated by memes, plays, dramas and songs, team Dasuya showed the journey of Hoshiar Singh's transformation from an ignorant to an intelligent voter.

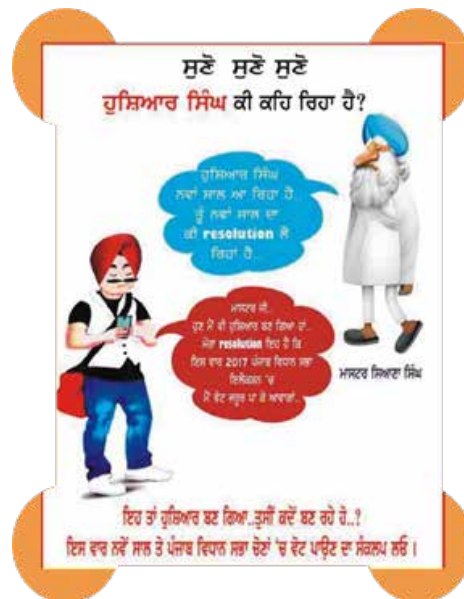
Strategically sound, Dasuya's team chose special days to release a number of creatives. Illustrations like the ones with Hoshiar Singh and Santa Claus on Christmas, Hoshiar Singh's New Year's resolution to vote and his celebrations on the day of Model Code of Conduct's



announcement gained a great popularity. Similarly, Hoshiar Singh's songs, calendars, air mascots and dramas were creatively executed and exhibited in schools and colleges to sensitize new voters as well as villages which ranked low in the voter turnout list from the previous elections.

The initiative was a huge hit especially amongst youngsters. The success of Hoshiar Singh reached its zenith when he got accepted as 'The District mascot of Hoshiarpur'.





CEO Office Punjab

Pammi Auntie inspires youth to register

While Hoshiar Singh and Syana Singh became the talk of the town, there was another character from the district that was busy becoming the talk of the social media. Laughter is the best medicine – so we have heard. But not everyone may know that it can even cure ignorance and bridge information gaps. The example of Pammi Auntie will easily prove this statement to be a fact.

For the Election Officers in Hoshiarpur, enrolment of young voters was a priority task and thus naturally,



more stress was put on reaching out to them. The realization that a massive engagement with the youth can be through social media prodded them to come up with ideas for utilizing the potential of the platform.

Doing the rounds of social media, where humor is the preferred flavor of the audience, was Ssumeir Pasricha's Pammi Auntie the quintessential Punjabi Auntie with gossiping second nature to her. Identifying the opportunity, Pasricha was made the district icon of Hoshiarpur. In return, Pammi Auntie in her own distinct style inspired eligible electors to get them registered through her humorous video. The video quickly went viral on the internet and as thousands of youth watched, Pammi auntie drove the message of voter registration home.

CEO Office Punjab



MEGHALAYA

INITIATIVES

Mission UNITE

Mission Unite(U 'n' I towards Enrolment), the SVEEP initiative in Meghalaya was conceived in March 2017, with the singular aim & objective of enhancing enrolment of young and future voters especially in the age group of 18 – 21 years. The tone was set at the NVD celebration of 2017, wherein substantial number of stakeholders collectively shared their concern with regard to enrolling the potential newly eligible young voters who would be turning 18. As it rolled out, the campaign steadily emerged as a creatively conceived and innovatively crafted exercise that centered on a variety of youth centric measures which synergized seamlessly with the Election Commission's Special Drive initiative to cover the 18 and 19+ young and future voters. The campaign focused principally on "Campus based enrolment" at schools and colleges, the involvement of a network of Nodal Teachers, intensive campus enrolment, pronounced presence on social media, youth centric activities, widely popular music videos, attractive creatives, democracy van and the show stopping human logo formation, all collectively contributed to providing a huge momentum to the efforts to enroll the 18 and 19+ in June –July earlier this year.

Mission Unite made its small beginnings with the Heads of Institution consultative meeting at the State Headquarters in March 2017 wherein, a network of Nodal Teachers was created and entrusted with the task of performing the role of Campus Ambassadors. The Office of the CEO, DEO, BLO, actively synergized and coalesced efforts and resources of the Election Department and the Educational Institutions for unleashing a momentous campaign that steadily gained strength, momentum and visibility. It culminated in a human logo formation comprising 2870 first time student voters drawn from over 113 schools and major leading colleges of Shillong City who assembled at the state's single largest outdoor venue, the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Polo. It emerged as a historic occasion for democracy

A mission for U 'N' I Towards

Enrolment
engagement
expression
empowerment



Birds eye View of Mission Unite Human Logo formed by 2800 young & future voters at JN Stadium, Polo, Shillong on the July 1, 2017.

as apart from the students, 200 nodal teachers were also actively involved in arranging a never attempted 120 feet long, 75 feet wide Human Logo formation comprising exclusively of young and future voters nearing 18 and above 18. The exercise has also gained entry into the soon to be published **2018 Edition of the Limca Book of Records**, in view of its public spirited purpose and the uniqueness of the effort that involved the largest ever attempt of human logo formation and

assembly of young voters at one single venue in India. Similar campaigns were also initiated by DEO's in all the 11 districts, under the over arching umbrella of Mission Unite. Also in further recognition, a commemorative special cover has been released by the Meghalaya Postal division at Meghapex 2017,

State Level philatelic exhibition depicting the efforts under Mission Unite which perhaps is a testimony, that the campaign has touched a chord and captured the imagination, particularly of the young voters.

The overall objective of devising the campaign Mission Unite was the expressed objective to bridge the gap of EP ratio in the Electoral Rolls to match the 18+ population. Other objectives included an endeavour to increase percentage of enrolment in the newly eligible 18–19 years age group to more than 20%. The third objective was to bring about wide ranging collective involvement and engagement amongst schools and colleges so as to cover and engage students,

nodal teachers and Head of Institutions on aspects related to enrolment, voting and democracy through a series of educative and entertaining campaigns, that aimed at being visible and attractive, creative and engaging besides being outcome oriented. All the above objectives were successfully achieved.

The Mission Unite achieved a higher involvement of nodal teachers from campuses in the enrolment drive. While focus was trained on the campus enrolment, at the same time, non-student youth groups were not left out. There were several campaigns through the FM radio, outreach programme, special registration Camps, and specially designed awareness material for 18–19 years old young voters with a view to meaningfully engage them on the entire process of registration and voting. Clustering of these outreach camp at



various schools and colleges to ensure maximum reach, awareness amongst voters and amplification of education and electoral participation initiatives were other highlights. The entire exercise was highly educative as it focused on the 3E's of Engage, Express and Empower.

A critical aspect of the Campaign were frequent meetings and trainings at CEO and DEO level amongst the BLOs, the Election Machinery, teachers and stakeholders. There were frequent reviews and Whatsapp groups were created to monitor targets and achievement on a weekly basis. A highly popular election/enrolment lyric video Tarak Tak Tak, which was developed in collaboration with the well known music group Summer Salt with the objective of



encouraging enrolment amongst the 18+ was widely circulated on social media, went viral, and within a few weeks reached 15,300+ people, 3000+ views, 200 likes, 77 shares and its popularity is still growing. The full video is being released to coincide with the launch of the upcoming Special Summary Revision Campaign 2017.

The Mission Unite campaign, with its focus on 'Campus Enrolment' and with a view, to both engage the attention and provide visibility to the campaign and Special Drive has fully met its objectives in terms of outcome and effectiveness through its highly visible and innovative efforts.

