Do Informed Voters Make Better Choices? Experimental Evidence from Urban India

Abhijit V. Banerjee, Selvan Kumar, Rohini Pande and Felix Su*

March 1, 2010

Abstract

Do informational deficits on the part of voters sustain poor quality of governance in low income countries? We provide experimental evidence on the role of public disclosures on candidate quality and incumbent performance in enhancing electoral accountability. Slum dwellers who were randomly exposed to newspaper report cards on politician performance responded by increasing turnout and rewarding incumbents who spent more in slums and attended fair price shop oversight committee meetings. We also find evidence of yardstick competition – incumbent's vote share is sensitive to the wealth and education qualifications of his challengers.

1 Introduction

On 30 December 2009 the tribal leader Shibu Soren became chief minister of the majority tribal Indian state Jharkhand. Soren has a significant but interrupted record of public service, having resigned multiple times for reasons ranging from being jailed for accepting bribes to being convicted of murder.[1] As of now, he has two murder cases pending and the Supreme Court of India has readmitted an appeal against his acquittal in the murder case (paraphrased from *Times of India* , 30 December 2009).

My father (former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi) used to say that only 15 Paisa out of the Rupee (spent by the government) reaches people, after seeing the situation here I feel that not even five Paisa of a Rupee is reaching the people. Rahul Gandhi, Congress Secretary (ruling party in India) at a rally in 2008 (Gandhi, 2008)

While stark, the facts that these two examples depict are, unfortunately, not rare. The incidence of corrupt and criminal politicians remains relatively high in low-income countries (Banerjee and Pande, 2009), and the quality of social service delivery very low (Banerjee and Duflo, 2009).[2] For instance, in India, which is the world's largest democracy and home to roughly one-third of the world's poor, over a quarter of the current national legislators face criminal charges. Turning to service delivery, nationally representative surveys for India find that at the time of a random visit less than 45% of the teachers were actually teaching (Chaudhury et al., 2006). In rural Rajasthan, eighty percent of the poorest people prefer to go to a fee-paying facility over 'free' government health care centers that are rarely open (Banerjee and Duflo, 2009). 14% of rural households have no access to what the UNICEF calls improved water sources and 82% have no access to improved sanitation facilities (indoor toilets, etc.),

---

[1]In 1992, he was jailed for taking bribes. In July 2004, he resigned after being accused of participating in a massacre of 11 non-tribal villagers. In 2006 he quit after being sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of his personal secretary, but was subsequently acquitted.

[2]Glaeser and Goldin (2006) discuss the decline of political corruption in the United States, and note that it was correlated with increases in GDP.

and in the case of water, improved is not meant to be a guarantee tha the water is not contaminated.[3] So why are poor citizens unable to use their vote to elect politicians who are less corrupt, or more competent at delivering services, or both?

This paper uses experimental data to evaluate the hypothesis that lack of information about candidate qualifications and incumbent performance explains why voters are not able to get better representation and reward/punish their representatives more effectively. The experiment was conducted in the run-up to the 2008 Delhi state elections. Voters in randomly selected slums received free copies of a vernacular newspaper containing report cards for their jurisdiction and a neighboring jurisdiction. The report card contained objective information about the incumbent legislators' performance obtained under the Indian Right to Information Act, and information about the qualifications of the three major party candidates taken from the mandatory pre-election disclosures. This included information about their wealth, education and criminal record.

It is easy to see why the hypothesis of limited information has *prima facie* plausibility in the context of the Delhi election and elections in developing countries, more generally: First, while the average jurisdiction in Delhi is small by standards of most densely populated low income countries, each legislator represents over a hundred thousand citizens and most of these citizens are unlikely to have talked to him or even met him. Second, a large majority of the poorer voters even in a place like Delhi, which has high literacy rates by Indian standards, do not read newspapers on a regular basis. In a household survey among slum dwellers in our sample 40% of the men and 66% of the women stated that they do not read newspapers. Third, there has been a steady accretion in the responsibilties assigned to the legislators over the last two decades, as a part of an overall push towards decentralization and devolution of powers away from the bureaucracy, with the consequence that voters may not know exactly what they should expect from their legislator.

On the other hand, lack of information is, by no means, the only possibility. There is an influential point of view that argues that voters in developing countries put a lot of weight on the ethnicity of

---

[3]http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/indiastatistics.html

3

their representatives, either because of clientelism, or out of a sense of loyalty or as a defensive reaction (because everyone else votes based on ethnicity), [4] and as a result do not pay much attention to other attributes of the legislator (such as his quality or his performance).

There is another possible theory that lies somewhere in between these two. Voters may care about quality/performance but be unable to figure out who is better even though they have the information . Alternatively even if a lot of information is avalable to them about the candidates, they may prefer not to put any effort into processing the information because, for example, they believe, rightly or wrongly, that all candidates are the same.

Our results strongly reject both the view that voters do not care about performance/quality and the view that they are unable/unwilling to parse the available evidence. Our campaign increased voter turnout by 3.6%. Further, along multiple dimensions, information about quality/performance makes voters react in exactly the direction we would expect – we observe a significant positive elasticity with respect to fraction of discretionary funds spent by the incumbent in slums and attendance of oversight committees. Moreover, voters seem both able and willing to interpret the evidence in sophisticated ways–we see clear evidence of voters comparing the qualifications of their own incumbent with those of the challengers in choosing who to vote for, suggesting that voters are aware of the need to benchmark performance.

Taken together these results support the optimistic view of the power of information disclosures suggested in Djankov et al. (2010), based on the negative cross-country correlation between disclosure laws and corruption. Consistent with Ferraz and Finan (2008), we find significant willingness of voters to use new information to enhance electoral accountability. More broadly, our findings further emphasize the importance of an independent and credible media source in enhancing the quality of government (Besley and Prat, 2006; Djankov et al., 2003).

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 provides an elementary model to help interpret what we find. Section 3 describes elections in Delhi and the nature of candidate and incum-

---

[4]See Horowitz (1985); Chandra (2004); **?**

4

bent disclosures. Section 4 describes the experimental intervention and our empirical design. Section **??** provides the results and Section **??** concludes.

2 An elementary model

2.1 Set up

Consider a citizen who has two decisions–whether to vote and who to vote for. His cost of voting, c, is randomly drawn from a distribution $G(c)$ on $[c_0, c_1]$, where $c_0 > 0$. If he votes he chooses beween two candidates, A and B. If he does not vote his utility from the entire electoral process is set to 0. Voting incurs a cost but provides the satisfaction of having voted for the best person: If the expected value he puts on candidate i is v_i, then his payoff from having voted is $\max\{v_A - v_B, v_B - v_A\}$.

The value of a candidate comes from a combination of his valence and "quality". Specifically we assume that

$$
\begin{aligned}
v_A &= a + Q^e \\
v_B &= 0,
\end{aligned}
$$

where Q^e is to be interpreted as the *expected* quality gap between candidate A and candidate B, and a is the difference in valence that a particular voter assigns to candidate A over what he assigns to B. For a voter with cost of voting c, let a be distributed over $[-\infty, \infty]$ with distribution function $H(a|c)$.

