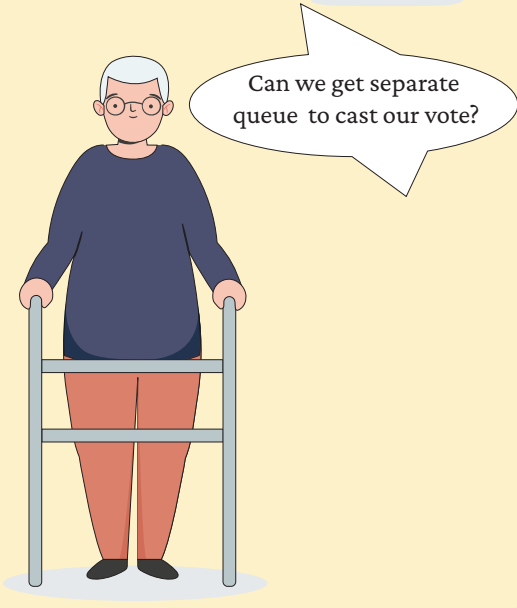




Booth Level Officer e-Patrika



Volume 14
November, 2024



"VOTERS' APATHY can be overcome by the enthusiasm of BLOs."



Voters' apathy in poll participation refers to a phenomenon where residents of urban and rural areas show a lack of interest, motivation, or engagement in the voting process and other related activities. This can manifest as low voter turnout, disinterest in local political issues, and a general feeling of disconnect from the political process.

This has been identified as one of the major issues that need to be addressed with the aim to further enhance the poll participation of electors and making the democratic process more participative.

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Factors responsible for voter apathy in poll participation



Busy Lifestyles

Demanding schedules of work and other time constraints can reduce motivation to participate in voting.



Anonymous Nature of Urban Life

Limited community bonds in urban areas can lead to a lack of connection to local issues.



Perceived Inefficacy

“Humare ek Vote se Kya hoga”---Belief that individual votes may not significantly impact election outcomes can discourage voting.



Cultural and Demographic Diversity

Diverse subgroups within the population may not identify with the majority. They often face barriers such as a lack of awareness, feelings of exclusion, or scepticism about their impact.



Job Relocations and Transient Lifestyles

Frequent migration and a sense of impermanence can lead to reduced interest in prioritizing casting their vote.



Lack of Local Connect

Individuals who feel disconnected from their community may be less inclined to engage in civic activities like voting.

BLOs can address voter apathy

The BLO stands as the bridge between the people and the Election Commission, a guiding hand addressing every query with dedication. Like a beacon in the electoral journey, they are the first point of contact, fostering trust, ensuring every voice finds its place, and addressing voter apathy effectively.



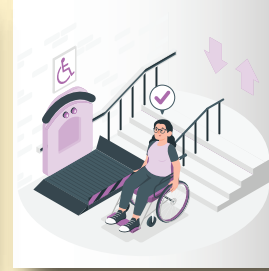
Shri Rajiv Kumar CEC, ECI, emphasising the role of BLOs.

Innovative ways to engage with voters'

- By organising flexible registration drives and voting awareness events during weekends or evenings, making it easier for people with busy schedules to participate in the electoral process.
- By building personal connections within communities, BLOs can foster a sense of belonging and encourage individuals to engage in elections.
- Assisting voters in updating their names in the electoral roll when they relocate.
- By providing targeted messages to targeted groups, making voting information more accessible and relevant to people from diverse backgrounds.
- Simplifying the registration process by guiding individuals through each step, clarifying procedures, thereby reducing barriers to voting.
- Abstainer voters are encouraged to cast their votes early in the morning or at a time when there is no long queue at the polling station. This information is shared through the designated Community/Society WhatsApp group to ensure wider awareness.

Popularising the Ease of Voting

The electors should be convincingly informed about the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at the polling station like drinking water, waiting shades, toilet with water facility, adequate arrangement of lighting, ramp of proper gradient for the PwD electors and a standard voting compartment with proper signage's etc. This can ensure ease of voting and encourage citizens to come to polling booths to cast their votes.

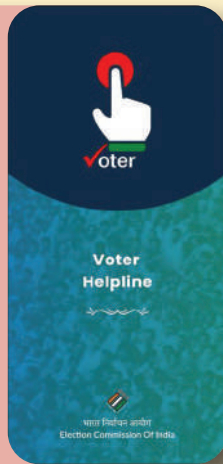


Familiarising ECI-IT Apps for information & awareness

A solution to simplify registration and updates the information, which will reduce the complexities for the electors.