The results are self evident – nearly 40,000 claims of Form – 6 were received, out of a gap of 69515 in 18 and 19+ category. The net addition of 21,455 young voters

after taking into account Form – 7 and other deletions which represents about 21.67% net addition against 18 and 19+ group is highly significant in the context of the campaign period spanning only a few months. The figures are a telling indication that the campaign had indeed captured the imagination, particularly of the young and future voters, for whom it was launched, and in doing so it also ultimately fulfilled the objectives of the Election Commissions Special Drive 2017. Besides being a highly memorable journey and experience for all those who were a part of it, it was truly a mission that passionately united the youth for a highly meaningful purpose.

F. R. Kharkongor
CEO, Meghalaya

GUJARAT

CREATIVE INITIATIVES

Navratri: Celebrating Dance Devotion Democracy

Imagine a state with more than 60 million people residing in more than 18000 villages, towns and cities. And then imagine millions of people across these 18000 villages, towns and cities dressed up in traditional outfits, dancing tirelessly for hours together, for nine consecutive nights.

Without any formal training, without any pre-planning yet completely in a concerted rhythm without a single step out of sync.

Sounds Interesting? Well, that's Navratri in Gujarat.

'Nav-Ratri' literally means 'Nine Lights', and is one of the most uniquely celebrated festivals in the world



Nine Vows of Democracy

and probably the largest dance event across the world as well. So, when the State Legislative Assembly Election is round the corner, then what's better opportunity than Navratri to reach out to millions across the state?

Festival based interventions have been a unique initiative under the SVEEP that is being implemented by Gujarat

since last two General Elections. Festivals are cultural threads that bind the society together. SVEEP has attempted to ride on this common cultural cohesive spirit to establish a close connect with people in all parts of the state. And so far, this has been one of the



જિલ્લા ચૂંટણી અધિકારી, અમદાવાદ

**Lokshahi Hum se,
Vote Karo Gurb Se**

**યુવતી અને યુવાન,
અચુક કરે મતદાન**



For more Details Kindly Log on to
www.ceo.gujarat.gov.in

For more Details Please Contact to
 **Help line 1950**

To Search your name, Send SMS
"epic <space> your epic number"
92275 00958

most successful activities under SVEEP. This year, with the State Legislative Assembly Elections slated to be scheduled around the end of the year and Navratri being celebrated towards the end of the September, it turned out to be an ideal occasion to intensify the SVEEP activities.

Specific SVEEP interventions for Navratri were carefully planned and designed and the DEOs were asked to implement it in all the districts. 'Nine Vows of Democracy' were formulated for each of the nine nights of Navratri with catchy and festival appropriate slogans. The 'Nine Vows of Democracy' included messages on enrolment, participation and ethical voting. Designs for social media posts and banners & hoardings were created based on the vows.

Alongwith that a scripted Garba on electoral awareness was created and recorded with voice by a blind District Icon. For regions where dialects/languages are common, Garbas on electoral & democratic awareness were scripted in locally popular dialects like Kachchhi and Dangi. Different scripts were prepared to get ready for the forthcoming 'Festival of Democracy', that is the General Election and another focusing on Introduction

The scripted Garbas were disseminated by all 33 districts to different Garba venues and were played at all large Garba venues with lot of fervor. Particularly the Garbas in local dialect were very popular among the regions like Kachch and Dangs. Tribal Communities felt quite excited with the Garba on electoral awareness in their own dialect called Dangi. Apart from these, help desks were set up at prominent Garba venues and functionaries patiently addressed queries by the interested revelers. EVM and VVPAT demonstrations were also organised exhibitions at the Garba Venues, which were attended by a large number of people. Of the identified Garba venues had banners on 'Nine Vows' as well as other messages on electoral awareness. The social media was flooded with the 'Nine Vows' messages with one vow post being circulated every day.

The Navratri SVEEP initiative perfectly set up the mood for SVEEP and the forthcoming elections. Through this innovation, about 15 lakh people could be reached out with imparting education relating to electoral participation and EVM-VVPAT. No other channel would have managed to reach out to such a

large population in all parts of the state within such a short span of time. Particularly this initiative was not limited to the information but actively engaged the people through its different activities. And the best part was that it reached the two of the most important target groups for electoral awareness, which are Youth and Women. SVEEP for General Elections could not have hoped for a better start than this.



of VVPAT in the forthcoming elections.

The Nine Vows of Democracy were widely circulated through hoardings, banners and social media. Every night, at all prominent Garba Venues, the anchors announced the scripted announcements, which was followed by encouraging the participation to take up the 'Vow of the Night'.

The following lines from the specially scripted announcements for Navratri sum up the initiative most aptly:

Whether it is Elections or Navratri

The one who never remains behind is a true Gujarati

CEO Office, Gujarat

Enrolment Awareness Campaign at Rehab Cum Disabled Home at Lunglei

At the outskirts of Lunglei Town, is a small but well looked after complex where disabled persons and drug users seeking rehabilitation are cared for. The place is known by the people as 'Kalvary Centre'. This non-governmental rehab-cum-disabled home is run by a private citizen, Mr. Sangthankima, who established it in 1998 with no regular source of fund for his establishment and depending solely on what he calls God's mercy. As of now, 87 disabled persons and 52 drug addicts have been cared for and rehabilitated

by his team called TNT. The workers here say that until today, their daily requirement has been provided for by God through His men.

The inmates of this centre have usually been looked at mostly as a burden on their families or as a nuisance to the society. They had no awareness about the fact that they were eligible to be enrolled in the Voters' List. Also, they were not aware of the significance of registering their names in the Electoral Roll.

As per the arrangement made by the District Election Officer of Lunglei District, Ms. Josephine Zonunsangi AERO was instructed to conduct a SVEEP workshop at the Kalvary Centre on September 15, 2017. The staff and inmates of Kalvary Centre warmly received her, and a communication effort was put together for all the patients of the Centre. With the use of an appropriate presentation by the AERO, the effort proved to be fruitful.

60 inmates at Kalvary were above 18 years of age. After the workshop, 40 inmates immediately submitted Form 6 to get themselves enrolled. The workshop also got the working staff at Kalvary Centre to realize the importance of getting enrolled and expressed their intention to get any new comers to the centre in the future registered as voters.



Inmates of Kalvary Centre listening to SVEEP campaign by AERO

Campaign Credibility of EVMS among MGNREGA Workers



AERO explaining the credibility of EVMs to MGNREGA workers

The elections to Mizoram Legislative Assembly were held in November 2013. Soon after the new Government was formed, there spread a rumour that EVMs used in the elections were manipulated by the winning party. A man who called himself, 'Phantom' accused the winning party of manipulating EVMs by installing high frequency radio wave towers in various locations. This rumour penetrated deep into the towns and villages of Mizoram and unsettled many.

Lungsen was one of the worst affected villages by this rumour. Located in a remote and backward Block within Lunglei District, it seems that the rumour affected this village more as it was a subject of argument among MGNREGA workers. After the elections, the people in this village especially the MGNREGA workers, said that they had lost interest in casting their votes in election as they doubted the credibility of EVM machines.

When the newly posted, young and energetic BDO Ms. V. Lalmuanpuii, who was also the AERO, heard

about the issue, she decided to conduct an awareness programme among MGNREGA workers on the reliability of EVMs. The District Election Officer of Lunglei District provided teaching materials and funds for her campaign.

