

LOK SATTA

LOK SATTA *People Power*

Rajasthan Election Watch 2003 17th July, 2003, Jaipur

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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



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

Key Reforms

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

Conditions for State-wide Movement

• A group of credible citizens with excellent track record

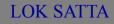
- Insights to political and governance process
- A practical agenda which unites all segments
- Professional, full-time, institutional approach

- 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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Advocacy for state and local goals

• Implementation of Right to Information

• Citizen's charters with penalties

• Empowerment of local governments





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





- 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

Election Watch Activities

- 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

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



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

How to Add or Delete Names

- Simple applications:
 - Form 6 : Addition
 - o 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

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

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

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

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							ditions						
rolls \	d	(Errors of Commission)				(Errors of Ommission)				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 elect	toral rolls	verified	Deletions Read (Errors of Commission)				Additions Read (Errors of Ormission)				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	220	
WG	2	2086	37	52		89	4.3	24	23	47	23	136	6.5	
Kiishna	1	416	27	13	1	41	9.9	12	3	15	3.6	56	13.5	
Rakasam	2	1297	43	38	2	83	64	34	12	46	3.5	129	9.9	
Nellore	4	3084	87	79	15	181	59	60	100	160	52	341	11.1	
Crittoor	2	1762	143	37	90	270	15.3	47	110	157	89	427	24.2	
Kumod	4	4648	488	71	1	560	120	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	125	35	12	47	13.7	90	26.2	
Karinnagar	5	3956	549	100	59	708	17.9	78	142	220	5.6	928	23.5	
Khammam	2	2016	11	36	12	59	29	37	0	37	1.8	96	4.8	
Rural Total	29	22297	1634	488	184	2306	10.34	447	592	1039	47	3345	15.10	

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Post-Polling Survey of Select Polling Station Areas (1999 Assembly and Parliamentary Polls, Hyderabad, AP)												
Assembly Constituency/	No. of No. of No. who No. not voted or doubtful cases vy/voters votes reported that Desiding in the line fit the grade by the grade by the line fit the grade by the grade by the grade by the line fit the grade by the gra											
Polling Booth No.		polled	they actually 'voted'	0								
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	the city (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

• **RPAct 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

Screening of Candidates

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

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

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

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

Know Your Candidate

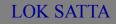
- Information on
 - Personal details
 - Income and assets
 - Criminal record, if any
 - Political history
 - Views and aspirations (Election Commission proforma as guide)
- Collect from candidates
- Collect disclosure details of candidates (criminal, financial and educational)
- Make public

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

Go Out and Vote Campaign

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



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

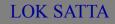
Field Volunteers

- 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
 - The Law
 - The Wider Context
- Rowdy Sheeters People against whom cases are pending
 - Criminalization & Public Opinion
 - Sensitivity of Politicians to Public Opinion

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Contd...

Some Critical Areas

4. Common Platforms:

- Interface
- Structured Meetings
- Chief Ministerial Candidates
- Election Manifestos / Promises
- 5. Monitoring on Election Day6. 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





• 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

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

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

Contd..

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)

"Never doubt that a group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever did"

- Margaret Meade