Ex ante, one of the two candidates is better–in other words, the quality gap between A and B is either Q or $-Q$. Assume that candidate A is the better candidate–in other words the quality gap between her and candidate B is $Q > 0$. However, voters have imperfect information about quality– specifically assume that they get a signal that tells them about candidate quality and that gives them a posterior belief that A is the better candidate with probability $p > 1/2$. Hence $Q^e = pQ - (1-p)Q = Q(2p - 1)$. Better information is captured by a value of p closer to 1.

2.2 Analysis

The fraction of voters with cost c who vote for A is $1 - H(c - Q(2p - 1)|c)$ and the fraction that votes for B is $H(-c - Q(2p - 1)|c)$. The total fraction of A voters is

$$F_A = \int_{c_0}^{c_1} [1 - H(c - Q(2p - 1)|c)]dG(c)$$

and the fraction of B voters is

$$F_B = \int_{c_0}^{c_1} H(-c - Q(2p - 1)|c)dG(c).$$

It follows that

$$\frac{dF_A}{dp} = \int_{c_0}^{c_1} 2Q \cdot h(c - Q(2p - 1)|c)dG(c)$$

where $h(a|c)$ is the density corresponding to $H(a|c)$, and

$$\frac{dF_B}{dp} = -\int_{c_0}^{c_1} 2Q \cdot h(-c - Q(2p - 1)|c)dG(c).$$

Clearly since $h(a|c)$ is always non-negative and sometimes strictly positive, $\frac{dF_A}{dp} > 0$ and $\frac{dF_B}{dp} < 0$. Information increases votes for candidate A and reduces votes for candidate B. A fortiori, the vote share of candidate A should go up and that of candidate B should do down.

What is the net effect on turnout?

$$\frac{dF_A}{dp} + \frac{dF_B}{dp} = \int_{c_0}^{c_1} 2Q \cdot [h(c - Q(2p - 1)|c)] - h(-c - Q(2p - 1)|c)]dG(c).$$

To see what can be said about this expression assume first that $h(a|c)$ is single-peaked and symmetric around $d(c) \geq 0$ (so that the mode is always at $d(c)$ for those whose cost of voting is c) for all c,i.e. $h(d(c) + a|c) = h(d(c) - a|c)$. This is perhaps most plausible when a and c are indepedent random variables, but does not require that stronger assumption. In this case

$$h(c - Q(2p - 1)|c)] > h(-c - Q(2p - 1)|c)$$

because c is at least weakly closer to $d(c)$ than $-c$ and therefore $c - Q(2p - 1)$ is strictly closer to $d(c)$ than $-c - Q(2p - 1)$ and the distribution is single-peaked and symmetric with a peak at $d(c)$, so

6

places closer to d will have a higher density than those places further away. Therefore turnout goes up with better information. Turnout will go up when intrinsic support for the two candidates is roughly symmetrical or when the favored candidate is also the one who is revealed by the information to be the better candidate.

However when this is not true, i.e. when B is intrinsically favored by more people, the opposite could easily happen. Basically, the information now counteracts $B's$ natural advantage, with the result that a lot people end up closer to indifference (because they started by favoring B and then received information that goes against B). And since voting is costly, indifferent or almost indifferent people do not vote.

In summary, this model provides two simple results which we take to the data

Prediction 1 *Information will increase the vote share of the candidate who is favored by information.*

Prediction 2 *Turnout will increase as long as the distribution of preferences is single-peaked and not too skewed in favor of the candidate who is disfavored by the information.*

3 Context

3.1 Elections in Delhi

Our evaluation was conducted in ten jurisdictions in the run-up to the Delhi State Election. Delhi is India's national capital and second-largest metropolis. Of a population of 12.8 million, 3.6 million of Delhi's inhabitants live in slums (2001 census).[5] Delivery of public goods in these slums is notoriously poor, and has been the subject of contentious political debate,. The Delhi State legislature is composed of 70 legislators, each directly elected via plurality rule from single member jurisdictions.

---

[5]According to the Indian Slum Area Act of 1956, slums are defined as those regions where buildings are unfit for human habitation for reasons such as dilapidation, overcrowding, and a lack of ventilation, light, and sanitary facilities.

Within a jurisdiction, residents who are Indian citizens and over the age of 18 are eligible to vote. Prior to every election, the election commission prepares voter rolls for each jurisdiction.[6] Only citizens whose name appears in the voter rolls are eligible to vote. Voter rolls are organized by polling station – on average, a polling station has a thousand voters. On Election Day, in order to vote, a citizen must go to their local polling station with proof of identity.[7]

In November 2008 elections were held in 69 jurisdictions (elections in one jurisdiction were postponed due to a candidate's suicide). 863 candidates stood for election, representing 69 different parties. The three major parties in the election were Congress, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP); Congress was the incumbent party and BJP the main opposition party.

The official campaign period runs for roughly two weeks prior to the election, and ends 48 hours before polling starts. In the 2008 elections, Congress ran mainly on a platform of local development.[8] The BJP campaigned mainly on the platform of controlling price rise and terrorism – one of their major campaign slogans, *Mehengi Padi Congress* ("Congress is Expensive") was omnipresent on billboards and signs preceding the election.[9] The 2008 assembly elections occurred three days after the 26/11

---

[6]The full set of voter eligibility conditions are that s/he should be above 18 years of age; not mentally unsound; not an insolvent; and a general resident of the state. This means, he should have a verifiable address and must be residing for at least 6 months in the given address. Voter rolls are typically scrutinized by election officers who visit all residential areas and verify the presence of eligible voters at individual locations and residences. The rolls are usually updated until about ten days before the election, when they are frozen and no more registration is permitted.

[7]Most voters use their voter identity card, which is also issued by the election commission, as proof of identity. In the 2008 assembly elections, the election commission allowed any type of government-issued ID card, such as a ration card or drivers license . The decision to accept other forms of identity proof was motivated by the fact that in previous elections many citizens complained that they failed to receive their voter identity cards in spite of registering before the deadline stipulated by the election commission.

[8]A particularly important issue in Delhi slums was government policy towards unauthorized settlements and businesses. In 2007, the ruling Congress government initiated a policy of "regularizing" slums, and included provisions for inhabitants to gain property rights to government land they illegally inhabited by purchasing it from the government at a heavily discounted rate. The regularization process also included a government drive to provide basic amenities to illegal settlements located on both public and private land, such as water supply, sanitation, drainage, and roads.

[9]In the year leading up to the election, Delhi saw a sharp price rise in food items largely driven by the oil price surge.

attacks, when Pakistan-based Islamic terrorists killed 173 people and wounded over 308 in a wave of coordinated attacks on civilians in Mumbai. Many people predicted that the Mumbai attacks would bolster the BJP in elections, since the BJP actively campaigned on the platform of security and prevention of terrorism. The third party, BSP, did not have a particularly clear campaign platform other than working for the benefit of poorer segments.