During September 2017, she went to sites where MGNREGA workers were taking up works under the scheme. As per rules, MGNREGA workers have an hour for lunch

break. So, she smartly utilized this 1 hour explaining the reliability of EVMs. She described how EVMs cannot be manipulated by remote control or any other devices using pamphlets on EVM. She also informed them that in the next Assembly Election, VVPATs would be connected to all EVMs that would print out receipts to ensure that an elector's vote exactly goes to where they cast it. She also cited the example of the EVM challenge to the workers where no person or party dared to come forward and question the reliability of EVMs in the nationwide challenge to hack the EVMs.

The argument amongst the people and the doubts in their mind had now vanished. The people seem to have regained a newfound interest in casting votes.

James Lalnithanga
Election Officer, Lunglei, Mizoram

A Creative Initiative for Behavior Change

The team of Officers from SVEEP division of the CEO Office, Gujarat started its homework almost one and half years before the Assembly Elections actually took place. A detailed scientific analysis of voter turnout during the previous Assembly and Parliamentary Elections was carried out. However, the focus this time was different.

"We did not look at the turnout figures just as numbers. But we tried to understand and identify a pattern, which would tell us about the voting behaviors. Over years, we had realized that just limiting ourselves to awareness and education initiatives would not be suffice. We need to aim at behavior change, because the people who do not vote consistently are driven by their behaviors which need to be changed if we want them to come out and start exercising their democratic right" – explains the Additional Chief Electoral Officer, Gujarat for SVEEP.

As per directive of ECI, a Baseline Survey of Knowledge, Attitude, Practices (KAP) of citizens across 40 ACs from 5 regions of the State was carried out covering different categories like Urban, Semi-Urban, Rural Backward, Forest, Developing, Industrial, Desert, Coastal, Inter State Border and Low Registration in respect of Gender, Age Cohort, EP Ratio. The survey suggested a low awareness about NOTA (55% unaware) and VVPAT (87% unaware). The survey also provided insights into various reasons reported by respondents for not voting. The survey findings coupled with the analysis of voter turnout from previous elections and discussions with the functionaries of low voter turnout ACs and Polling Stations helped to understand specific voting behaviors. In the follow up brainstorming sessions, it was decided to develop SVEEP initiatives that would go in depth of voters' minds and impact at attitude and behavior level. Subsequently a professional agency was brought on board to develop a Creative Campaign that would target the determinants and deterrents of the voting behavior and aim to achieve a change for positive voting turnout. More than 200 creatives were

developed as a part of the SVEEP 2017. This was an all encompassing campaign which step by step addressed each and every deterrent to voting behavior and thus motivated voters to respect their democratic right, infuse a sense of responsibility towards the democratic process and not miss voting for any reasons whatsoever.

Creatives were developed focusing on different target groups, covering different topics and based on some themes, which targeted specific behaviors. The target group specific creative included creative for youth, urban women, rural women, urban voters, rural voters, migrants, PwDs, senior citizens, tribal voters and third gender voters. The different topics covered by these creative include EVM–VVPAT, NOTA, Ethical Voting, Registration, Facilities available for PwDs etc.



Different series of creative targeting different groups and behaviors were developed. A series of creatives using characters like 'Bako' and 'Sonu' were developed for youth with a touch of humour and motivating people with a message "How can we forget voting!".



One series of creatives was developed focusing on how people of different occupations demonstrate 'Responsibility' in their occupations and encouraged them to exercise the same degree of 'Responsibility' in their electoral participation as well.

One of the most incisive series was 'Excuse versus Reality', where different excuses for not voting commonly provided by electors were taken up and responded with a solid reason about why one should vote instead of giving excuses. Every creative also had a common message that *"There can be many excuses for not voting, but only one reason to vote that I am a Responsible Citizen of India"*.



One series was developed using specific food habits of different regions for appealing the voters by giving a local touch. One series of creatives was developed for one of the most successful and widespread SVEEP strategies of Gujarat i.e. the Festival Based Intervention. One interesting series provided examples of things which are relatively difficult to do and this



was followed by a message on how 'Voting is So Easy'. This was targeted at communicating to voters that voting is actually a very easy process and everyone can vote without any hassle.

For example, the above creation says that to solve a Rubik's cube may be difficult but Voting is Very Easy.

Special creatives on EVM/VVPAT awareness with



tagline (#बटन दबाके 'देखो') emphasizing on being able to 'see' the vote were created. Similarly creatives emphasizing the importance of 'verifying' were also created.

One other series educated the voters through asking riddles related to Election process. For e.g. the following creative asks a riddle – 'What is common between the windshield of a Car and Election?' and then the answer is provided that 'Both are completely transparent'.



The Gujarat SVEEP campaign developed number of such series, which appealed to voter's minds and ensured engagement and behavior change in a step-by-step process.

The creative were developed in different languages as well as using rural, area specific and tribal dialects. Extensive dissemination was carried out through social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp as well as in form of placards, banners, hoardings etc. during mass awareness programs of SVEEP. More than 4 crore impressions were created over different social media platforms through different campaigns and hashtags.

I do not hesitate to say that a high turnout of 69.04% with a high turnout particularly of groups like PwDs, senior citizens and women would not have been achieved without the collective and creative effort under SVEEP." – proudly mentions the Chief Electoral Officer of Gujarat.

Lalit Padalia
Addl. CEO, Gujarat

ETPBS

ELECTRONICALLY TRANSMITTED POSTAL BALLOT SYSTEM

Reaching out to Service Voters



Many ground breaking initiatives have been taken up in recent months to bring the ballot to the service voter. While the facilitation part continues, it is to be ensured that simultaneously, the education and outreach aspects are taken care of, so that the service personnel are aware of the latest initiatives, including the online registration facility as well as the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot (ETPB) facility.

A film on service voters registration and ETPBS was launched on September 13, 2017 at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, New Delhi by the Commission in the presence of Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra, Secretary East (MEA); Preeti Saran, Additional Secretary (Home Affairs); Jaideep Govind, Lt. General R.Gopal, DG (MP&PS), Indian Army; Air Marshal P.P. Bapat; Vice-Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla and other senior officers from the services and CPFs. Moreover, the exhibition on service voter registration and ETPBS

was appreciated by the dignitaries. A.K. Joti, Chief Election Commissioner laid emphasis on motivating the service personnel to ensure enrolment and participation of maximum number of service personnel.

Posters and brochures for the service voters have also been produced by ECI and are being shared with the forces for wide dissemination. Moreover, even as the film is scheduled to be screened at all the defence stations in the country for the benefit of the soldiers, Election Commission of India also attempted to reach out to the members of the target group directly via social media.

Hence the film was uploaded on ECI's official YouTube channel and promoted across platforms. Prior to the online launch of the movie, a one minute teaser video of the film's theme song was released on facebook along with motivational posters and information brochures. The aim was to reach as many servicemen online as possible.

Partnering with the social media wings of the Indian Army, Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, the film was shared on the official Facebook pages of all the three forces. The film reached to 1,00,000 facebook viewers and created an overall engagement with 31,341 users. The Defence Minister of India, Nirmala Sitharaman herself shared the film on her official Facebook page.



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ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

पंजीकरण एवम् मतदान

तेरी आवाज़ भी ज़रूरी
तेरा वोट भी ज़रूरी

सेवा मतदाता कौन है?

अतः आज ही www.servicevoter.nic.in
पर अपना पंजीकरण कराएं...
ताकि आप आगामी चुनावों में मतदान कर सकें!

