



LOK SATTA
People Power

Orissa Election Watch 2004

19th February, 2004, Cuttack, Orissa

THE PRIMACY OF THE VOTER

“ The little man with the little pencil, making the little mark on a little piece of paper.....”

Ultimately its for him, and he's the boss

In a Sane Democracy

- Political process should resolve the crisis
- Parties, elections and public office are the route to reform
- In India a vicious cycle operates

Failure of Political Process

- Parties
 - Autocratic and unaccountable
 - Repel the best
 - A problem, not solution
 - Choice - Tweedledom & Tweedledee

Contd..

Failure of Political Process

- Elections
 - Change of players
 - No change of rules of game
 - Criminalization
 - Money power
 - Flawed process
 - Electoral rolls (40% errors)
 - Bogus voting (22%)

Way Out

- Assert people's sovereignty
 - Fundamental democratic transformation
 - People centered governance
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Key Reforms

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Electoral reforms | Funding |
| | Criminalization |
| | Voting irregularities |
| Electoral system | Proportional Representation |
| | Separation of Powers |
| Decentralization | Local Governments |
| Rule of Law | Judicial reforms |
| Accountability | Right to information |
| | Citizens' charters |
| | Independent crime investigation |

Conditions for State-wide Movement

- A group of credible citizens with excellent track record
 - Insights to political and governance process
 - A practical agenda which unites all segments
 - Professional, full-time, institutional approach
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Methods of Citizens' Action

- People's Watch
 - Collective, informed assertion
 - Tools : A people's charter in local language

A common platform with name recognition

Establishment of citizen centres

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Methods of Citizens' Action

Advocacy for state and local goals

- Implementation of Right to Information
- Citizen's charters with penalties
- Empowerment of local governments

Contd..

Methods of Citizens' Action

Advocacy for state and local goals

- Empowerment of stake holders (water users, schools, market committees, fair price shops)
- Empowerment of ward committees
- Grama / Nagara Nyayalayas for speedy justice

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Methods of Citizens' Action

- Monitoring of meters in petrol stations
- Focus on delivery of school education and health care
- Police reforms at state level
- Monitoring of government programmes
- Election Watch

Objectives of Election Watch

- Promote voter awareness
 - Ensure purity of elections
 - Bring pressure on parties to put up desirable candidates
 - Discourage candidates with criminal record
 - Help voters make informed choices
 - Set a citizen - centered agenda
 - Generate demand for electoral reform
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Election Watch Activities

1. Verification of voters' lists and rectification of defects
 2. Screening of Candidates
 3. Go out and Vote Campaign
 4. 'Know Your Candidate'
 5. Common platforms and live TV debate
 6. Monitoring of polling
 7. Post - election monitoring
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Verification of Electoral Rolls

Why?

- Ordinary Citizens can easily understand it
 - Locally achievable
 - Law is perfect – only implementation is needed
 - Electoral rolls have a direct bearing on elections & governance
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Verification of Electoral Rolls

How to Access Voters' Lists?

- **Electoral rolls are available to all citizens**
 - MROs offices
 - Municipal offices in twin cities
- **They can be purchased for a price**
 - 0 – 95ps / page
 - 1.35 pos / a sheet of 2 pages

Head of account

- Districts: 0070 – 02 – 101
 - Hyderabad: 0033 – 03 – 101
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How to Add or Delete Names

- Simple applications:
 - Form 6 : Addition
 - Form 7 : Objection to a name & deletion
 - Form 8B : Deletion
 - Form 8 : Corrections
 - Form 8A : Change of polling booth
 - Form 6 – Voter should apply
 - Form 7 & 8B – Any other voter can apply
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Additions / Deletions / Changes

- Application in duplicate to MRO
(Municipal Officials in Hyderabad)
 - Receipt given to applicant – No fee
 - Application published by MRO.
(on Notice Board)
 - 7 days notice for objections, if any
 - Summary enquiry & decision
 - Decision communicated to applicant
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Verification of Voters' Lists

LOK SATTA Surveys:

- 44.8% errors in voter registers in cities
 - up to 22% voting fraud in Hyderabad
 - Existing rolls form the basis
 - Additions and deletions only on application in duplicate
 - form 6 for addition
 - form 7 or 8B for deletion
 - Revenue / Municipal officials in charge of voter registration
 - Forms to be filed by the applicants personally
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Voter Verification – Logistics

- Election Watch role only facilitatory
 - 2 volunteers per polling station
 - volunteers drawn from citizens, activist groups, consumer
 - organizations, colleges and residents' associations
 - Voters' list for the area polling stations to be supplied
 - Wide Publicity to the programme to encourage voters to participate
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Voter Verification – Logistics

- Address and phone no. of Local Election Watch office to be publicized
 - Statutory forms will be made available locally
 - Election Watch will work with the election officials to facilitate filing applications
 - Election Watch will monitor processing of applications
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Verification of Voters' Lists in Andhra Pradesh

Survey of Urban Polling Stations

| Particulars of electoral rolls verified | | | Deletions Required (Errors of Commission) | | | | | Additions Required (Errors of Omission) | | | | Total Errors | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---|---------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
| District | No. of Polling Stations. | No. of Voters | Moved out of the area | Death | Other * | Total | % to voters | Attained 18 years of age | Moved into the area | Total | % to voters | Total number | % to voters registered |
| Vizag | 3 | 1298 | 355 | 22 | 17 | 394 | 30.4 | 82 | 413 | 495 | 38.1 | 889 | 68.5 |
| E.Godavari | 3 | 419 | 78 | 14 | 0 | 92 | 22.0 | 39 | 85 | 124 | 29.6 | 216 | 51.6 |
| W.Godavari | 2 | 1491 | 121 | 12 | | 133 | 8.9 | 46 | 179 | 225 | 15.1 | 358 | 24.0 |
| Krishna | 3 | 1919 | 690 | 35 | 0 | 725 | 37.8 | 53 | 500 | 553 | 28.8 | 1278 | 66.6 |
| Kurnool | 3 | 1796 | 419 | 43 | 28 | 490 | 27.3 | 62 | 90 | 152 | 8.5 | 642 | 35.7 |
| Nalgonda | 1 | 797 | 273 | 5 | 2 | 280 | 35.1 | 34 | 125 | 159 | 19.9 | 439 | 55.1 |
| Warangal | 2 | 1863 | 320 | 28 | 30 | 378 | 20.3 | 43 | 74 | 117 | 6.3 | 495 | 26.6 |
| Guntur | 5 | 4060 | 1039 | 83 | 92 | 1214 | 29.9 | 209 | 604 | 813 | 20.0 | 2027 | 49.9 |
| Hyderabad | 5 | 4459 | 923 | 31 | 42 | 996 | 22.3 | 85 | 691 | 776 | 17.4 | 1772 | 39.7 |
| Urban Total | 27 | 18102 | 4218 | 273 | 211 | 4702 | 26.0 | 653 | 2761 | 3414 | 18.9 | 8116 | 44.8 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rural+Urban | 56 | 40399 | 5852 | 761 | 395 | 7008 | 17.3 | 1100 | 3353 | 4453 | 11.0 | 11461 | 28.4 |

*[under-aged / ineligible / fictitious]