Party campaigning typically takes the form of public campaigning. Public gatherings and rallies are very common, and often feature dancing, singing of party songs, and speeches by party officials. Door-to-door and street-corner canvassing by party workers is also common, and almost all candidates and parties distribute flyers, clothing, literature, signs, and flags featuring their colors. In the weeks prior to the election, party trucks full of raucous, slogan-chanting supporters can be found visiting neighborhoods, often using loudspeakers to make pronouncements in favor of their party. It is also common for candidates to hold street corner meetings and other local public appearances.

It is common knowledge that political parties ply voters with bribes, most often in the form of liquor and cash. This tendency is especially pronounced in poor urban areas, where vote-buying is so prevalent that residents usually speak about it quite openly. 9.8% of respondents from our post-poll survey said that liquor was distributed by political parties in their locality, and 5.5% reported cash distribution in exchange for votes. According to newspaper reports, the police reported a 400 percent rise in liquor smuggling cases two weeks prior to the election (IANS), with the Delhi excise department registering over 1,500 bootlegging cases in the month prior to the election. Liquor is particularly valued in slum areas and unauthorized colonies, since not many licensed liquor shops tend to operate in these areas, and the majority of slum residents usually consume semi-legal country liquor. In addition to cash and liquor, it is common for parties to distribute clothing, and food to encourage people to vote for them. At various points during the information campaign, it was evident in some localities that the vast majority of male residents were inebriated due to the recent distribution of liquor by parties.

According to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, the average household food budget increased by almost 40% in 2008. Across India, the highest surge in food prices was in Delhi, which lacks a connected hinterland for food supply.

3.2 Qualifications, Performance and Public Disclosures

3.2.1 Candidate Qualifications

In March 2003 the Indian Supreme Court made it compulsory for candidates contesting national and state elections to submit affidavits as an essential part of their nomination paper, containing information on criminal charges, assets and liabilities and educational qualifications. This judgment was implemented by the Indian Election Commission, which stated that if a candidate does not submit the affidavit along with their nomination form, then this "shall be considered to be violation of the Order of the Honorable Supreme Court and the nomination of the candidate concerned shall be liable to rejection by the Returning Officer at the time of scrutiny of nominations for such non-furnishing of the affidavit." Filing an affidavit disclosing this information is, therefore, a precondition for contesting and a number of NGOs work to make these data available to voters.

The 2008 Delhi election included 91 candidates with pending criminal cases against them. These candidates featured prominently on the rolls of the major parties (a quarter of the major party candidates faced criminal charges) – INC and BJP both fielded 19 candidates with criminal record; BSP fielded 15 such candidates. One concern with using all criminal charges as a measure of quality is that some charges may be extremely petty or arguably related to being an active politician (e.g. rioting charges in India can be easily filed against someone who addressed a large crowd). For this reason, NGO activists typically focus on heinous charges – these are criminal charges which carry a minimum conviction of atleast five years. A common characterization of wealth in India is being a *crorepati*, i.e. have assets in excess of Rs. 10 million. In the 2008 election close to 20% of the candidates (153 candidates) declared personal assets of over Rs.1 crore (10 million)–of these 41 were from Congress, 47

from the BJP and 32 from BSP.[10] Delhi Election Watch, a consortium of NGOs that independently monitors elections, analyzed the change in personal assets of the 45 incumbents who were recontesting. The average increase in assets per MLA over a single five-year term was 211%, amounting to an average of almost 1.8 crore.

Finally, in terms of educational qualifications candidates in Delhi are relatively well-educated. Overall, only 3% (18 candidates) were illiterate. 18% had up to 10 years of schooling, and 19% had up to twelve years of schooling. 19% held a college degree and 15% a post graduate or professional degree. Our report cards featured information on the value of assets owned by the candidate and his/her spouse, criminal charges and educational qualifications for the three major party candidates.

3.2.2 Incumbent Performance

In October 2005, The Indian Right to Information (RTI) Act was implemented. This law gives Indian citizens access to all non-classified government records. Under the provisions of the Act, any citizen may request information from a "public authority" (any arm of government or "instrumentality of State") and be legally entitled to an expeditious reply (typically within thirty days). Our partner NGO Satark Nagarik Sangathan (SNS) filed over 70 RTIs in 2008, through which it obtained information about the responsibilities of legislators and incumbent performance.

Delhi legislators have three main responsibilities. First, to attend the legislature and act as a voice for their constituency during the legislative process and draw attention to the problems of their constituents when necessary. Our report card provided two measures of incumbent performance in the legislature (based on data collected through RTIs) – attendance and the number of questions asked to elicit information that is presumably relevant to public interest.[11] Attendance rates for legislators at

[10]The veracity of assets data is more questionable than criminal charges: for instance, as many as 21 candidates declared that they own no vehicle (including six candidates who declared their assets to be more than 90 lakhs). Twelve candidates declared zero cash holdings and no deposits (including one candidate whose asset value is more than 4 crores). Five candidates declared zero total assets, meaning that they claimed to have no cash, savings, securities, vehicles, property, jewelry, or other durable goods.

[11]Delhi legislature rules state that any question raised must relate to a matter of administration for which the

11

assembly sessions are relatively high–mean attendance in 2007 was 16.9 out of 18 sessions and nearly 70% of legislators had perfect attendance, while more than 95% attended at least 15 sessions. There is significantly more variation in the number of questions asked. During the 2007 legislative session, approximately half of the legislators asked no questions, while the remaining half asked between 2 and 77 questions each.

A second responsibility of legislators is to participate in committees that provide oversight of local government institutions. The three main committees are the Ration Vigilance Committee, the Police Vigilance Committee, and the District Development Committee. The Ration Vigilance Committee is tasked with ensuring that the local ration shops, which provide subsidized food to below-poverty-line residents, function effectively. The Police Vigilance Committee is supposed to provide oversight over the local police station, and ensure that the police do not harass locals, take bribes, or engage in other types of corruption, a common problem in India. The District Development Committee is a district-level committee that provides oversight of development projects. This committee is not convened by the legislator, though legislators do play a role as members.

Finally, each legislator receives 20 million Rupees a year to spend on development in their juris-diction, known as the MLA LADS (Local Area Development Scheme) Fund, along with five million rupees annually to be spent exclusively on water development (known as the Delhi Water Board Pri-ority Fund). Once the legislator decides on a particular development project that he wants in his constituency, he then drafts a proposal and gets an informal cost estimate from the relevant municipal corporation which will be responsible for actually implementing the project.[12] The legislator then allocates money for that project and submits a formal proposal to the relevant municipal corporation. After performing a feasibility and cost analysis, the municipal corporation will either initiate work or ask for revisions to the proposal. The legislator is mainly responsible for fund allocation. The

Government is responsible. A question is classified as "starred if the member desires an oral answer and Minister replies on the House floor, and "unstarred" if a written answer will suffice.

[12]Delhi has several different municipal bodies that are responsible for implementing development projects in different sectors.

involved municipal corporation is almost exclusively responsible for the implementation of the project once funds have been allocated.

