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LOKNITI Newsletter

OCTOBER 2008

Editor's Note,

A warm welcome to Lokniti Newsletter for the month of October 2008.

This issue highlights the activities undertaken by Lokniti in the month of September this year. I warmly acknowledge the encouragement and appreciation shown by Lokniti network members in publishing the Lokniti Newsletter. I hope, we will continue this productive enterprise with your guidance and support. Your comments and suggestions for improving the newsletter are highly welcome.

Rajiv Kshetri, Editor

SEMINAR/TALKS /LECTURES

A PUBLIC LECTURE BY YOGENDRA YADAV AT PRABHAT KHABAR, RANCHI



Professor Yogendra Yadav, Co-director at Lokniti, delivered a public lecture on the Electoral System in India on 10th September at Ranchi. The lecture was held in the office of the Prabhat Khabar, a leading Daily Newspaper in Jharkhand. In his lecture, Professor Yadav observed that Indian politics is full of examples where strong people place weak men and carry on the show. He further argues that the Indian political system makes a people's representative responsible to his constituency, which is not the case in the 'proportional system' now used by many European countries.

However, he stressed on the importance of decentralizing politics and administration rather than changing the existing Electoral System. Thus, he stated that instead of Delhi deciding for Ranchi or Ranchi deciding for Lohardaga, each district should have decision-making power in itself. He felt that the districts should have their own chief minister and council of ministers. Finally, he questioned the competency of the local administration saying "how can a 30 year old lad who becomes an IAS officer by reading some books and get appointed as a district collector without having any understanding of the actual problems, rule the district?"



LECTURE BY SANJAY KUMAR TO THE NSS STUDENTS OF DELHI UNIVERSITY

Sanjay Kumar, Deputy Director Lokniti, CSDS, delivered a lecture on Youth's Participation in Politics to the National Service Scheme (NSS) students from 14 colleges of Delhi University. The lecture was delivered during a two day workshop organized by Rajdhani College on 19th - 20th September 2008 at its college premises. About 50 students attended the workshop.

MEETINGS/ DISCUSSIONS/ CONFERENCES

APSA CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY SUHAS PALSHIKAR AND SANDEEP SHASTRI



A MOMENT OF CONVERSATION : SANDEEP SHASTRI (L) & SUHAS PALSHIKAR (R)

Professor Suhas Palshikar, Lokniti co-director and Dr. Sandeep Shastri, Lokniti National Convener attended the American Political Science Association (APSA) Conference held at Boston from 28 - 31 August 2008. They presented a paper on the theme 'The Idea of Minority and Democracy in South Asia'. They also attended the meeting of the Global Barometer, which discussed the possibility of conducting the second round of South Asia Barometer Survey. The meeting also decided to float two panels on themes related to the Global Barometers at the IPSA conference to be held in 2009 at Santiago, Chile.

KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION MEETING



The German Government is evaluating the activities of Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), India office. For this purpose, Dr. Christian Wagner, a one-man committee appointed by KAF, visited Lokniti-CSDS on 24 September 2008 to evaluate the project Youth Study in India. He is also Head of Asia Division of German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Dr. Jorgg Wolff, Country Representative of KAF in India, accompanied him during his visit. On this occasion, Lokniti team made a presentation on the main findings of the study on Indian Youths that was conducted in partnership with KAF. This was followed by some discussion on what could be the impact of this kind of study in India.

LOKNITI GROUP AT FDRI/BERKELEY CONFERENCE ON INDIAN DEMOCRACY

The Forum for Democratic Reform in India and University of California (FDRI-UC), jointly held a Conference on Indian Democracy on 26th -27th September 2008 at the University of California, Berkeley. The theme of the conference was Law and Democracy in India. The focus of the conference was on the importance of a mechanism to ensure safety, justice and certainty that are the cardinal elements for the survival of a healthy democracy. At the conference, deliberations were done by luminaries from government, the judiciary, civil society, the media, academia, and the corporate world to explore a judicial delivery mechanism through the interactions

A group of five members from Lokniti participated in the conference. The group comprised of Professor Suhas Palshikar, Co-Director, Dr. Sandeep Sashtri, National Convener, Sanjay Kumar, Deputy Director and Dr. K.C. Suri and Dr. Sanjay Lodha, Network members of Lokniti. At the conference, the Lokniti Group presented the findings of the pilot survey conducted by Lokniti-CSDS on the Indian District Courts System. The group also held meetings with various experts on the thematic and methods to carry out the study on the Index of Democratic Governance in India which is likely to take place in later this year.

PROJECTS

ARCHIVAL PROJECT



- * Lokniti Team at Delhi completed the compilation of all the published articles based on Survey conducted by Lokniti, CSDS in partnership with various media houses and institutions. Starting from 1996, a copy of this compilation is now available in Lokniti Office and CSDS Library at Delhi.
- * Lokniti Team is also in the process of preparing a detailed report of each survey conducted by Lokniti, CSDS in partnership with various media houses and institutions. The hard copies of the Reports are now available at Lokniti Office. The reports currently available are:
 - I. State of India's Environment Survey - May 2008
 - II. Tripura Assembly Election - 2008 (Post-Poll Survey)
 - III. Meghalaya Assembly Election - 2008 (Pre-Poll survey)
 - IV. Nagaland Assembly Election- 2008 (Pre-Poll Survey)
 - V. Uttar Pradesh Assembly Election - 2007 (Pre-Poll Survey)
 - VI. Uttar Pradesh Assembly Election -2007 (Post-Poll Survey)
- * The Soft copy of these reports will be loaded on Lokniti website shortly.

UPDATES

NEW APPOINTMENT



Roseena Nasir has joined Lokniti as a Research Officer in August 2008. She has done her doctorate from University of Delhi in Anthropological Demography in 2007. She was also rewarded a fellowship to pursue a diploma in Geriatrics by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, India. Health policy, Research Methodology and Population studies are her areas of academic interest. She has worked as a Research Officer in a Health Project taken up by Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai in partnership with London School of Economics.

PUBLICATION

- I. Rajeshwari Deshpande and Suhas Palshikar, 'Occupational Mobility: How Much Does Caste Matter?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLII, No. 34, August, 23, 2008, pp.61-70.
- II. Yogendra Yadav, Saptapadi for Political Reforms' *The Economic Times*, 19 September 2008. (At: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/3500761.cms>)

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