Voter Helpline App

1. The one-stop solution provides registration and election-related services conveniently in a single platform.
2. You can easily check the details of contesting candidates to make an informed decision.



Saksham App

1. Apply for a new voter card.
2. Mark yourself as a Person with Disability (PwD).
3. Apply for a wheelchair if needed.
4. Request for Home voting facility.



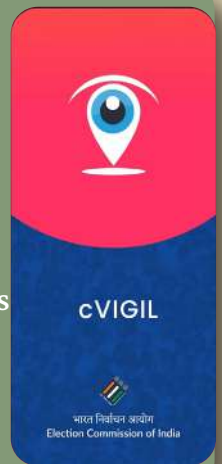
Know Your Candidate App

1. Allows voters to search for candidates by their names.
2. Displays information about the candidate's criminal antecedents, if any.
3. Provides information about the status of any criminal cases filed against the candidate.



cVIGIL App

1. Allows users to report violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).
2. Provides a platform for citizens to participate in the electoral process.
3. Uses GPS to track the location of the violation.
4. Allows users to capture the live incidents only.
5. Tracks the progress of the complaint.
6. Enables to report the case of MCC violation anonymously.



Targeted campaigns for marginalised communities

The ECI runs targeted outreach programme of awareness for communities with low voter turnout, including rural women, tribal groups, and the economically disadvantaged electors. BLOs can engage the community leaders to drive these campaigns to raise awareness and provide necessary voting support.

Since, BLOs act as trusted and accessible sources of information, they can address each barrier to voting and making election participation more engaging and feasible for every individual.

Every vote matters- BLO can make it popular

Benchmark PwD voters, 85+ senior citizen and electors employed in essential services and covid suspect/affected voters are eligible for the optional postal ballot facility as "Absentee voters", which has been defined in clause (aa) of rule 27A of the conduct of elections rules 1961. They can opt to vote by postal ballot by making an application to the Returning Officers enclosing form 12D.

BLO should distribute the 12D forms, collect from them within 5 days of the notifications, and deposit with the RO forthwith.



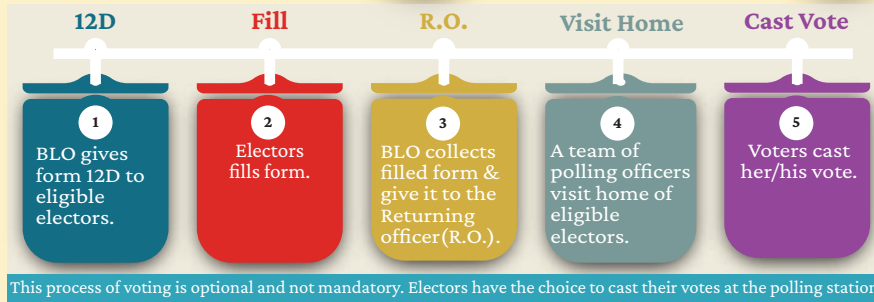
PwD
Elector who has 40% benchmark disability certificate as per Section 2 of The Rights of PwD Act- 2016



Senior Citizen
Voters of 85+ years of age



**Covid patient/
Suspect**



Booth Level Officers must inform eligible voters about this provision and facilitate them through Home to Home visits.

Stories from Ground

1. Seeds of Democracy: A BLO's Journey

Name: Mohd Sadeeq

Polling Station Number: Part No. 80

Polling Station Name: CHURANDA, UT of J&K

Voter Turnout in 2019 Lok Sabha Elections: 12%

Voter Turnout in 2024 Lok Sabha Elections: 49%

Total Votes Polled in Assembly Elections 2024: 716

Total Voters: 793



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Strategies for Improving Voter Turnout from 12% (in 2019) to 49% (in 2024):

Voter Registration

I proactively guided eligible voters through registration paperwork, ensuring no one was left behind and fostering a more inclusive voter base for higher turnout on Election Day.

Voter Slip Distribution, BLO standing in right side



Voter Motivation

I aimed to instill civic pride and responsibility among voters in my area, using personalized outreach and impactful messaging to deepen their understanding of the vote's power in shaping the nation's future.