The total amount of money allocated by each individual legislator to development projects provides a gauge of how proactively s/he pursues development of their jurisdiction, since money that is not allocated by the MLA is effectively wasted. The data reveals considerable variation in how much of their development funds MLAs actually spent, and what they spent it on. In our figures we show the distribution of total allocation levels for all 70 MLAs in Delhi across a set of common spending categories (developed by our partner NGO- SNS). These include roads (including sidewalks), water (referring to water supply infrastructure such as borewells, pumps, and tanks), parks and statues, sewage (sewage pipes and public toilets), drains, lights, community halls, and boundary walls. The most popular spending category was road and sidewalk development. Across Delhi, spending on roads and sidewalks accounted for an average of 60% of a legisator's total allocation, (on average, 307.3 lakh out of 512.2 lakh total).

The report card that was at the heart of our treatmnent summarized incumbent performance across all three dimensions.

4 Experimental Design

Our experimental intervention was conducted in ten jurisdictions in Delhi state.[13] Within each jurisdiction we identified the subset of polling stations which (at least partially) covered a slum and

---

[13]We used multiple criteria to select these jurisdictions. First, we explicitly selected constituencies where the incumbent was likely to fight for re-election. Second, delimitation had altered the boundaries of many jurisdictions between the 2004 and 2008 elections; we sought to work in jurisdictions which were least affected by delimitation. Third, the NGO network had a partner NGO working that jurisdiction. Finally, we restricted attention to unreserved jurisdictions. Our final sample of jurisdictions included: Nangloi Jat, Mangol Puri, Wazirpur, Model Town, Tughlakabad, Okhla, Vishwas Nagar, Shahadra, Rohtas nagar and Seelampur.

then randomly selected twenty for treatment.[14] This yielded an overall sample of 200 treatment slum polling stations and 575 control polling stations.

In Table 1 we report a randomization check. Panel A uses electoral roll data (which were completed prior to our intervention; for now, we only have this for the control polling stations that entered our household survey) and Panel B survey data from the household survey conducted just after the election. The average polling station had a 1000 electors, and panel B shows that these electors are relatively poor–avergae per capita household income is a dollar a day. We observe balance on all covariates across treatment and control pollng stations.

4.1 Intervention

The voter information campaign was conducted in three phases over the two weeks prior to the Delhi State election in November 2008. It was implemented by a local NGO network with a single NGO responsible for treatment in a jurisdiction.

Door to Door Campaign The first phase was a door to door campaign, conducted by two NGO workers. Each household in the polling station received a pamphlet containing information about the voting process and roles and responsibilities of an MLA (see Figure 1). This campaign sought to educate voters about the three major legislator responsibilities: legislative participation, attendance at oversight committees, and allocation of development funds. Voters were also told that candidates file affidavits which provide details of criminality, education, and assets, and were explicitly encouraged to read our partner newspaper to learn about candidates' backgrounds. The campaign also highlighted the actual mechanics of voting, such as how to determine if one is eligible to vote, the accepted forms of identity proof, and what to do if one felt they were being unfairly denied the right to vote. Voters were also reminded that vote-buying is illegal and they should not let party workers accompany them to the

---

[14]In identifying this list we worked with our partner NGO for that jurisdiction – we gave the NGO the list of polling stations in the jurisdiction, and asked them to identify polling stations located in slum areas (each polling station included roughly 1000 voters, approximately 400 households on average). This gave us a master list of XX slum polling stations for the 10 jurisdictions.

polling station. During this phase of the campaign, no candidate-specific information was provided. In the typical jurisdiction, the NGO used 10 two-member teams and covered as many households as possible in 3 days. The teams reported reaching about 2/3rds of the households in their assigned polling station locality–these localities were identified based on the addresses of the households given in the electoral rolls, and each team had a list of households that were in the neighborhood they were supposed to serve in order to make sure that they stayed in the treatment areas. At each household the NGO team typically spent 15 minutes.

Newspaper Campaign In the second phase of the campaign, we collaborated with a major Hindi newspaper – Dainik Hindustan – to publish a series of Òreport cardsÓ delivering objective information on the incumbent MLA's performance, as well as information about the educational, criminal, and financial records of the three major party candidates standing for election in that jurisdiction. A single newspaper carried the report cards for two neighboring jurisdictions, placed adjacent to one another (Figure 2). The report card listed the allocation of the discretionary development funds, aggregated into 9 different spending categories. (roads, drains, lights, community halls, boundary walls, parks, water, sewage, and other) and information on incumbent attendance and participation in the legislature (as measured by number of questions asked) and major committees (measured by attendance at most recent meetings of 3 main committees). For the candidates from the three major parties (which always included the incumbent), we published information about their criminal history, personal assets, and education, which were compiled from the mandatory affidavits.

Dainik Hindustan published report cards for two of the ten jurisdictions in our sample per day, for a total of five days prior to election eve. On the day a particular jurisdiction in our sample was featured in the Hindustan, we coordinated a mass distribution of newspapers in all treatment polling stations in that jurisdiction. In each polling station, NGO workers went door-to-door in the early morning and distributed 400 copies of the newspaper - roughly one per household, and encouraged them to read the section with information on their candidates. The newspaper campaign was always conducted after the door to door campaign had been completed in a jurisdiction.

Focus Group Discussions In the third and final phase of the campaign, our NGO workers followed

up the newspaper distribution campaign by organizing informal street-side focus groups, where they facilitated a detailed public discussion of the information provided in the newspapers and door-to-door campaign. These discussions occurred within 48 hours of newspaper distribution, and were motivated mainly by a concern that slum dwellers might not be able to contextually interpret the considerable depth of information that was being presented to them in the newspapers. Each NGO was required to hold at least one focus group discussion in each treatment polling statement in their jurisdiction. These discussions were held in a public location central to each polling station locality, and typically attended by 30-70 residents of that locality (covering roughly between 5-10% of the households).

4.2 Data and Empirical Strategy

Our empirical analysis utilizes multiple datasets. The first is official electoral returns which are available at the polling station-level. These include voter turnout and candidate vote shares.

Second is data from a household survey that was conducted in the six day interval between election day and when results were announced. The survey was conducted in all 200 treatment polling stations and a randomly selected 200 control polling station localities. In each polling station 10 individuals were randomly selected and surveyed. The survey instrument asked respondents a wide variety of questions on the factors that influenced their vote, their perceptions of the political process, vote-buying, and also a brief pop-quiz to test their level of civic knowledge.

The final set of data is from a separate observational survey: in 29 treatment and 32 control polling stations, we had a surveyor spend approximately four hours on the eve of the election observing and noting whether there was any visible evidence of political parties distributing cash, liquor, food, clothes or milk/refreshments as enticement for voting for their party.

Since we are evaluating a randomized intervention, our basic empirical analysis is straightforward. We start by using the survey data to examine whether our campaign influenced the levels of voter knowledge. Then, to examine effects on turnout we use the official polling-station level data to estimate

$$Y_{sj} = \alpha_j + \beta T_{sj} + \gamma X_{sj} + \epsilon_{sj} \tag{1}$$

16

where s denotes polling station and j jurisdiction. Y_{sj} is log voters and X_{sj} is log registered voters. T_{sj} is a dummy indicating whether the polling station received the voter information campaign. Since we stratified our treatment by jurisdiction we always include a jurisdiction fixed effect α_j. We also examine whether turnout effects vary by gender.

