

*Lokniti, (CSDS)*

**Call for papers**

*Seminar on: Explorations in Indian Democracy*

*April 4-5, 2017*

**Organized By**

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

#### **ABOUT THE SEMINAR**

Lokniti - Programme for Comparative Democracy([www.lokniti.org](http://www.lokniti.org)) is a network of academics interested in empirical study of Indian politics and also a research programme for comparative democracy based at CSDS, Delhi. Formalized in 1997, Lokniti completes two decades of its existence in 2017. To celebrate the completion of two decades of existence of this novel collaborative research programme and network, Lokniti plans to hold a Two-Day Seminar on the theme, **Explorations in Indian Democracy** to be held at CSDS, Delhi, on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The seminar intends to discuss, in an empirical frame, specific themes on which we invite papers from researchers and young-to-mid-career scholars using data already available or collected by the scholars. An adequate number of papers will be selected on each of the following themes on the basis of proposal to be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016. The decision regarding the selection would be announced by 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2017 and the selected participants would be required to submit working drafts by 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2017.

The proposals are expected to be of not more than **1000** words but should clearly state objective, the central question and the method of investigation. Draft papers are expected to be in the range of **5000 to 7000** words inclusive of data, appendixes and references.

**The proposals are invited on the following four themes:-**

**1. Public Policy and Politics: Does policy matter in Electoral choices?**

The rise of ‘programmatically regimes’ in several Indian states has shifted the analytical lens on to the interface between electoral politics and public policy. Unlike Western democracies, wherein political parties provide alternate policy platforms, in India, irrespective of ideology there seems to be a consensus in the provision of public goods. This poses an interesting question- Does electoral politics shape public policy or public policy shape electoral outcomes by creation of political capacities? What influence do political institutions (party systems, party competition, organizational base) have on public policy?

**2. Clientelism: Is India a clientelist democracy?**

Clientelist linkages in the form of money, access to employment and goods and services define political representation not just in Southern democracies but also in numerous advanced democracies. While clientelism of various degrees exists in India in the form of both empowerment goods and symbolic goods, is clientelism a defining aspect of Indian democracy? How does clientelism translate into votes for political parties? Or are we veering toward a post-clientele democracy?

**3. Social Engagement and Political Action**

Social engagement in India is commonly characterized by informal, associational patterns based on affective ties of caste, religion and ethnicity rather than voluntary, civic engagement. While voluntary, civic associational networks are known to enhance democratic functioning, do informal associational networks also strengthen democratic institutions and processes? How do political institutions interact with such informal networks? Which kind of informal networks are able to mobilize politically or supplement existing political organization?

**4. Parties and Democracy**

As Indian democracy has evolved, political parties too have changed along the way. Moving beyond the lens of societal change and sociology of politics, we need to take note of new type of parties and their strategies. It is also necessary to examine how political parties have adapted to political, social and economic change, including for instance, the development of new forms of

communication, the increased role of the media and new economic actors. More recently, both old and new parties have also outsourced political strategy and management to professional and voluntary agencies. What impact does this have on party organisation, membership and even whom they claim to represent? Also, given the close connection between political parties and democracy, a crisis of the former in many ways could endanger democracy itself. The lack of internal democracy within parties has for instance has contributed party fragmentation. Does this also reflect in ways in which voters perceive parties and relate to parties?

Since Lokniti emphasizes an empirical understanding of political phenomena, we shall be happy to provide data available with us to scholars of selected proposals. Similarly, proposal involving cross-state comparisons would be welcome. We intend to select not more than twenty proposals and spread them roughly equally across the four themes. Lokniti would encourage authors to rework and submit their papers to the journal run by Lokniti, *Studies in Indian Politics* (<http://inp.sagepub.com/>). Selected participants would be provided local hospitality including two nights of accommodation on sharing basis (April 3 & April 4) and if required also on April 5, along with the reimbursement of travel costs to a maximum of 2 AC train fares.

**Important Dates:**

Seminar Dates: 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Last Date for Submission of Proposal – 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Announcement of Selected Candidates: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Submission of Working Drafts – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017

**The Proposal must be sent to [lokniti@csds.in](mailto:lokniti@csds.in) latest by 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016.**

- **Convenors:** *Suhas Palshikar, Sanjay Kumar, Sandeep Shastri*
- **Organizing Committee:** *Suhas Palshikar, Sanjay Kumar, Sandeep Shastri, Rajeshwari Deshpande, Jagroop Singh Sekhon, Sajad Ibrahim*
- **Organizing Secretaries:** *Vibha Attri & Souradeep Banerjee*