कोई मतदाता न छूटे

How do I Vote
A guide for Service Voters

Armed Police Force of a State
serving outside that state

Army
Navy
Air Force
Assam Rifles
Central Reserve Police Force
Central Industrial Security Force
Indo Tibetan Border Force
Coast Guard
Border Security Force
Government of India officials posted outside India

GREF in Border Road Organisation



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कोई मतदाता न छूटे

अपना बहुमुख्य मत डालें : पोस्टल बैलट को कैसे भरें

इलेक्ट्रॉनिक पोस्टल बैलट (ETPB) द्वारा मतदान

वर्गीकृत सेवा मतदाता

How do I Vote
A guide for Service Voters

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SERVICE VOTERS

MOVIE

Ballot is stronger than Bullet

Election Commission of India is on its expedition to attain 100 % voter turnout in the upcoming elections. Under the campaign, 'No Voter should be left behind', ECI is striving to spread awareness among all stakeholders of the world's largest democracy.

One of the challenging dimensions is to ensure electoral participation of the service voters. A force that is busy protecting the nation around-the-clock, always ready to sacrifice their lives for the national security, protecting country's present must have a say in the future of the nation. ECI has introduced a campaign with the slogan 'Teri awaaz bhi jaruri, Tera vote bhi jaruri' to connect to the service voters of the nation.

The film 'Service Voters and ETBPS' explains the process of voting for a service personnel. It aims to spread awareness on elections among the service voters in the country, which include people serving in Central Reserve Police Force, Sashastra Seema Bal, Indo Tibetan Border Police, Border Security Force, Assam rifles, State Armed Police Force, Central Industrial

Security Force, National Security Guard, and Border Road Organization.

The movie elucidates the process of voting through postal ballot or proxy vote. The movie introduces Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) and the website for service voters (<http://servicevoter.nic.in/>) that have been launched recently by Election Commission of India.

Motivating the community, Flying Officer Swasthika, Indian Air Force said, I voted through postal ballot, it depends on the spirit of your involvement in the democracy." The film underlines the fact that voting must not be an option. After all, as Abraham Lincoln stated 'A ballot is stronger than the bullet'.



Movie available at http://servicevoter.nic.in/Images/MediaContent/Service_Voter_Film_5_minutes_ENGLISH.mp4

STRATEGY FOR SERVICE VOTERS

NUMBERS

DEFENCE PERSONNEL
1.5 million

CENTRAL ARMED POLICE PERSONNEL
1.29 million

INDIAN OFFICIALS SERVING ABROAD
Thousands

MESSAGING

- ◆ Eligibility of Service Personnel and wife, if ordinarily resident at the place of posting
- ◆ **Registration process**
 - Forms for Registration and supporting documents
 - www.servicevoter.nic.in
- ◆ **Voting**
 - Postal Ballot and ETPB
 - Proxy Voting/ Classified Service Voter
 - As a General Voter

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STRATEGY FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL IN INDIAN MISSIONS/ EMBASSIES

- ◆ Training and Skill development programmes of the MEA to include a module on Postal Ballot
- ◆ Special training sessions for Embassy Officials
- ◆ Embassies to display posters and pamphlets on **How do I Vote**
- ◆ Missions to make available relevant forms to all their employees on their postings
- ◆ ECI brochure on Overseas Electors and on Service Voters to be widely disseminated
- ◆ Social Media pages of Embassies/ Missions to carry messages on electoral participation and link to www.servicevoter.nic.in/ India Votes/ Election Commission of India

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STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION

- ◆ Identification of Nodal Officers for awareness and outreach from among the services
- ◆ Regular interaction with the Nodal Officers for monitoring the outreach programme
- ◆ Collaboration
- ◆ Periodic Impact Assessment & Evaluation of strategies

OUTREACH ACTIVITY

- ◆ Special camps for Registration and awareness drive
- ◆ Collaboration with Wives Associations like AWWA, AFWA, NWVA
- ◆ Continuous awareness at induction and training academies and centres
- ◆ Dedicated Portal for Service Voters
- ◆ Outreach through in-house magazines & newsletters
- ◆ Annual Days to be used to facilitate Registration of officers, jawans, airmen, sailors and their wives
- ◆ Integration of ECI websites/ portals and social media page/ channel with accounts/ handles of Ministry/ Associated Organizations

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COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS

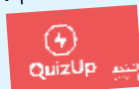
- ◆ Educational Film in Hindi & English
- ◆ A/V promos in Hindi
- ◆ Radio spots in Hindi
- ◆ Brochure in Hindi, English and Roman Hindi
- ◆ Motivational banners and hoardings
- ◆ Interactive trivia gaming app **QuizUp** topic-Indian Elections

TARGET

- ◆ Service Personnel
- ◆ Spouse of Service Personnel
- ◆ Wards of Service Personnel
- ◆ Friends
- ◆ Opinion Leaders

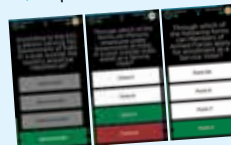
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COMMUNITY RADIO

ECI reaches out through NIOS–CR

Election Commission of India widened its reach through NIOS Community Radio through a series named 'Mat evam Matdan, kare Loktantra nirman'. This series of six programmes on elections was a joint initiative of ECI and NIOS–CR where different aspects



A JOINT COMMUNITY RADIO INITIATIVE BY
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA & NIOS



(Left to Right) Sr DEC Mr Umesh Sinha, DEC Mr. Sudeep Jain and Nikhil Kumar, Director who gave listeners helpful insights on Electronic Voting Machine with Dr. Aarti Aggarwal and NIOS team

of elections and the election processes were explored. This one hour programme, aired monthly, incorporated interview/ panel discussion with expert(s) along with small snippets of different creatives developed either by ECI office or the office of Chief Electoral Officers all over India. These creatives developed as songs, jingles, audio/video plays, statements by icons, advertisements played a significant role in spreading awareness on importance of elections. Undoubtedly, these made the radio programmes more informative and interesting. Moreover, a question was posed at the end of each

programme and first 25 correct entries were awarded by Election Commission of India.

Reaching out through Community Radio in collaboration with NIOS–CR has been a novel initiative by ECI National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) is an autonomous institution under Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India and caters to the educational requirements of out of school youth of India. It works with 14+ years old school dropouts, where over 75% of learners fall in the age group of 14–25 years. With 2.3 million learners on rolls, NIOS has emerged as the largest open schooling organization in the



NIOS Community Radio recording equipments



Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Mr. Umesh Sinha and Mr. S. K. Mendiratta, Legal Advisor to ECI talk about Presidential & Vice Presidential Election

world. The Community Radio Station of NIOS, known as NIOS-CR FM 91.2 MHz, reaches out to listeners up to a radius of 8–10 kms of area, covering more than 10 lakh people. The series 'Mat evam Matdan, kare Loktantra nirman' has been aired from 167 community radios pan India through Federation of Community Radio Association (FCRS).

The first programme was broadcast live with Mr. Umesh Sinha, Senior Deputy Election Commissioner of India, answering the queries on voter enrolment and registration on 'NIOS-CR' FM 91.2 MHz on June 23, 2017. The next programme dealing with Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP), a flagship programme of Election Commission of India that spreads awareness on elections, was broadcast live with Ms. Padma Angmo, Director SVEEP, as the expert on July 20, 2017.