Next we examine whether information on candidate qualifications influenced the incumbent's vote share.[15] Here, for each qualification reported in the newspaper we estimate two specifications

$$Y_{sj} = \alpha_j + \beta_1 T_{sj} + \beta_2 Q_j \times T_{sj} + \epsilon_{sj} \tag{2}$$

where Y_{sj} is the incumbent vote-share and Q_j is a particular "qualification" of the incumbent. In our second specification we examine whether voters use the qualifications of the other two candidates as a yardstick. Let Y_j be the fraction of challengers who don't have the qualification Q_j.[16] We estimate

$$Y_{sj} = \alpha_j + \beta_1 T_{sj} + \beta_2 Q_j \times T_{sj} + \beta_3 Y_j \times T_{sj} + \epsilon_{sj} \tag{3}$$

We estimate regressions of the same form as equation (2) to examine whether incumbent performance influenced his vote share. Again, we separately estimate the effect of each dimension of performance.

Finally, we examine whether our treatment influenced the incidence of vote-buying.

5   Results

We start by using our survey data to examine exposure to the campaign and its impact on voter knowledge. In the six days between the election and announcement of results we conducted a household survey in the 200 treatment slums and 200 control slums (as defined by polling station). The results are in Table 2. In columns (1) and (2) we examined the impact of the treatment on whether the respondent said s/he read the report card and pamphlet. In both case we observe very significant, but relatively small, effects of the campaign. The report card effect, however, is much larger when we

---

[15]All but one of the incumbents won.

[16]Except in the aggregate wealth regression where it is average wealth of the challengers.

consider the subsample of respondents who state that they regularly read a newspaper. In column (4) we examine whether the treatment influenced respondent ability to answer a series of questions about the responsibilities of legislators, the qualifications of the candidates and incumbent performance. The dependent variable is the fraction of (standardized) correct responses. Being exposed to either (or both) the newspaper report card and pamphlet improves knowledge by 1.3 standard deviations.

In Table 3 we examine whether the campaign also influenced turnout. Here, we use electoral data which is compiled at the polling station level. In column (1) the dependent variable is log votes – we see that the campaign increased turnout by 3.6%. Columns (2) and (3) show similar effects for male and female voters, though the effects are much more precisely estimated for male voters.

Table 4 reports the effects of candidate qualifications. In the first two columns, the incumbent's characteristic is having a heinous crminal charge against him (heinous criminal charges are those that come with at least 5 years of prison time if convicted). The challenger variable is the fraction that does not have such a charge. Both having such criminal charge and having opponents who do not have such a charge hurt the incumbent according to the point estimates, as one would expect, but neither coefficient is significant. The results are similar when we use any criminal charge but since any criminal charges includes charges that politicians often end up with while doing their job (being a demonstration, for example) this variable is intrinsically less interesting and is not reported. In the next two columns, the incumbent's qualification is his wealth and the challenger variable is their average wealth. Once again the pattern is one where being rich seems to hurt, but nothing is significant. This may suggest that its unnatural to make distinctions between two people who are not particularly rich or between two very rich people on the basis of their wealth. However when the difference is one that is salient in the particular cultural context we see a strong reaction. In the next two columns, incumbent's qualification is having more than a crore (10 million) rupees in declared wealth, while the challenger variable is the fraction of challengers who do not have that much. The incumbent does signficantly less well when his opponents are not "crorepati's". If it is disclosed that neither of his opponents are crorepatis his vote share is 6.6% lower than when it is discolosed that both of them are crorepatis and he is not. The last two columns show that not being as educated as the opponents

hurts the incumbent: the incumbent variable is whether he does not have a college degree and the challenger variable is the fraction of them who do have a college degree. Relative to the case where it is disclosed that neither of his opponents have a college degree but he has one, if it is revealed that both have a college degree his vote share is 6.9% lower.

These results, with the possible exception of the weak criminality results, accord with intuition. The poor are suspicious of rich candidates, either because they feel that the rich are less likely to care about what they care about or because they see wealth as a signal of corruption, but like candidates who are educated, probably because education signals competence. Notably only the results where we control for the incumbent's and challenger's characteritics separately are significant suggesting that people are not reacting naively to the incumbent's wealth or education, but comparing him with the challengers and favoring the one that looks better to them.

In Table 5 we examine whether voters react to information about the incumbent's performance in the legislature and to his attendance record vis-a-vis three oversight committee: fair price shops and police vigilance. The report card also listed a fourth committee – the grievance redressal but no information on incumbent attendance was provided (because the government did not respond to the right to information petitions regarding this committee). Columns (1) and (2) show that information about an incumbent's attendance and record of asking questions did not influence voting outcomes. This is consistent with the view that poor slum dwellers see the main responsibilities of their legislator as relating to local development and grievance redressal not the enacting of bills. Columns (3)-(6) consider committee attendance. The report cards provided information on whether last meeting of the committee was held according to schedule and whether the incumbent attended the meeting. In column (3) we see that the average attendance of the incumbent is a significant predictor of electoral outcomes. Columns (4)-(6) suggest that this effect is being driven by incumbent attendance in the ration committee – all else equal, committee attendance increases the incumbent's vote share by 5 percentage points.

In Table 6 we turn to the spending information – in column (1) we examine whether an incumbent vote share is sensitive to the extent of discretionary fund spending. Over their five year term, the

incumbent could have spent upto Rs. 100 million. However, the average incumbent in our sample only spent Rs. 50 million – arguably, lack of spending measures an unwillingness on the part of the incumbent to exert effort.[17] In column (1) we do not observe any responsiveness of voters to the total amount spent by the incumbent. In column (2) we look for evidence of benchmarking and ask whether an incumbent's vote share is sensitive to the average incumbent's spending in that district (one district consists of roughly eight jurisdictions). Again, we find no evidence of voter responsiveness.

Next, we investigate the thesis that voters care about the nature of spending rather than then level. The report card listed incumbent spending by category - these included roads, drainage, light, parks etc (the full list is in the report cards shown in Figure X). Simply looking at which categories of spending are rewarded by the voter is hard to interpret. We, therefore, chose to parse these data through the lens of whether the spending was more likely to occur in a slum. Specifically, after the elections we recruited the NGOs that carried out the door-to-door campaign to identify whether each of the spending items that incumbent MLA's had allocated money towards benefited slum residents. Each NGO was provided a list of all projects in their jurisdiction that had been allocated funding by the MLA from the Local Area Development Scheme (LADS). The NGO then dispatched fieldworkers to visit the location of each individual spending item and assess whether or not it mainly benefits residents living inside sample area previously defined as slums (see appendix for a list of criteria used to identify slums). Columns (3) and (4) present the results. We see that voters reward incumbents who spend more in slums.

Finally, in Table 7 we use the observational data collected on the eve of the election to examine whether our voter awareness campaign influenced the incidence of vote buying. There is a significant decline in the incidence of cash bribes in polling stations that received the voter capaign. There are, of course, multiple possibilities for why this occurred. It may be that political parties were more wary of giving bribes in areas where they knew a NGO had been active. Alternatively, it may be that voters (often represented by their slum leader) were less willing to accept such bribes - the latter thesis

---

[17]Legislators also had access to a separate fund for spending on water related issues. Interestingly, all incumbents spent the entire amount of this funding .

is, however, not supported by the fact that the incidence of non-cash bribes was unaffected by the campaign.