Voter Sensitization Drives



2. Setting the Standard: 100% H2H Survey and Voter Registration Success

Name: Nimmala Leela

Polling Station Number: Part No. 45

Polling Station Name: Kamareddy Assembly Constituency, **Telangana**

Position: Anganwadi Teacher, serving as Booth Level Officer (BLO)



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- Successfully completed a 100% house-to-house (H2H) survey in the 016-Kamareddy Assembly Constituency.
- Achieved the distinction of being the first person in the constituency to complete the H2H survey.
- Organised extensive voter registration campaigns in Polling Station No. 45, Wadi Village of Palwancha Mandal.
- Recognised for her proficiency in computer skills, effective utilisation of the BLO app, and proactive approach to voter registration efforts.

3. Pride in doing

Name : Md. Anwar

Polling Station Number: Part No.48

Polling Station Name: Mahmoodia Primary School, under 158 Kolkata Port Assembly Constituency of Kolkata South District of **West Bengal**



Md. Anwar's tireless efforts sparked a chain reaction:

- It is worth mentioning that the field-level data he provided during the rationalisation process was both reliable and decisive.
- Well-versed in the Election Commission's guidelines, Md. Anwar ensures their effective dissemination to the grassroots level through continuous interaction with voters, thereby instilling confidence in them.
- Working as a BLO in the densely populated Garden Reach area, he demonstrates exceptional calmness and composure in addressing the queries of existing and prospective electors.



BLO in pink shirt visiting door-to-door



4. Proactive approach in using BLO App

Name:-LAXMI DEVI

Polling Station Number:-532

Polling station Name:-Upgraded Middle School, (36 BOKARO)Jharkhand



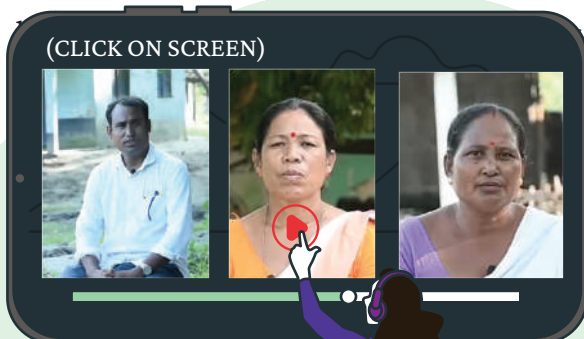
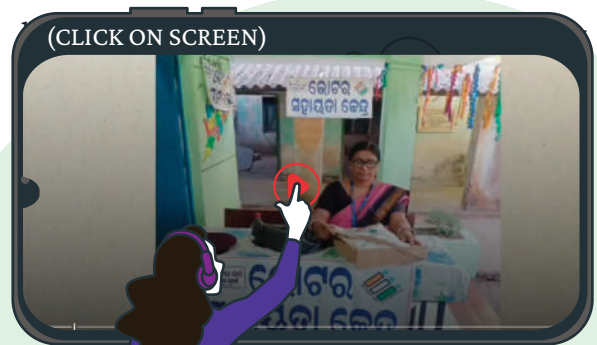
Ms. Laxmi Devi successfully completed a 100% house-to-house survey in the 36 Bokaro Assembly Constituency, making her the first in the area to achieve this milestone. She led intensive voter registration efforts at polling station No. 532 in Badhadih village, Chas Block. Her strong computer skills, efficient use of the BLO app, and proactive approach in driving voter registration initiatives earned her notable recognition.