The third episode, relayed on August 17, 2017, introduced the listeners to Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), VVPAT and NOTA. The dignitaries who answered the queries included Mr. Umesh Sinha, Sr. DEC, Mr. Sudeep Jain, DEC and Nikhil Kumar, Director, ECI.

The fourth focused on presidential elections (September 21, 2017) with the fifth episode elucidating



CEO Delhi, Mr Chandra Bhushan Kumar with NIOS team

on Vice Presidential election (October 19, 2017) with Mr. S.K. Mendiratta, Legal Advisor, ECI as the expert.

The last programme was broadcast on November 16, 2017 with Mr. Chandra Bhushan Kumar, CEO Delhi, who talked about Election Museum & SVEEP initiatives by CEO Delhi office.

It was witnessed that the participation in the contest, where a question is posed at the end of each episode, increased manifold with each episode. The new initiative by ECI was indeed successful in reaching out to out of school youth and informing them about elections and electoral process.

Dr. Aarti Aggarwal
Sr. Consultant, SVEEP



Mat evam Matdan – Signature Tune

Open Question for NIOS students

What is the full form of NVSP?

Give us the full form of SVEEP in Hindi.

In which Assembly Constituency was the EVM used for the first time?

Who has been the President of India for more than one tenure?

In case the seats of both President and Vice-President of India are vacant, who takes over as the working President?

VIGNETTES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed & Ethical Participation

Is voting just a right, a duty or a voluntary action? Or is it an empowering collective journey taken up by a large number of people deciding not only the fate of the candidate but their own too?

Undoubtedly, participation in the democratic and electoral processes is integral to the successful running of any democracy and the very basis of wholesome democratic elections. This realization on the importance of the power of the fundamental right to vote as well as the difference it can make to their lives and the nation makes the voter the central actor in democratic election process.

Who the voter decides to vote for is their individual choice and decision, but the voter should surely and definitely participate in the election

process. Can we empower, inform, engage, and facilitate the voter to do so? Can we understand their reasons and perceptions, beliefs and motivations, barriers and challenges, experiences as also their habits, contexts and contours that shape their decision to cast or not to cast their vote?

Thus inclusive, informed and ethical voter education needs to be imparted by the Election Management Bodies across the world. Hence, Election Commission of India organized an International Conference on Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical Participation on October 19–21, 2016 at New Delhi, India. Voter education is the most appropriate way to improve participation in a democracy and thus the need of the hour.

The film on International Conference on Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical Participation covers the



Movie available at <http://voicenet.in/icvideo.htm>



three day conference. It talks about the efforts and initiatives taken by the participant countries to create an informed electoral base in their country so that the voter can make the right choice.

Following were the objective of the conference which were encapsulated in the film:

- To study the best practices by EMBs towards promoting inclusive, informed and ethical electoral participation; identify the roles that different stakeholders can play ; assess challenges related to voter education and ways to tackle them.
- To explore ways and means to impart electoral literacy through curricula and extra-curricular in educational institutions.
- To explore successful methods of imparting electoral literacy to population outside formal sector of educational institutions.
- To explore role of technology in voter education.
- To look at policies and practices that can support inclusive, informed and ethical electoral participation.
- To assess the impact of voter education in supporting informed and ethical participation in electoral democracy.

The film showcases how the conference was a grand success with the participant countries sharing knowledge on voter education with one another. Moreover, with an aim to learn from each other, VoICE.NET – a global knowledge network on voter education was launched as a part of New Delhi Declaration.

Greetings from the Electoral Commission of Uganda.



I have watched the movie of the International Conference of Oct 2016. It is a good movie, good picture quality, covering all the major events. Thank you and your team for the great work.

It has indeed brought back the memories of the Conference and what an experience we had.

Regards to all.

***Sekabembe K. Peninah
Principal Election Officer***

REACHING OUT

COLLEGES

ECI reaches out at IIT Kanpur

At present, a major target group for ECI's Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme is the youth of the nation. A young country, India, has 30 million young adults who are eligible to vote, making it an extremely important target group for SVEEP. It is imperative that the voice of the youth is heard as they constitute a sizeable part of India's democratic polity and its future.

ECI recognizes that as the future architects of our nation, it is essential that the young citizens, who largely suffers from electoral apathy, exercise their franchise.

In a step towards engaging with the youth and spreading voter awareness and education, the Election Commission of India used the platform of national level college fests to realize its aims. For this purpose, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur's annual cultural festival Antaragni served as a beginning point.

Antaragni is a four-day-long festival, attracting participation from over 300 colleges of India and is one of the largest fests in the country with a footfall exceeding 40,000. Besides hosting an array of creative and intellectual events and competitions, the festival also serves as a platform for the expression of youth opinion on social problems.

Identifying the opportunity that such a festival presents for an effective engagement with the young electors, ECI sponsored the prize money for seven competitive events revolving around themes of voter awareness and education. The events included:



- **Vox Walks:** Participants interviewed the crowd of Antaragni and created a short video compiling the same. The theme given to the students was 'My First Vote Youth Speaks'. Memorable experiences of the young were recorded and documented.
- **Journalism:** Wielding the mighty pens in their hands and donning the caps of professional reporters with an eye for news, participants of this competition wrote articles and created videos discussing their impassioned views on 'Voter Education – An Undermined Necessity.'
- **Short Film Making:** With the aim to persuade the masses with stories written on celluloid, young students zealously participated in the short film making competition, attempting to convey a serious message this time working on the theme 'Motivating the Urban Youth to Vote.'

- **Documentary Making:** Appealing to the journalistic side of young filmmakers, the documentary making competition offered two themes to the participants. Theme 1 on electoral culture in India required the participants to project the electoral process from enrolment

- **Ad Making:** An on the spot competition, Ad Making got the creative juices of the participants working as they tried to create simple yet effective messages around Electronic Voting Machine awareness. The participants also had the choice of creating an ad that tackled voter apathy and motivated Indians to vote.



to election and showcase the attitude of people towards participating in elections, while critically commenting on the culture of voting amongst the citizens. Theme 2 explored the topic of inclusion in elections where the entrants discussed the participation of various marginalized groups in the country.

- **Aamne Samne:** An invigorating discussion based competition, Aamne Saamne was conducted in the Hindi language. It imitated the style of Television debates and discussions where a group of 5 students donned various roles, from anchor, party workers to election officials, and discussed topics like 'Online Voting: the way forward or opening a potential Pandora's box' and 'Voter Education – An Undermined Necessity.'

- **Parliamentary Debate:** Going on a 2 versus 2 basis, the parliamentary debate provided three motions to its participants. The motion discussed by the participants was 'This house believes that compulsory voting in elections does more harm than good,' where they debated over the pros and cons of making voting mandatory by the state.



SOCIAL MEDIA

INITIATIVES

ECI goes Social in a New Avatar

How would it feel if India's apex authority in charge of conducting elections reached out thrice daily with interactive posts to 142 million people via the world's biggest social networking service? Unbelievable but true!

Election Commission of India has decided to leverage the immense potential of social media to ensure voter engagement, awareness and empowerment through its official Facebook page India Votes. The page will serve on the principle of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) by establishing a direct, two-way contact between the Indian masses and the Election Commission.

Currently managed by the commission's SVEEP section, India Votes informs its audience about recent news and events of the ECI, imparts educative messages in the form of comics, memes, posters, creatives, videos, fun facts and brings forward the human faces behind the election process of the world's largest democracy captured through stories, photos as well as anecdotes.