6   Conclusion

The idea that voters in an otherwise well-functioning democracy might be severely constrained by information about the candidates' qualifications and past record is both striking and important. We see that voters when given the information move quite substantially and if this information had reached the entire constituency, outcomes may have been quite different. We also see evidence that voters are somewhat sophisticated in how they use the information, allaying fears that information would simply confuse them.

7   Appendix

7.1   Data

Questions entering Knowledge Quiz Each response was coded as correct or incorrect:

- What is your constituency?

- Can you vote if your name is not in the voter rolls?

- Which candidate is the most educated?

- Which candidate is the wealthiest?

- Which candidate is most criminal?

- Which candidate is least criminal?

- Does your MLA get money to spend on local dev?

- How much money is given to MLA for local dev?

- Name government committees

- How much money spent by MLA on local dev?

- What did MLA spend most on?

- What did MLA spend least on?

- How did MLA compare to average MLA in spending?

Slum coding: Slums include: (JJ Colonies, Unauthorized colonies, resettlement colonies, temporary huts, kacchi bastis, urban villages).

References

Banerjee, A. and E. Duflo (2009). Improving health care delivery in india.

Banerjee, A. V. and R. Pande (2009). *Parochial Politics Ethnic Preferences and Politician Corruption.* mimeo, Harvard.

Besley, T. and A. Prat (2006). Handcuffs for the grabbing hand? media capture and government accountability. *American Economic Review 96*(3), 720–736.

Chandra, K. (2004). *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed: Patronage and Ethnic Headcounts in India.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chaudhury, N., J. Hammer, M. Kremer, K. Muralidharan, and F. H. Rogers (2006). Missing in action: Teacher and health worker absence in developing countries. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives 20*(1), 91–116.

Djankov, S., R. LaPorta, F. L. de Silanes, and A. Shleifer (2010). Disclosure by politicians. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, forthcoming.

Djankov, S., C. McLiesh, T. Nenova, and A. Shlefier (2003). Who owns the media? *Journal of Law and Economics 46*(2), 341–381.

Ferraz, C. and F. Finan (2008). Exposing corrupt politicians: The effects of brazil's publicly released audits on electoral outcomes. *Quarterly Journal of Economics 123*(2), 703–745.

Gandhi, R. (January 17, 2008). Not even 5 percent of allocated money reaches Bundelkhand: Rahul Gandhi.

Glaeser, E. L. and C. D. Goldin (2006). Corruption and reform: Lessons from america's economic history. In *A National Bureau of Economic Research conference report*, Chicago, pp. –. University of Chicago Press.

Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Table 1: Randomization Check

	Control	Treatment	Diff (1) and (2): p-value
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Panel A: Electoral Rolls			
Total Electors	1044.48	1012.426	-33.214
	[24.238]	[22.175]	[31.923]
Total Female Electors	428.418	431.969	2.671
	[10.167]	[9.962]	[13.282]
House Size	4.391	4.554	0.175
	[0.165]	[0.153]	[0.213]
Age	35.176	35.316	0.150
	[0.176]	[0.174]	[0.237]
N	196	195	391
Panel B: Survey Data			
Female	0.496	0.499	0.003
	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.010]
Age	36.496	35.918	-0.531
	[0.302]	[0.292]	[0.502]
House Size	5.953	6.097	0.160
	[0.061]	[0.066]	[0.110]
Income (monthly Rs)	6386.829	6687.185	350.225
	[121.007]	[134.618]	[315.587]
Ration Card Holder	0.817	0.819	-0.001
	[0.009]	[0.009]	[0.017]
Literate	0.761	0.776	0.014
	[0.010]	[0.009]	[0.018]
Muslim	0.153	0.182	0.024
	[0.008]	[0.009]	[0.021]
Low Caste	0.58	0.583	0.003
	[0.011]	[0.011]	[0.029]
N	1944	1952	3896

Notes

1. Panel A reports outcomes compiled from electoral rolls while Panel B reports outcomes from household survey.
2. Column (3) reports differences in means from regressions which include jurisdiction fixed effects. For Panel A the regressions include robust standard errors, while for Panel B they are clustered by polling station.

Table 2: Did the Campaign Affect Voter information?

	Access to Information			Knowledge
	Any Information	Report Cards	Pamphlet	Quiz Score
	1	(2)	(3)	`(4)
Treatment	0.049***	0.042***	0.031***	
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	
Any Information				1.372*
				(0.75)
Observations	3707	3695	3879	3710

Notes:

1.Outcome variable in column (1) is whether the respondent either read the newspaper report card and/or received a pamphlet.Columns (2) and (3) look at the two components separately. The outcome variable in column (4) is standardized score for a respondent from a knowledge quiz of 12 questions, including knowledge of which candidate is the wealthiest, most educated, criminal and knowledge of incumbent spending. The full list of questions is in the Appendix.

2. Columns (1)-(3) report OLS regressions. Column (4) IV regressions where the first stage is given by column (3). All regressions include jurisdiction fixed effects and standard errors clustered at the polling station level. All regressions include the set of controls listed in Panel B of Table 1.

Table 3: Information Campaign and Voter Turnout

Sample	All	Male	Female
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treated	0.036**	0.036**	0.018
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Registered Voters (Log)	0.883***	0.856***	0.974***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Observations	775	703	703

Notes:

1. The outcome variable is log(number of voters) in column (1). In columns (2) and (3) the outcome variable is separately defined for men and women respsectively. We report OLS regressions which include jurisdiction fixed effects, and robust standard errors.

2. The unit of observation is polling station, and the sample in column (1) includes 10 jurisdictions. Columns (2) and (3) use data for 9 jurisdictions - voting data disaggregated by gender was unavailable for AC 59.

	Crime		Assets				Education	
	Heinous Crime		Total		One Crore Dummy		College	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Treated	0.006	0.026	0.015	0.016	-0.0004	0.033	0.002	0.028
	[0.012]	[0.045]	[0.018]	[0.021]	[0.022]	[0.030]	[0.013]	[0.019]
Treated*Criminal Charge	-0.013	-0.008						
	[0.026]	[0.028]						
Treated*Challengers Criminal Charge		-0.024						
		[0.052]						
Treated*Assets			-0.006	-0.005	0.006	0.005		
			[0.007]	[0.007]	[0.026]	[0.026]		
Treated* Challengers' Assets				-0.0004		-0.066*		
				[0.006]		[0.037]		
Treated*Not College							0.009	0.013
							[0.024]	[0.024]
Treated*Challengers College								-0.069*
								[0.035]
Incumbent Mean	0.2	0.2	1.971	1.971	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8
Challenger Mean	0.15	0.15	2.542	2.542	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4
Observations	775	775	775	775	775	775	775	775

Table 4: Candidate Qualifications and Incumbent Vote Share

Notes: The variables are defined as below

Heinous	dummy equal to 1 if incumbent has a heinous criminal charge
Challengers Not Heinous	fraction of challengers that do not have a heinous criminal charge (possible values: 0, 0.5, 1)
Assets	total assets of incumbent in crore
Average Challengers' Assets	average assets of challengers in crore
One Crore	dummy equal to 1 if incumbent has more than one crore of assets
Challengers Less Than One Crore	fraction of challengers that have less than one crore of assets (possible values: 0, 0.5, 1)
Not College	dummy equal to 1 if incumbent does not have a college degree
Challengers College	fraction of challengers that have a college degree (possible values: 0, 0.5, 1)

Notes: All regressions include constituency fixed effects and robust standard errors.

