

Editor's Note!

On behalf of Lokniti, I would like, first of all, to wish all of you a very Happy New Year 2009 and welcome you to our first Newsletter of the year 2009. This Newsletter highlights various activities and major events happening at Lokniti in the last month.

Your comments and suggestions for improving the Newsletter are always welcome.

Rajiv Kshetri, Editor

MEETING/ DISCUSSION

LOKNITI- NETWORK MEETING

A meeting of all the Lokniti network members was held from 12th to 14th, December 2008 at CSDS to review the activities of the network and to plan for the National Election Study 2009 (NES 09). It was attended by 35 members from different colleges and universities who have been associated with Lokniti and coordinated various surveys in their respective states. The meeting started with an opening remark by Prof. Suhas Palshikar, Co Director- Lokniti, expressing his sorrow on the demise of Rajendra Vora, one of the founding members of Lokniti. He also congratulated Prof. Peter R. deSouza, former Co-Director- Lokniti, on his appointment as Director, Indian Institute of Advance Studies, Shimla and Prof. Yogendra Yadav- Co Director Lokniti, for receiving the prestigious Adiseshiah Award for achievement in Social Science for the year 2008.

After the introductory remarks by Prof. Suhas Palshikar, Yogendra Yadav- delivered a lecture on the challenges before the practitioners of social scientific survey research in India.

First session of the meeting was devoted to a review of the activities undertaken by Lokniti, CSDS since National Election Study 2004. The highlights of this session were: State of Democracy in South Asia (SDSA), Youth Study in India, a series of Assembly Election Studies, the State of Nation Surveys (SONS) in collaboration with CNN-IBN and the two summer workshops held at IAS, Shimla in the year 2007 and 2008 for training in data analysis.

In the second session, the meeting briefly discussed three new initiatives: Project on the Study of Democratic Governance in Indian States which is planned to be launched in January 2009 in collaboration with Forum for Democratic Reform in India (FDR) Berkeley, USA, Project on Democratic Accountability and Citizen-Politician Linkage in collaboration with Duke University, Durham, as part of a larger comparative project based on data from over 84 countries and another project on the ethnographies of elections in collaboration with University College of London, London and which is to be coordinated by Mukulika Banerjee.



The third session of the first day was devoted to the overall strategy of the National Election Study 2009.

The entire session of the second day was devoted to detailed discussion on the structure and themes to be incorporated in the questionnaire.

The session on the last day was devoted to logistic and organizational matters.

**POST POLL SURVEY:
ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS- 2008 IN THE SIX INDIAN STATES**

Lokniti-CSDS conducted post poll surveys for the recently held assembly election in the states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir in November and December 2008. The purpose of the survey is to understand and to analyse the voting behaviour of the electorates, how people from different communities/section voted, how people decide their verdict by observing the performance of the last government in the state as well as the changing scenario of their verdict, etc.

In Chhattisgarh, the survey was conducted from 16th to 20th November and 1249 electorates were interviewed. In Madhya Pradesh, 1555 electorates were interviewed during the survey conducted from 28th November to 2nd December. In Delhi which went to the polls on 29 November, the survey was conducted from 30th November to 4th December and a total of 1674 electorates were interviewed. For Mizoram, 668 electorates were interviewed during the survey conducted from 2nd to 6th December. In Rajasthan, the survey was conducted from 4th to 7th December and a total of 1573 electorates were interviewed. For the state of Jammu and Kashmir which went to the polls in six phases, the survey was conducted in all the phases- firstly starting from 1st to 5th December covering the first to the third phase of polling, then from 8th to 12th December covering fourth phase of polling and finally from the 18th to 22nd December that covered the fifth and sixth phase of polling.

MAJOR EVENTS:**REPORT RELEASE****Indian Youth in a Transforming World: Attitudes and Perceptions**

A report titled "Indian Youth in a Transforming World: Attitudes and Perceptions" was released on the 22nd of December 2008 in New Delhi. The study was initiated in 2006 by Lokniti, CSDS in collaboration with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS). The function began with a welcome address by Prof. Yogendra Yadav, Co-director Lokniti followed by introductory remarks on the study by Mr. J. Wolff, resident representative of KAS to India. Prof. Peter R. deSouza, one of the principal investigators gave a key note address reflecting the findings of the study. This was followed by a presentation on the detailed findings of the study by Prof. Sandeep Shastri and Mr. Sanjay Kumar, two of the principal investigators.

As a part of the occasion, a panel discussion was also held. The panelists who were from varied disciplinary backgrounds were Sanjay Kundan- a poet, Sachin Pilot- a Member of Parliament, Bhanwar Meghvanshi- a social activist from Rajasthan, Nupur Sharma- Delhi University Students' Union President 2008, Dr. Hilal Ahmed-CSDS Fellow and the discussion was moderated by Prof. Yogendra Yadav.

BOOK RELEASE AT CSDS

A book titled "Rise of the Plebeians? The Changing Face of India Legislative Assemblies" edited by Christophe Jaffrelot and Mr. Sanjay Kumar was released by Prof. Rajeev Bhargava, Director of CSDS at CSDS on 12th December 2008. The book was published by Routledge in association with Centre de Science Humaines, New Delhi, CERI & CNRS, Paris and CSDS, Delhi. This book is a part of the series on "Exploring the Political in South Asia" edited by Mukulika Banerjee of University College of London, London.

The book examines how India's caste based social diversity gets translated into politics, by tracking the individual trajectory of sixteen states since the 1950 to the present times. Tracing the changing social profile of the elected representatives of the Indian states, the book also points to an uneven democratization of the regional political class.

The book has seven parts on different themes such as the Hindi Belt towards Social Engineering, North-eastern Pattern, the Reign of Dominant Castes in the Deccan, Tribal States, Where the Upper Castes Resist, the Domain of Proportionality and the Tamil Exception: the Subalternist Tradition.



RELEASE OF SHODHARTHY IN VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS



Shodharthy, is a quarterly Hindi journal of Social Sciences, published by Lokniti as a part of its Indian Language Programme which was initiated in December 2006. The journal is an article bank of over 300 articles from various reputed international journals and edited by Prof. A.K. Verma, Department of Political Science, Christ College, Kanpur. The journal has become popular among social science students in the Hindi belt states of India. Recently, the journal was released in various colleges and universities. It was released at BHU on 19th Nov by Prof. Priyankar Upadhyaya. On 20th November, 2008, it was released at Christ Church College, Kanpur By Prof A.K. Sharma, HSS, IIT-Kanpur.

Shodharthy was released on 11th December 2008 at Ambala by Prof. R.S.Yadav, Political Science, Kurukshetra University and at Kurukshetra by Prof. Leela Yadav, Head, Political Science, Kurukshetra University. Shodharthy was also released at Lokniti, CSDS on 12th December 2008.

Shodharthy was also released at Guru Nanak P.G. Girl's College, Udaipur on 15th December by Prof. G.M. Mehta, Principal of the college. On 16th December, it was again released at Raja Vidyapeeth, Udaipur and Centre for Nehru Studies, MLS University, Udaipur by Prof. Anju Kohli and Prof. Arun Chaturvedi and also at Mira Girl's College, Udaipur by Dr. R.L. Vyas.



CONTACT FOR FEEDBACK @
LOKNITI- PROGRAMME FOR COMPARATIVE DEMOCRACY
Centre for the Study of Developing Societies
29 Rajpur Road, Civil Lines, Delhi- 110054
Telephone: (+91-11) 23942199, 23981012
E-mail: kshetri.rajiv@gmail.com
www.lokniti.org