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From the Editors Desk

Dear Friends of the Lokniti Network,

Welcome again to a new edition of the Lokniti Newsletter

In my previous letter I had informed you about our varied activities regarding the four State Assembly Elections. This month we were relaxed from the election work. The informal discussions we colleagues had initiated on Reservation continued this month also. These became more intense after the results of Prof. Yadav study on the 'Caste Profile of Media Persons' came in. Apart from debating these reservation issues and planning our new ventures for the coming months, we had organised a Dialogue on the 'Functioning of Political Parties' at Guwahati, and a new study on the 'Verification of Electoral Roll's in Bihar was initiated.

In this issue of the newsletter, we have for you, a write up on Dialogue on Political Parties being held in Guwahati, This is followed by with a short write up on our forthcoming dialogues on 'Electoral Violence' being held in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

With Warm Regards

Pallavi

EVENTS ORGANISED

Dialogue on the Functioning of Political Parties in India

Lokniti, in collaboration with the International IDEA organized a two-day Dialogue on the functioning of political parties in India, at Guwahati on 14-15 June 2006. This dialogue was a part of the larger research project, which IDEA has undertaken in more than 50 countries in all regions of the world with the view to encourage parties to assess their own regulatory frameworks and methods of functioning. The dialogue was divided into seven broad sessions. The broad themes of the session are as given: *Parties and elections, Internal party process, Changing party system, Political Party Reforms*. The participants for the dialogue came from all the states of North East India. Some prominent politicians who spoke at the dialogue were Shri Apurba Bhattacharya (AGP) Shri Ramen Deka (BJP) Shri Deepak Ghosh (Trinammol Congress) Md. Hafiz Basir Ahmed (AUDF) Bindo L. Anong (UDP). Some other spokes person were , Ms. Leena Rikkila, (IDEA International) Prof. Krishna Hachhethu, (CNAS, Tribhuvan University Nepal), Prof. K.C.Suri, (Nagarjuna University) Dr. Sandeep Shastri (International Academy of Creative Teaching, Bangalore) Shri Sanjay Kumar (CSDS). Dr. Nanibath (Arunanchal University) Dr. Rajesh Dev (Shillong) Dr. K Debbarma (NE Hill Univ.Umshing)Dr. S.Mangi Singh (Manipur University) Dr.Mukund Giri (Sikkim) This dialogue was coordinated at Guwahati by Dr. Sandhaya Goswami and her team which included Professors and research scholars from the Department of Political Science, Guwahati University.

(Select photograph of the same event)



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Dialogue on 'Electoral Violence'

As a part of study on '*Electoral Violence and Electoral Dispute Mechanisms*' being conducted in countries of South Asia by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangkok Thailand, Lokniti- is organising Dialogues on Electoral violence in Western Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. These will be held on **July 15 and July 24, 2006** respectively. Both these dialogues aim to understand underline the nature and extent of electoral violence in these two states. In addition these dialogues will focus on the impact of poll violence on electoral participation of voters, especially women and electoral outcome in the state.

NEW PROJECT

Electoral Rolls (ER) Verification Study-2006

Lokniti has initiated a new study entitled '*Electoral Rolls (ER) Verification Study- 2006*', with intent to verify the accuracy of our voters list. The state of Bihar has been selected as case study. The reason that media for a long time now have accused the Election Commission-Bihar that some of the names from the voters list have been intentionally deleted. The objective of the study is to verify the actual voter list. This verification of Electoral rolls will be carried out at fifteen Assembly Constituencies namely Manjhi, Parsa, Mahnar, Jandaha, Muzzafarpur, Araria, Singheshwar, Kishenganj, Sheikhpura, Masaurhi, Rajpur, Dumraon, Ramgarh, Sasaram, Hisua. A total no of Deletions: 2,877, entry will be verified from among the 15,185 Electors. Each and every Polling Station will be covered under the study.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Shourie Arun (2006) 'Falling Over Backwards': An essay on against reservations and on-against judicial populism,' Rupa and Co, New Delhi

The book comes in the backdrop of the government proposal to reserve 27 percent seats for Other Backward Classes in higher education as well as a move to reserve jobs in the private sector, charts the history of reservations and questions the very notion of quotas. He Documents what he says are attempts by state legislatures and Parliament to bend the law for their benefit, and how the courts - including the Supreme Court - have been virtually ineffective in tackling arbitrary government functioning. In the authors own words this essay is about how we have got from PanditJi's, 'this way lies not only folly, but disaster,' to pronouncements of this kind

ARTICLES WRITTEN

- Sanjay Kumar- Bharat Mein Chunav Sudhar Ke Vicharniya Pahlu, *Sahyarti*, April –June 2006 (Hindi)
- YogendraYadav with Satish Deshpande , Redesigning Affirmative Action-Castes and Benefits in Higher Education-*Economic and Political Weekly- Volume41 No 24 June 17, 2006*
<http://www.epw.org.in/showArticles.php?root=2006&leaf=06&filename=10206&filetype=pdf>

CONTACT US

Lokniti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)

29, Rajpur Road, Delhi – 110054, India.

Phone: +91 11 23942199, Telefax: +91 11 23831290

Email: news@lokniti.org