Table 5: Legislature and Committee Performance and Incumbent Vote Share

Performance Indicator	Legislature		Committees			
	Attendance	Questions	All	Ration	Police	District Development
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Legislative Performance * Treatment	-0.002	0	0.038**	0.051**	-0.019	0
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.00)
Treatment	0.025	0	-0.029	-0.02	0.0163	0.005
	(0.05)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Mean of Indicator	16.000	9.111	0.8	0.5	0.4	0
Observations	646	646	775	775	681	497

Notes:

1. Attendance is to the number of legislative assembly sessions attended by the incumbent. Maximum value is 18. Questions is the total number of questions raised by the incumbent in all legislative assembly meetings. The committee variables refer to whether the incumbent attended the XX meeting. Columns (4)-(6) report attendance at the three oversight incumbents - ration, police and district development. All is the average across the three.

2. The dependent variable is incumbent vote share (at the polling station). We report OLS regressions with jurisdiction fixed effects and robust standard errors. Differences in N reflect that data were unavailable for some incumbents.

Table 6: Impact of Spending Information on Incumbent Vote Share

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Total Spending * Treatment	0.00837	0.00614		
	(0.01)	(0.02)		
District Average Spending * Treatment		0.0135		
		(0.04)		
Slum Spending * Treatment			0.0190*	
			(0.01)	
% Slum Spending * Treatment				0.0982*
				(0.05)
Treatment	0.0386	0.0997	0.0203	0.021
	(0.07)	(0.22)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Incumbent Mean	5.017	5.017	0.936	0.188
Observations	775	775	646	646

Notes:

1. The outcome variable is incumbent vote share in a polling station. Total spending refers to amount of discretionary development funds spent by incumbent (in Rs. 10 million). District Avergae refers to how much the average incumbent in a delhi district (which consists of 9 jurisdictions) spent. Slum spending and % slum spending refer to the fraction of total spending which occurred in slums (the

2. Slum Spending data was only available in 8 of the 10 jurisdictions, hence the reduced number of observations in (3) and (4)

Table 7: Information Campaign and Vote Buying

	Any Bribes	Cash Bribes	Non-cash bribes
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Treatment	-0.061	-0.194**	0
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.07)
Control Mean	0.652	0.633	0.781
Observations	61	61	61

Notes:

1. OLS regressions where the unit of observation is polling station, standard errors in parentheses.
2. Dependent variable is a dummy=1 if surveyor observed vote buying in that polling station

मतदाता – चुनाव अभियान

आपके क्षेत्र में–

...न ठीक से नहीं मिलता है?

...ी की समस्या है?

...क टूटी हुई है?

...स नाजायज परेशान करते है?

...ट लाईट नहीं है?

...त घर नहीं है?

अवश्य ध्यान दें:

- मतदान के दिन अपना मत जल्द से जल्द देने का प्रयास करें, ताकि कोई अन्य व्यक्ति आपका मत आपसे पहले न डाल दे।

- किसी अनजान व्यक्ति के साथ गाड़ी में मतदान केन्द्र तक हरगिज़ न जाऐं।

- अपना मत मुद्दों के आधार पर दें, न कि जाति या धर्म के आधार पर।

- जनता को किसी भी प्रकार का प्रलोभन देना कानूनी अपराध है।

हमारी जरूरतें !

हमारी माँगें !

हमारा वोट हमारी आवाज़ है!

Our Needs!
Our Demands!
Our Vote is Our Voice!

वोट देना - हमारा अधिकार एवं कर्तव्य

In your neighborhood…

- Are you not getting rations properly?
- Are there problems with water supply?
- Is the road/footpath broken?
- Do the police harass people without justification?
- Are there no street lights?
- Is there no community hall?

डि. एन. एन.

ठम्मीदवार की जिम्मेदारी

न. एल. ए. की जिम्मेदारियाँ एवं कार्य -

- दिल्ली विधान सभा का सदस्य होने के नाते दिल्ली के लिए कानून व नीतियाँ बनाना।
- जनता की बुनियादी माँगों को विधानसभा में

our MLA is a member of the vidhan sabha.
he vidhan sabha is responsible for making laws for Delhi
our MLA is responsible for raising the needs
ad demands of our citizens in the vidhan sabha.

ा सरकारी कामकाज पर ए समितियाँ बनाई गई हैं?

ा. एल. ए:-

- राशन निगरानी समिति के अध्यक्ष हैं।
- थाना समिति के अध्यक्ष हैं।
- जिला विकास समिति के अध्यक्ष हैं।
- जिला शिकायत निवारण समिति के अध्यक्ष

Is there anyone watching over the workings of the government? Your MLA:
- Is a member of the Ration Vigilance Committee.
- Is a member of the Police Oversight Committee.
- Is a member of the District Development Committee
- Is a member of the Complaint Redressal Committee.

क्या आप जानते है?

- आपके क्षेत्र के विकास के लिये सालाना २ करोड़ रूपए एम.एल.ए फंड में होते हैं। इनमें शौचालय, ट्यूबवेल, स्कूल, सड़कें, कूड़ाघर आदि का निर्माण कार्य शामिल है।
- दिल्ली जल बोर्ड से ५० लाख रूपए का फंड क्षेत्र में पानी, नाली और सीवर ...र्मों पर खर्च करने के लिए होता है।

दारी-

Did you know:
- Your MLA gets two crore every year to spend on his constituencies' local development. He can spend it on schools, drainage, water facilities, roads, community halls, sanitation, etc.

- क्या आप जानते हैं कि हर उम्मीदवार को चुनाव से पहले 'शपथ पत्र' में शिक्षा आपराधिक विवरण व धन सम्पत्ति की जानकारी देनी होती है?

- A copy of the Hindustan containing this information will be given to you between X and X. It is your responsibility to read this information carefully and learn about your candidates' background.

मतदान से पहले ध्यान दें-

- क्या आपका नाम वोटर सूची में है? अगर है, तो आप वोट दे सकते हैं।
- पता करें कि आपका नजदीकी मतदान कक्ष व केन्द्र कहाँ है— उसी केन्द्र में अपना वोट डालें।
- वोटर पहचान पत्र अपने साथ ले जाना न भूलें
- वोटर पहचान पत्र न होने पर भी आप मतदान कर सकते हैं। उसके लिए आपका नाम वोटर सूची में होना चाहिए और राशन कार्ड या ड्राईविंग लाइसेन्स, जिसमें आपका फोटो हो, जैसा प्रमाणित पहचान पत्र होना चाहिए।

Delhi (Vidhan Sabha) Assembly

"Netaji's" Report card - Affidavit

हिन्दुस्तान
Satark Nagrik Sanghthan Movement

Sampark Nagrik Sangthan

Northeast District	No. of legislative constituencies	8	Total allotted money (lakh)	4467.5	Average Allotment per Area	583.4

Every MLA is given approximately Rs. 2 crore per year for the development of their constituency. This data is of the expenditure from the local area development fund from 2004 until 2007.