Keeping in mind the interactive, dynamic and attractive nature of the medium which operates amidst millions of users every day, ECI has entered the Facebook arena with a pre-planned content strategy. Day-wise features are as follows—

#Monday Memoirs —

Photos of election scenarios from the bygone era of a newly independent India shared with simple, single line captions, anecdotes and facts from elections every Monday.



Which Act, brought into force in 1951, allows for the conduct of elections to the Houses of Parliament and House (s) of State Legislatures?

#Tuesday Trivia —

A simple challenge to the audience every Tuesday. Tuesday Trivia poses simple quiz-like questions with the purpose of engaging and educating the audience on the election basics.

#World In A Wednesday –

Fun facts about democracies and elections around the world presented in the form of attractive info-graphics.



US Presidential Elections: Why the first Tuesday of November

The first Tuesday of November was selected as the day of Presidential Election in the US, considering two key factors- providing farmers with sufficient travelling time, who had to cross long distances to reach a polling station and in order to not disrupt the Church activities of the Catholics, therefore preventing a clash with the All Saints Day.

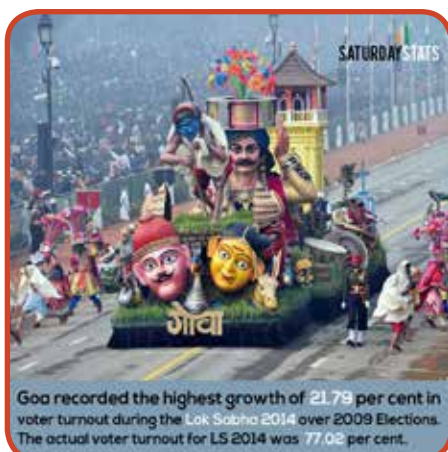


Thursday Toons–

Engaging, educative, but most importantly, tongue-in-cheek comic series featuring our Chunaav Toons to tickle the funny bones of the young audiences every Thursday

Friday Frames –

Visually appealing representative images capturing the human faces as they celebrate the festival of democracy and also showcasing the efforts behind the conduct of elections.



Goa recorded the highest growth of 21.79 per cent in voter turnout during the Lok Sabha 2014 over 2009 Elections. The actual voter turnout for LS 2014 was 77.02 per cent.

Saturday Stats –

Easy to understand, engaging info- graphics with stats representing information related to gender gaps, voter turnout etc. shared with the audience every Saturday.



Sunday Stories –

This human interest photo series shares tales of inspiration from the 'Belief in the Ballot – 101 Human Stories from Indian Elections,' published by Election Commission of India and Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

With its presence being gradually felt on Facebook and exciting prospects in future, ECI is gearing up to the challenge of communicating the importance of the elections in India—a country that harbours the biggest fraction of youth in the whole world.



Apart from having an active Facebook page that shares current happenings within the Commission and disseminates messages of voter education, the Election Commission of India also has a curated YouTube channel which showcases fascinating video content received from Chief Electoral Officers

of all States and Union Territories as well as videos produced by the ECI itself.

YouTube has proved to be an excellent platform for reaching out to the audience with important information regarding the latest updates in the electoral process or for simply sending across motivational messages to exercise their franchise through vibrant and interesting short videos. In October last year, a movie targeted towards Service Voters talking about the recent ETPBS system was effectively circulated amongst the concerned audience via our YouTube channel.

Pun-chayat Contest

In the year of 2017, the Election Commission of India entered the digital social arena to reach out to Indian citizens through its official Facebook page for voter education India Votes. The page holds an array of content from facts to stories, photographs to videos and cartoons to animation with each creative carrying messages for the information and education of the audience.

In an attempt to engage the Indian electors as well as gather crowd sourced content for communicating the key messages related to voter awareness, a creative tagline writing contest was conducted on the social

networking site from October 25 to 30, 2017. It was popularized by the name Pun-chayat. The contest was also an opportunity for the one and all to have their ideas reflected in the ECI merchandise such as mugs, T-shirts, key-chains etc.

Around 50 entries were received from which 7 were shortlisted and put up on the page for online



voting. The top 3 entries on the basis of maximum number of likes and comments received, were announced and rewarded with a certificate along with a customized T-shirt with their tagline printed on it.



MEGHALAYA

MILLENNIALS

The Millennium Voters

2018 isn't just another year; the number holds a lot of value. A proportion of population born on January 1, 2000 have qualified as eligible electors on new year's giving to our country the very first batch of its voters from the new millennium. The Election Commission of India has fondly christened them as millennium voters. There are about 74,000 millennium voters in the country, with Election Commissions' estimation of around 2,000 such potential voters in each state.

The mind of the millennial has been a mystery all over the world. Born in a new age of free information

and broad minds open to a variety of ideas, the potential this generation holds is without a doubt limitless. Building a future democracy in the nation is one of the key responsibilities, each is entrusted with. By 2021, India will be emerging as the youngest country with 64% of its population in the working age group of 20–35 years. Hence, involvement of the young and future voters is indispensable for fair representation in a powerful democracy. With millennium voters, the ambassadors of the new age

and date, the Commission aims to reach out to each and every young and future elector of the country and motivate them.

CEO

Meghalaya's office took the very first steps forward in this initiative aimed at registering millennial

voters ahead of the 2018 assembly polls. A fascinating coincidence led us to the discovery of the first child born in Meghalaya on January 1, 2000 whose name itself is Millenium Grace. Millenium Grace was aptly made the brand ambassador of Millennium Voters of the State and a number of posters featuring her were circulated, through which she motivated the eligible electors of Meghalaya to get registered and exercise their franchise in the upcoming State Legislative Assemble Elections in March.

The vigor that the young bring with themselves is what fortifies our faith in them. ECI will attempt

to seize every opportunity to engage with the youth with the hope that they will grow into informed, ethical and responsible voters essential to preserve the sanctity of the electoral process.

CEO Office, Meghalaya



List of Millennium Voters from Meghalaya

Name	Sex	DOB	Mother's Name	Father's Name	Village
Millennium Grace Marwein	Female	01-01-2000	Bilanty Marwein	Markhiar Basaiawmoit	Mawlangwir
Richfnaullmerry Shylla	Male	01-01-2000	Remedy Shylla	Silverwell Snaitung	Phlangkynshi
Happydaris Lyngdoh	Female	01-01-2000	Meloris Lyngdoh	Pholstar Lyngkhohi	Mawten
Wanborsuklang Marwein	Male	01-01-2000	Diloris Marwein	Sholin K. Raswai	Nonglang
Nangshemlad lawphniaw	Male	01-01-2000	Duty lawphniaw	Timothi Khonglam	Mawsaw
Reynoldson lawphniaw	Male	01-01-2000	Egina lawphniaw	Hector K. Syiemlieh	Mawsaw
Khrav Nongrem	Male	01-01-2000	Ral Nongrem	Mooring Thongni	Nongdiat
Sharies Shangpliang	Male	01-01-2000	Skintina Shangpliang	Diro Pariong	Laitlawsnai
Evidentwell Thongni	Male	01-01-2000	Helistilda Thongni	(L) Tridingwell Lyngkhohi	Mawthungmalang
Nephisha Mawlieh	Female	01-01-2000	Powerful Mawlieh	Donbok Lyndoh	Mawsaw
Pynshaibor Lyngdoh Langrin	Male	01-01-2000	Bidaris Lyngdoh Langrin	Nestar	Wahkaji
Khrawkupar Paliar	Male	01-01-2000	Lildaris Paliar	Thwes Thongni	Demnar

Gujarat : Facilitating the Voters



You have two Choices

Vote Candidate or **Vote NOTA**



ceo.gujarat.gov.in

Chief Electoral Officer, Gujarat State

Toll -Free Helpline : 1950

Born as men, they voted as women

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Vadodara: These assembly polls are special for **Manvi Vaishnav**. Born as a man, she exercised her voting right as a woman on Thursday.