Verification of Voters' Lists in Andhra Pradesh

Survey of Rural Polling Stations

| Details of electoral rolls verified | | | Deletions Repl (Errors of Commission) | | | | Additions Repl (Errors of Omission) | | | | Variation | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|--|------------|------------|-------------|--|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| District | No. of Polling Stns. | No. of Voters | Shifting | Death | Other | Total | % of voters | Attained 18 years of Age | By shifting | Total | % of voters | Total | % of voters |
| EG | 4 | 1289 | 166 | 36 | | 202 | 15.7 | 31 | 50 | 81 | 6.3 | 283 | 22.0 |
| WG | 2 | 2086 | 37 | 52 | | 89 | 4.3 | 24 | 23 | 47 | 2.3 | 136 | 6.5 |
| Krishna | 1 | 416 | 27 | 13 | 1 | 41 | 9.9 | 12 | 3 | 15 | 3.6 | 56 | 13.5 |
| Prakasam | 2 | 1297 | 43 | 38 | 2 | 83 | 6.4 | 34 | 12 | 46 | 3.5 | 129 | 9.9 |
| Nellore | 4 | 3084 | 87 | 79 | 15 | 181 | 5.9 | 60 | 100 | 160 | 5.2 | 341 | 11.1 |
| Chittoor | 2 | 1762 | 143 | 37 | 90 | 270 | 15.3 | 47 | 110 | 157 | 8.9 | 427 | 24.2 |
| Kurud | 4 | 4648 | 488 | 71 | 1 | 560 | 12.0 | 82 | 128 | 210 | 4.5 | 770 | 16.6 |
| Warangal | 2 | 1399 | 51 | 15 | 4 | 70 | 5.0 | 7 | 12 | 19 | 1.4 | 89 | 6.4 |
| Monagar | 1 | 344 | 32 | 11 | | 43 | 12.5 | 35 | 12 | 47 | 13.7 | 90 | 26.2 |
| Karimnagar | 5 | 3956 | 549 | 100 | 59 | 708 | 17.9 | 78 | 142 | 220 | 5.6 | 928 | 23.5 |
| Khammam | 2 | 2016 | 11 | 36 | 12 | 59 | 2.9 | 37 | 0 | 37 | 1.8 | 96 | 4.8 |
| Rural Total | 29 | 22297 | 1634 | 488 | 184 | 2306 | 10.34 | 447 | 592 | 1039 | 4.7 | 3345 | 15.10 |

**Post-Polling Survey of Select Polling Station Areas
(1999 Assembly and Parliamentary Polls, Hyderabad, AP)**

| Assembly Constituency / Polling Booth No. | No. of voters | No. of votes polled | No. who reported that they actually 'voted' | No. not voted or doubtful cases | | | | Percentage of doubtful and 'not voted' votes |
|--|------------------|---------------------------|--|--|--|---------------------------------|------------|--|
| | | | | Residing in the area but not voted | Left the area but residing within the city | Left the city / country etc. | Total | |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) |
| 207/173 | 1143 | 625 | 483 | 5 | 91 | 46 | 142 | 22.7 |
| 207/176 | 956 | 459 | 377 | 15 | 41 | 26 | 82 | 17.9 |
| 209/93 | 725 | 428 | 306 | 20 | 95 | 7 | 122 | 28.5 |
| 209/75 | 989 | 495 | 380 | 42 | 72 | 1 | 115 | 23.2 |
| 210/426 | 893 | 476 | 399 | 22 | 49 | 6 | 77 | 16.2 |
| Total | 4706 | 2483 | 1945 | 104 | 348 | 86 | 538 | 21.7 |

Prescreening Potential Candidates

- **RP Act 1951 Section 8**
 - Prohibition only if convicted for offences listed
 - Election Watch screening by constituency committee
 - **Criminal record**
 - Screening involves
 - Rowdy sheeters
 - History sheeters
 - Convictions
 - Charge sheets pending
 - Credible allegations with documentation
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Screening of Candidates

- Post box no: 100
 - Screening Committee
 - Bench Marks
 - Conviction
 - Charge sheet
 - Rowdy sheeter
 - History sheeter
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Screening of Candidates

- Information from public & other sources for information on potential candidates
 - Screening of available information
 - Write to parties
 - If they are put up as candidates, make the lists public
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Corruption Antecedents

- **Criteria**
 - Credible allegations with documentation
 - Convictions
 - If public servants earlier, details of disciplinary action
 - Charge sheets pending
 - Assets before entering public life and now
 - Assets disproportionate to income
 - Income and expenditure assessment
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Screening Procedure

- Identify prospective candidates of major parties
- Screening at constituency level
- Full involvement of media persons
- Send details to parties with an appeal not to nominate them

If they are nominated:

- Make details public
 - Appeal to people not to vote for them
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Know Your Candidate