Rohtash Nagar(47)   Ram Babu Sharma (Present MLA)

Attendence (2007)	Starred Questions	Unstarred Questions
18/18	0	0

Allotment of legislative constituency Development Scheme till 2004-07

Category	Money (lakh)	Percentage
Road/Footpath	523.2	87.8
Drainage	49.8	8.4
Light	0.0	0.0
Park	11.1	1.9
Water	6.6	1.1
Sewage	0.0	0.0
Others	5.2	0.9
-	-	-
Total	**595.9**	**100**
Delhi Water Board (2005-06)		**50.0**
Delhi Water Board (2006-07)		**50.0**

Delhi Water board gives Rs. 50 lakh to each MLA per year.

In Govt. Committees

Name of the committee	Post held by the MLA	Duration	Last Meeting	Attendance
Ration watch	Chairman	Quarterly	—	—
District development	Member	—	8.07.08	No
Grievance reddressal	No committee constituted in Northeast district			
Police station committee	Chairman		30.03.08	No

Ram Babu Sharma registered his presence in all the 18 meetings of Delhi legislative assembly in year 2007. But he didn't raise any question on the issues concerned with his constituency or the state in the legislative assembly. Mr. Sharma spent 5.3 crore rupees for the betterment of roads, lanes and footpaths in his constituency from his Local Area Development Fund during 2004-07. This amount was approx 90% of his fund. He spent 1% of his funds to improve the water supply system but didn't allocate any money on the betterment of the sewage structure in his area. Being the MLA of the area, he is the chairman of the ration watch committee of circle 44 but because of the health conditions of the MLA no meeting could be held in last 9 months. Mr. Sharma is also a member of the district development committee of the northeast district. Mr. Sharma didn't attend any of the last three meetings of this committee in 2008.

Seelampur (49)   Chowdhery Matin Ahmad (Present MLA)

Attendence (2007)	Starred Questions	Unstarred Questions
18/18	1	1

Allotment of Local Area Development Scheme funds 2004-07

Category	Money (lakh)	Percentage
Road/Footpath	374.7	73.4
Drainage	27.0	5.3
Light	0.0	0.0
Park	11.3	2.2
Water	5.1	1.0
Community Centre	84.0	16.5
Sewage	0.0	0.0
Others	8.4	1.6
Total	**510.5**	**100**
Delhi Water Board (2005-06)		**50.0**
Delhi Water Board (2006-07)		**Data Unavailable**

Delhi Water board gives Rs. 50 lakh to each MLA per year.

In Govt. Committees

Name of the committee	Post held by the MLA	Duration	Last Meeting	Attendance
Ration Watch	Chairman	Quarterly	0.05.07	Yes
District development	Member		08.07.08	No
Grievance reddressal	No committee constituted in Northeast district			
Police station committee	Chairman		26.04.08	No

Matin Ahmad was present in all the 18 meetings of Delhi legislative assembly in year 2007. In this duration he raised two questions before the government. One of these questions was related to the vacant seats of Urdu teachers in the schools of Delhi. He asked about the number of vacant seats of Urdu teachers per constituency and also when the government was planning to fulfil those seats. Raising the issue of monkeys' terror in Ahmad Nagar, he asked what steps were taken by the government according to the directions of the court. He spent 3.7 crore rupees for the betterment of roads, lanes and footpaths in his constituency from his Local area development fund during 2004-07. This amount was approx 75% of his fund. He spent 1% of his funds to improve the water supply system but didn't allocate any money on the betterment of the sewage structure in his area. Being the MLA of the area, he is the chairman of the ration watch committee of circle32. According to the rules, meeting of this committee should be held every three months but according to the information the last meetings of this committee was held in year 2007.

Affidavits from the main candidates of Rohtash Nagar

Congress has declared RamBabu Sharma as its candidate from Rohtsh Nagar

- **Property** –According to the affidavit, given to the commission, Ram Babu Sharma is the richest in comparison to all other candidates. His total property is worth 5.95 crore rupees.
- **Education -** The present MLA from Rohtash Nagar is a bit less educated than the BJP candidate from his constituency. RamBabu Sharma holds a bachelor degree. He received his B.Com from Delhi University in 1974.
- **Criminal Record -** According to the affidavit filed at the commission, there are no criminal cases registered against him.

BJP has declared Alok Kumar as its candidate from the area.

- **Property –** The BJP has declared Alok Kumar as its candidate. Alok Kumar had much less property in comparison to Mr. Sharma and the BSP candidate. His total property is worth Rs. 37 lakh.
- **Education –**As far as education is concerned, he more educated than the other two candidates. He received his BA (Honours) in 1971 and his LLB in 1974 from Delhi University.
- **Criminal Record -** The BJP candidate has reported criminal case pending against him in his affidavit.

BSP has declared Lokesh Dixit as its candidate from the area.

- **Property –** Lokesh Dixit has slightly less property than Ram Babu Sharma: his total property is said to be worth Rs. 5.2 crore.
- **Education –** As far as education is concerned, he is far behind the other two candidates. He is educated until the 10th grade.
- **Criminal Records-** According to the affidavit filed in the commission, there is no criminal case registered against him.m.

Affidavits from the main candidates of SeelamPur

Congress has declared Matin Ahmad as its candidate from Seelampur.

- **Property –** Congress has declared Matin Ahmad, the present MLA, as its candidate again from the area. Matin Ahmad had told the election commission that his total property is worth Rs. 29 lakhs.
- **Education –** As far as education is concerned, Matin Ahmad is a bit lagging behind the BJP candidate. Matin received a BA from Chowdhry Charan Singh University in 1978.
- **Criminal Records-** According to the affidavit filed to the commission, there is one case of Hooliganism and gathering a crowd in an unconstitutional way registered against him. There are no other pending cases against him.

BJP has declared Sitaram Gupta as its candidate from the area.

- **Property –** The responsibility to defeat the Congress candidate is given to Sitaram Gupta by the BJP. He has the most property among the three candidates. He has declared property of worth Rs. 147 lakh.
- **Education –** In education, he is ahead of other two candidates. He received his B.Com from Delhi University in 1978 and his M.Com in 1980 from Meerut University.
- **Criminal Records -** According to the affidavit filed to the commission, the BJP candidate had claimed no pending criminal charges.

BSP has declared Hajji Ifzal as its candidate from the area.

- **Property –** BSP had declared Hazi Ifzal as her candidate before Congress and BJP candidates. He had declared property of worth 13 lakhs rupees only.
- **Education –** Ifzal is significantly behind the other candidates in education. He has only studied until the 5th standard.
- **Criminal Records-** In terms of criminal charges, he is far ahead than other candidates. There are 22 criminal cases registered against him, of which 4 are murder cases. Many of the other cases are also of a serious nature.