Vaishnav voted using her new Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) card. She was born as Yogesh Vaishnav, Manvi had left home in childhood struggling with her gender identity. She stayed with eunuchs before become a volunteer for Lakshya Trust working for LGBT rights.

She underwent a sex re-assignment surgery in



March 2016. "Voting today was more of a recognition of

Vaishnav voted using her new Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) card. She was born as Yogesh Vaishnav and had left home in her childhood struggling with her gender identity

my gender identity and rights as a woman. She said that she voted hoping that the new government would do something for people like her," she said. After her operation, Manvi had obtained a certificate from the civil

surgeon and got a gazette notification done. She approached the election officers with supporting documents and made changes to her EPIC.

Vadodara-resident Aakruti Patel (27) was born Yogesh Patel in Thasra in Kheda will also cast her vote to elect the state's government for the next five years on a woman's ID card. She realized that she was indeed a girl within and decided to get sex revision surgery done. Interestingly, Aakruti got her name and gender changed in her ID papers even before she opted to go under the scalpel.





Hello, We are Shri Mat & Shri Mati



Lokshahi Hum Se, Vote Karo Garv Se

For More Details Kindly Log on to
www.ceogujarat.nic.in

Chief Electoral Officer,
Gujarat

Champions of Champaran

As the Bihar Legislative Assembly Elections fast approached the state in the october of 2015, one could have easily caught a glimpse of the resolve of Lokesh Kumar Singh, District Election Officer of West Champaran, getting stronger. He was determined to ensure that there was a significant increase in the voter turnout in the district for the upcoming elections.

Working tenaciously, the DEO and his team developed a strong and direct communication plan to positively impact its urban as well as rural citizens.

Going beyond motivation, the election team successfully achieved mobilization of the urban masses by holding an array innovative activities and taking confidence building measures. Through cycle rallies, run for vote events, formation of human chains, hosting road shows and conducting a flag march, the message 'Every Vote Counts' reached one and all. The air of West Champaran was almost festive with hot air balloons, campaign stickers, awareness seals, pamphlets and audio spots greeting the people every day. A special focus was maintained on the youth with campus ambassadors tirelessly educating and encouraging their peers.

rural awareness. By organizing rallies twice every week, effective mobilization of the masses was observed. Facilitation Centres were established at all Lok Shiksha Kendras (1 in every Panchayat, 315 in total) and voter slips were distributed to facilitate voters.

The efforts of the team were observed in the extensive media coverage the SVEEP activities garnered. But the ultimate prize for their hard work was paid with a 4.72% increase in the voter turnout. DEO Lokesh Kumar Singh was awarded the National Best Electoral Practices Awards in 2016 for the SVEEP initiatives undertaken by him.

Direct Communication efforts of the West Champaran election team resulted in 4.72% increase in the District's voter turnout

CEO Office, Bihar



Large Scale Rural Awareness collaborating with Booth Level Officers, Sakshar Bharat Preraks, Livelihood Mission Mobilizers, Vikas Mitra, Tola Sevak, ASHAs, Anganwadi Sewika/ Sahayika and community groups, the elections team worked on a convergence approach for creating a widespread



SVEEP III Brush will Paint the National Canvas of Future



The Election Commission of India's SVEEP programme has gradually spread across the nation with the patriotic message of voters' education and electoral participation in a phased and systematic manner. The sustained efforts

undertaken with the launch of SVEEP Phase I & Phase II have successfully been able to reap the benefits in the shape of voters' turnout. Today, SVEEP is being recognized by its name in the public domain and also able to convey its message.

The introduction of SVEEP III has the potential to make inroads into the young minds. Once implemented, it will go a long way to educate the future voters as graduates of democracy. Undoubtedly, the right chord has been touched after a great deal of spade work done through the earlier phases of SVEEP. The education and learning of all kinds make maximum impact and create an everlasting impression on the minds which are fresh & young. The motive of this programme in itself is motivating. The design of SVEEP III has been interwoven to inculcate the essence of democratic values. It will attempt to transform every future voter into an informed

and electorally literate citizen. In addition to the motivation and facilitation for electoral participation, this programme has potential to motivate and promote ethical thinking.

The innovative interventions in the shape of Electoral Literacy Clubs with an eye on the youngsters will go a long way to serve the desired purpose in multiple manners. There is every likelihood that these clubs will engage the students in more constructive, creative, positive and patriotic manner. These clubs will probably take the center stage of all cultural extra-curricular activities in the educational institutes.

The concept of Chunav Pathshala will also give additional impetus to the programme by covering the left outs of formal education system. The community participation at booth level through Chunav Pathshala with BLO at center stage will revive booth locations round the year.

The programme of mainstreaming of electoral literacy through educational institutions and communities will not only impart electoral education but also provide educated and informed citizens with a great civic sense and ethical values.

Naresh Mahajan
SVEEP Nodal Officer, Punjab



NATIONAL ICONS



Late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam — A renowned scientist, scholar, administrator and the eleventh President of India, Dr. Kalam has been a role model for thousands of young people in the country, especially because of his campaigns and literary works focused on channelising the untapped energy of the youth. He was ECI's first national icon in 2010.

Sh. M.S. Dhoni — Leading the Indian cricket team to several victories as its present Captain, Mahendra Singh Dhoni is an inspiration to many. Popular for his image of being hardworking and a self-made man, he became ECI's national icon in 2010.



Ms. Saina Nehwal — The first Indian to win a medal in badminton at the Olympics and achieve World Rank 2 in her sport, Saina Nehwal inspires women and youth across the nation. She became ECI's National Icon in 2013.

Ms. MC Mary Kom — The only woman boxer to have won a medal in each one of the six world championships, and bagging several prizes in boxing for India, Mary Kom is the face of the undaunted spirit of women and became ECI's National Icon in 2013.



Sh. Aamir Khan — Apart from being one of the most popular actors, Aamir Khan, who is also a director, screenwriter, producer and television presenter, has been making significant contribution by mobilising masses through his association with several social development and welfare programmes. He was appointed ECI's national icon ahead of the Lok Sabha Election 2014.

