

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110 001

PRESS NOTE

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President Shri Ram Nath Kovind Graces the 8th National Voters Day Celebrations held at New Delhi; President felicitates newly registered Voters and Gives away awards on Best Electoral Practices

First Copy of VoICE India Magazine launched at the event

The Election Commission of India celebrated the 8th National Voters Day in New Delhi today. Hon'ble President of India, Sh. Ram Nath Kovind graced the National function as the Chief Guest along with Minister of Law & Justice, Sh. Ravi Shankar Prasad in New Delhi. This year's celebrations revolved around the theme 'Accessible Elections', which expressed ECI's pursuit of working towards making the electoral process more inclusive and friendly for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).



Addressing the gathering President Kovind said that we have been celebrating National Voters Day on January 25 every year since 2011. The aim is to encourage our voters to participate enthusiastically in the democratic process. And that is why the relevance of this day is even more pronounced on the eve of Republic Day. The President congratulated young voters who have just turned 18 and got the right to vote for the first time. "Our Constitution empowers an independent Election Commission. And our election process makes every vote important, with the right to equality and freedom. As such Indian democracy is known through the world for its maturity and stability." He reminded that Developed Countries took many years to hand over the suffrage right to its citizens whereas the Indian Constitution empowered the Indian citizens in one stroke.

Law and Justice Minister, Sh. Ravi Shankar Prasad congratulated Election Commission of India for organizing National Voters' Day and honoring millennium voters.

Speaking on the occasion the newly appointed Chief Election Commissioner Sh. O. P. Rawat informed that the Commission has taken several initiatives in its continued endeavor to encourage and enhance inclusive, informed and ethical electoral participation from all categories of voters, with special focus on PwDs. The initiatives integrate technology and media including social media for efficiency and efficacy of connect with the voters down to the polling station level in consonance with our motto 'No voter to be left behind'.



CEC added that keeping in line with the theme '**Accessible Elections**' for the year 2018, an international Conference was organised yesterday on 'Inclusion of the Persons with Disabilities in the Electoral Processes'. "Guidelines are already in place on the subject. We intend to consolidate our efforts on accessible elections based on the insights of this Conference", he said.

Introducing the best electoral practices awards, Election Commissioner, Sh. Sunil Arora appreciated the role of all those who were selected for the awards. Earlier, Election Commissioner, Sh. Ashok Lavasa delivered welcome address and congratulated young electors, who have become eligible as voter on 1st January, 2018. Sr. Deputy Election Commissioner, Sh. Umesh Sinha proposed vote of thanks on this occasion.

Hon'ble President of India conferred the National Awards for the Best Electoral Practices to officers deputed in the election machinery. The President congratulated District Election Officials for conducting awareness campaigns successfully. These awards were in recognition of outstanding efforts employed in the area of Election Management, Voters Education and Electoral Participation, Information Technology, Security Management and Innovation in Elections. The President lauded the use of e-platform for educating and reaching out to voters. List of awardees is attached herewith.

The NVD event also witnessed the felicitation of the National Champions of the National Election Quiz 2018. National Elections Quiz, the largest elections quiz in the world yet, had an astounding participation of 13.5 lakh students of 9-12th standard from 38 thousand schools across the country. The Zonals and Finals were organised in collaboration with Rajya Sabha Television and telecast its first episode on 25th January to mark NVD. Subsequent weekly telecast shall be on Sunday prime time 9 am and repeat telecast on Saturdays.

The President also inaugurated the first edition of VoICE India – a biannual magazine which brings forth best practices, innovations and knowledge derived from practical experience and success stories of the election machinery that exists in every corner of India. The NVD function also officially marked the launch of Electoral Literacy Clubs in the nation. With the aim of introducing electoral literacy in the future voters falling in the age group of 14-17 years, around 60 thousand ELCs are planned to be set up with 36 thousand in Schools, around 16 thousand in Communities and 7 thousand in Colleges and Universities in the coming two months.

NVD is celebrated all over the country right from the national level to the far and remote corners of our country down to each Polling Station location where new voters were felicitated with a badge carrying the logo ‘Proud to be a Voter- Ready to Vote’, administered the Pledge and handed over their Elector Photo Identity Cards (EPICs). This is a unique electoral participation exercise across the democracies of the world. This year 60 thousand ‘Millennium Voters’ were felicitated across the nation in functions similar to the event in New Delhi. These Millennium Voters are young adults, who were born on 1 January 2000 and qualified as eligible voters on 1st January this year. Six such Millennium Voters from Delhi were felicitated at the National function.

It may be recalled that the Election Commission of India was constituted on 25th January 1950. Thus 25th January every year is now observed as the National Voters Day.

(Ajoy Kumar)
Secretary

ANNEXURE

LIST OF AWARDEES FOR NVD – 2018

S. No.	General Category	Name of Awardee
1.	Election Management	Ms. Avantika Singh, DEO Ahmedabad, Gujarat
2.	SVEEP	Ms. P .Bharathi, DEO Vadodara, Gujarat
3.	IT	Sh. Ravi Bhagat, DEO Ludhiana, Punjab
4.	Security Management	Sh. Kabib K, SP, Imphal East, Manipur
5.	Electoral Roll Managements	Ms. Antara Acharya, DEO, North 24 Paraganas, West Bengal
6.	Innovation	Sh. Kaushal Raj Sharma, DEO, Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh
	Special Category	
7.	Election Management – Special	Smt. Nila Mohanan, DEO, North Goa
8.	SVEEP	Ms. Ritu Suhas, DDC, Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh
9.		Ms. Ranjana, DEO Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand
10.	IT	Sh. Vipul Ujwal, DEO SBS Nagar, Punjab
11.	Security Management	Sh. Vivek Gogia, IGP, Goa
12.	Electoral Roll Management	Shri. Paresh Fal Dessai, ERO, Ponda Goa,
13.		Sh. Om Prakash Bunkar, ERO, Udaipur, Rajasthan
14.	Innovation	Sh. Lalit Narayan Singh Sandu, ERO, Gujarat
15.		Sh. Jatinder Singh Aulak, Commissioner of Police, Punjab
16.		Dr. Amrit Tripathi, DEO Sitapur, UP

Best State		
1.	ER	Ms Radha Raturi, CEO Uttarakhand
2.	SM	Sh. T Venkatesh, CEO Uttar Pradesh
3.	IT	Sh. V K Singh, CEO Punjab
4.	SVEEP	Shri V K Dewangan, CEO Manipur
5.		Shri Pushpendra Rajput, CEO Himachal Pradesh
6.	Innovation	Shri Kunal, CEO Goa
7.	EM	Shri B B Swain, CEO Gujarat
8.	Best Govt. Department Award	Sh. Rajesh Kumar, Addl. CEO, Delhi
9.		Sh. Vikash Ahlawat, Deputy CEO, Delhi
10.	Best CSO Award	Ms. Kusum Manral, State Secretary, Bharat Scouts and Guides, Uttar Pradesh

11.		Smt. Ankhi Das, Public Policy Director (India, South & Central Asia), Facebook
12.	Best Media Award	Kathryn Harbath, Global Politics & Govt. Outreach Director, Facebook
13.		Michael Hogan, Product Manager, Facebook.
14.		Best Media Award (Hindustan, UP)
15.	NEQ Award	Madhur Jain, DPS, Ranchi Jharkhand
16.		Aditya Kumar, DPS, Ranchi Jharkhand