- Information on
 - Personal details
 - Income and assets
 - Criminal record, if any
 - Political history
 - Views and aspirations (Election Commission proforma as guide)
 - Collect from candidates
 - Collect disclosure details of candidates (criminal, financial and educational)
 - Make public
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Common Platforms & TV Debate

- All recognized party candidates
 - Predetermined format
 - Brief statements
 - Time-bound answers to written questions
 - Impartial moderator
 - Wide publicity
 - Questions from Lok Satta panel
 - TV debate between candidates for Chief Minister's office
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Go Out and Vote Campaign

- Television
 - Radio
 - News coverage
 - Pamphlets
 - Posters
 - Cinema Slides
 - Hoardings
 - Other means of communication
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Monitoring of Polling

- Wherever feasible
- Trained volunteers
- Coordination with State Election Commission

Structure for Furthering These Aims

FIELD VOLUNTEERS



DISTRICT COMMITTEES



A CENTRAL WORKING GROUP



APEX COMMITTEE

Field Volunteers

- Pre-voting
 - Scrutiny of Rolls
 - Rectification
 - Individual Registration
 - Identification of Candidates
 - Candidate Information
 - Candidate Information - Common Platforms
 - Election Day
 - Monitoring Polling
 - Post Election
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Working Group

- Planning
- Selection of Volunteers
- Training of Volunteers
- Guidance of Volunteers
- Liaison Where necessary with Election Authorities
- Coordination of Ad Campaign
- Centralized HELP LINE to VOLUNTEERS & GENERAL PUBLIC

Apex Committee

- Monitoring - Guidance, Advice
- Intervention if necessary, at critical junctures

Some Critical Areas

1. Accuracy of Voter Rolls:

Bogus voting

2. Registration of Voters / Removal of Voters.

Forms 6, 7, 8

3. Criminalization

- o The Law
- o The Wider Context

Rowdy Sheeters - People against whom cases are pending

- o Criminalization & Public Opinion
- o Sensitivity of Politicians to Public Opinion

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Some Critical Areas

4. Common Platforms:

- Interface
- Structured Meetings
- Chief Ministerial Candidates
- Election Manifestos / Promises

5. Monitoring on Election Day

6. Post Election

Ad Campaign

1. Hoardings
2. Posters
3. News
4. Public Events

THEME

Vote; Do Not Vote For Undersirable Candidates -
Vote For Good Candidates - Vote Intelligently

If No Major Candidate Is Acceptable, Still Go For
Polling And Invalidate The Vote/leave It Blank.

Monitoring and Guidance

- Core Group
- Control room with all facilities
- A team of Volunteers
- A team of employees
- All necessary infrastructure

Logistics

- Procedure – Election Watch Manual ready
- Electoral rolls – supplied by Election Watch
- Application forms – available with EC

Volunteers

- Each Assembly constituency
- 200 Polling booths (average)
- 100 Volunteers (average)
- 25 teams of 4 each
- 4 volunteers per polling station

Election Watch (Other Activities)

- Pressure on parties to allow candidate selection
 - Locally by members
 - Campaign for specific reforms
 - Citizen's charter
 - Freedom of information
 - Empowerment of local government stake-holders
 - Speedy justice through local committees
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Election Watch (Other Activities)

- Campaign for simple electoral reforms at EC level
 - Mandatory identity cards
 - Electronic voting
 - Repolling, if tendered votes exceed certain number
 - Campaign for full disclosure by candidates
 - Campaign for funding reform
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Possible Advocacy Issues

- Short Term (advanced stage)
 - Post office as nodal agency for voter registration
 - Disclosure of financial details of candidates
 - Political funding law
 - Tendered votes as a ground for automatic repolling
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Possible Advocacy Issues

- Short Term (advanced stage)
 - National judicial commission
 - A law for local courts in every state
 - One for every 25,000 population
 - Justice in 90 days
 - Simple procedures in local language
 - Local government empowerment (Amendment of Art 243)
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**“Never doubt that a group of thoughtful,
committed individuals can change the world.**

Indeed it is the only thing that ever did”

- Margaret Meade