ICONS

FOR ELECTIONS

STATE ICONS

State	Name of Icon	Field
Meghalaya	1. Headingson Ryntathiang	Music Artist
	2. Ms. Bertha G. Dkhar	Teacher
	3. Mr. Sengjan A. Sangma	Special Educator
Kerala	4. Gopinath Muthukad	Magician
Odisha	5. Sudarshan Pattnaik	Sand Artist
Punjab	6. Abhinav Bindra	Olympic Shooter
	7. Gurdas Mann	Singer
Rajasthan	8. Sh. Rajat Chauhan	Archery Gold medalist
	9. Ms. Apurvi Chandela	Shooter Gold Medalist
Tripura	10. Ms. Dipa Karmakar	Gymnast (Artistic) /Physical Instructor
J&K	11. Tsering Ladol	Mountaineer
Haryana	12. Ms. Meghna Malik	TV Actress
Chhattisgarh	13. Smt Mamta Chandrakar & 14. Shri Prem Chandrakar	Folk Singers
	15. Smt Saba Anjum & 16. Shri Abdul Fahim Khan	International Hockey Player
	17. Shri Vijay Kumar Sharma & 18. Smt Yugadhi Sharma	Celebrity Chef
Himachal Pradesh	19. Shri Vicky Chauhan	Regional Singer
	20. Ms. Shalini Sharma	RJ in 95.0 Big FM Channel
Gujarat	21. Shri Dhvanit Thaker	RJ of Radio Mirchi
	22. Shri Cheteshwar Pujara	Test Cricket Player
	23. Ms. Ankita Raina	Tennis Player
	24. Ms. Parul Parmar	PWD Badminton Player
	25. Ganesh Muhudkar	Blind Cricket Player
	26. Ms. Payal Rathava	National Gold Medalist, Archery
	27. Ms. Daxa Patel	Bharatnatayam exponent, silver Medallist in culture Olymiad
	28. Mr. Kiran Parmar	Kabbadi Player
	29. Mr. Vipsi Kasad	World record holder in Martial Art
	30. Ms. Vishwa Mohini Bhatt	RJ Radio Mirchi
	31. Mr. Harshil Shah	RJ Radio City

State	Name of Icon	Field
Tamil Nadu	32. Shri Gopinath	Star Vijay TV Anchor
Madhya Pradesh	33. Sh. Prahlad Singh Tipaniya	Malvi Folk Singer
	34. Sh. Rajiv Verma	Actor & Theatre Person
Nagaland	35. Ms. Veineinem Singson	Beauty and Aesthetic
	36. Ms. Nenghoilhing Hangsing	Beauty and Aesthetic
	37. Ms. Vilokali Zhimomi	Miss Nagaland, 2016
Uttar Pradesh	38. Ms. Malini Awasthi	Folk Singer
	39. Ms. Arunima Sinha	Amputee Mountaineer
Bihar	40. Mrs. Sharda Sinha	Folk Singer
	41. Smt. Santosh Yadav	Mountaineering
	42. Mr. Shashi Suman	singer and composer
Jharkhand	43. Ms. Bachenderi Pal	First Women Everest climber of India
	44. Ms. Aruna Mishra	International Pugilist
	45. Sh. Saurabh Tiwari	Cricketer
	46. Sh Silvanasu Dungdung	International Hockey Player
	47. Ms. Ashutosh Lakra	Former Hockey Player
	48. Sh. Ajay Malkhani	Director
Uttarakhand	49. Ms. Kavita Bisht	Acid attack survivor
	50. Sh. Manish Rawat	Participated in Olympics
	51. Sh. Pritam Bhartwan	Folk Singer
	52. Ms. Priyanka Negi	Singer
Delhi	53. Asmita Theatre Group	Theatre Group
	54. Sushil Kumar	Olympian Wrestler
Sikkim	55. Miss. Naksum Bhutia	International taekwondo player
	56. Mr. Tarundeep Rai	Archery Gold medalist
Goa	57. Mr. Antonio Rosario Fernandes	Playwright, Director, Actor & Producer
	58. Ms. Sonia Sirasat	Singer
	59. Ms. Hema Sardesai	Singer
	60. Mr. Subodh Kerkar	Visual Artist
	61. Mr. Sagun Krishna Kamat	Cricketer
	62. Mr. Suresh G.Amonkar	Writer & Educationist
Mizoram	63. Mr. TBC Ziahanpuia	Gospel Artist
Manipur	64. Ms. Leishangthem Jonthoingambi Devi	Artist

மே
16

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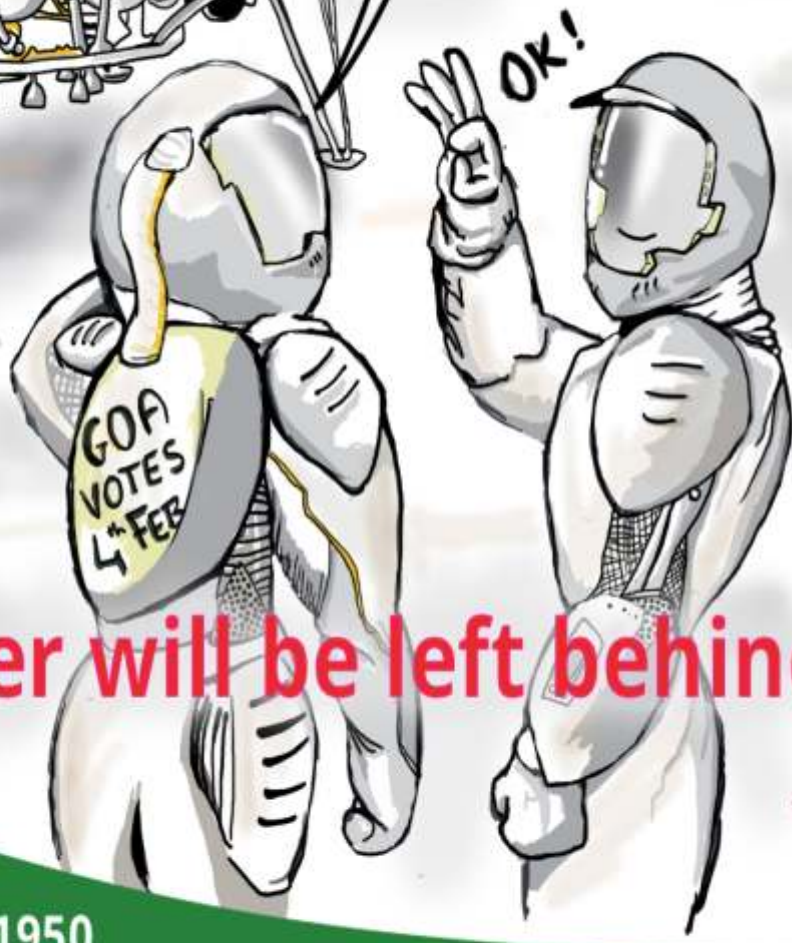
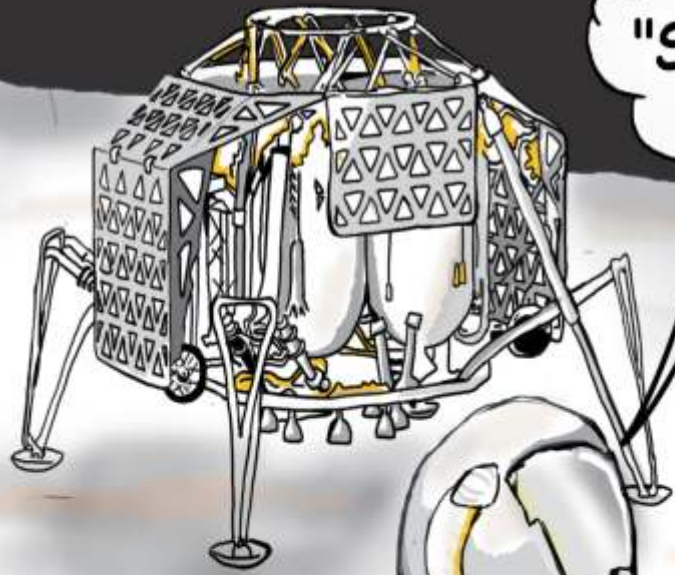


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OFFICE OF CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, GOA



ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

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