Baaton Baaton Mein

1. Awareness through animated films on WhatsApp

Name: Anjali Mahaman

Polling Station Number: No.224, Banki 88, Assam

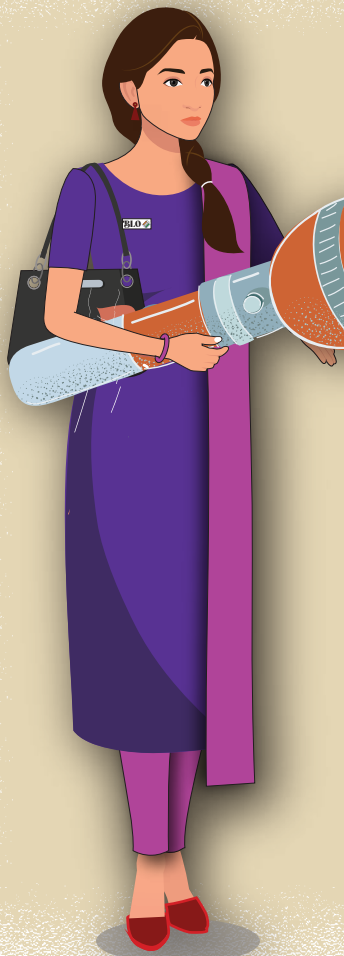
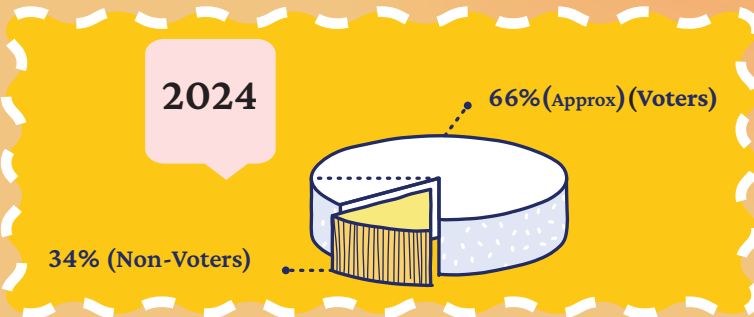
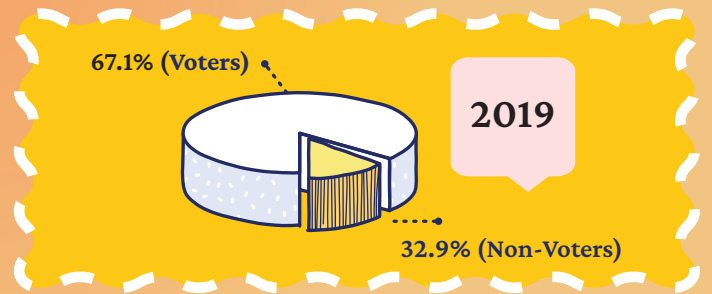
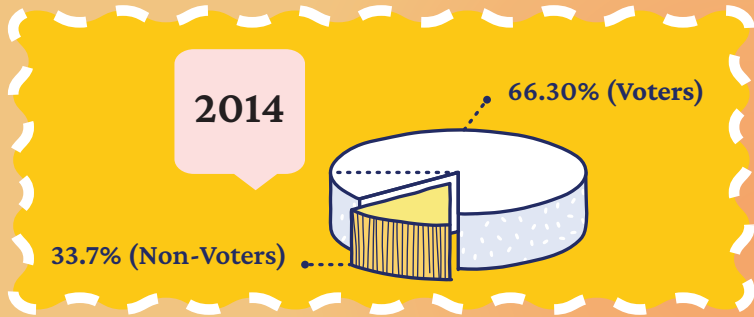


2. BLOs sharing their experiences from the Ground

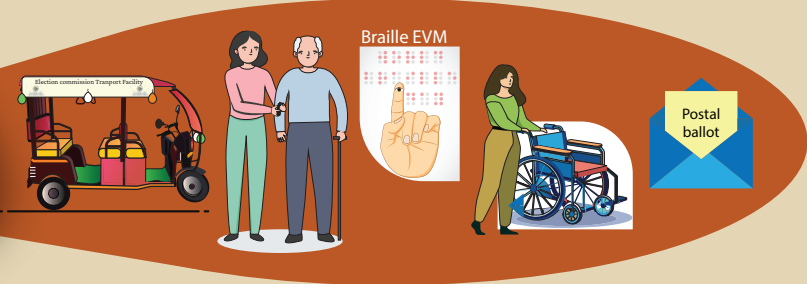
- **Name:** Dhanjit Duley
Polling Station: Na-Ali Miri L.P. School, Assam
- **Name:** Rupa Pegu
Polling Station: Na-Ali Miri L.P. School, Assam
- **Name:** Jiliki Doley
Polling Station: Na-Ali Avany High School Lakhimpur, Assam

Percentage of poll participation in Lok Sabha Elections

BLOs can make a difference




 **NO VOTER TO BE LEFT BEHIND**



Locate your Polling Station at:

 voters.eci.gov.in

 Call Voter Helpline - 1950

 Voter Helpline App

HOLIDAY

Holiday is declared on the day of poll to facilitate casting of vote

It's not a holiday, it's a voting day.



No gadgets allowed in polling booth