'SIVE'- Safe, Informed, Vigilant & Empowered Voters

Making Elections Accessible In Rajasthan









Election Department, Rajasthan, Jaipur

The CEO Speaks

Rajasthan is a State that is endowed with a substantial population of the specially-abled PwDs. To not include this worthy electors segment in the election process, would be an incalculable loss to the State and the Nation. The official Statistics puts the PwDs polulation figure at about 02%, which roughly translates to about 15 lakh PwDs in the State.

The Elector-worthy segment in this set is obviously less than this number. In our quest to acquire an authentic data set of the Catagory-wise PwDs in the State, we roped in the Social Justice & Empowerment Department and Commissioner, Specially-Abled Persons (SAP) to be our valuable SVEEP Partners.

Our journey to ensure 100% PwDs inclusion in the electoral process, received a big boost, when we conducted the ECI-blessed State PwD Consultation on 16 April 2012 (Hon'ble CEC being the Chief Guest). The year 2018 was also the focus year for "Accessible Elections" as decided by the ECI.

Ever since, the "Accessible Elections" Programme of the State, is being run around the following three major planks:-

- (1) A Sustained Drive to register each and every PwD Elector on the Rolls.
- (2) Sensitisation of the PwDs about the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) at all the Polling Stations (more than 50k) in the State.
- (3) In the Pre-Poll Phase, making the registered PwD Electors aware about the Poll-Day Facilitation (PDF).

Each administrative task being a blend of the factors of Push and Pull, Covid-19 brought its unique posse of Push Factors to the fore. This necessitated an enormous gear-shifting, to stay on the course. Here, the digital mode, came to the big rescue for all aspects of the elections. In accordance, the ECI has equipped us with the new mantra SIVE - Safe, Informed, Vigilant and Enlightened Electors. We commit ourselves to turn every Elector in the State into a SIVE Elector, who may know to steer the electoral destiny of the country by the tiny lever of his vote.

Praveen Gupta, Chief Electoral Officer

Contents

S.N.	Topic	
(A)	Background of Accessible Elections in Rajasthan	
1.	Accessible Elections in Rajasthan	
2.	State Level PwD Consultation	
3.	Sabal Abhiyaan	
(B)	Elections in the Time of Corona	
1.	Rajya Sabha Bye-Elections 2020	
(C)	Consolidation of Accessibility Measures	
1.	State SVEEP Mission	
2.	Rajasthan SVEEP Model	
3.	State Network for PwD Electors	
4.	Meetings of PwD Committees	
5.	Special Summary Revision (SSR-2021)	
6.	11 6 66 6	
7.	Person to Person Contacts	
8.	National Voters' Day 2021	
(D)	Assembly Bye-Elections 2021	
1.	Overview	
2.	Accessibility during AC Bye-Elections 2021	
3.	COVID-19 Protocol	
4.	PS-wise Mapping of PwD Electors	
5.	Customized SVEEP and Spcial Drives	
6.	Trainings in a Run-up to the Bye-Elections 2021	
7.		
8. Poll Day Facilitation		
	9. Counting Day	
10.	Postal Ballot Facility	
11.		
(E)	The Road Ahead	
1.	Feedback from SSCAE, District and NGOs/ CSOs	
(F)	Annexures	
1.	Annexure I – The Data of 5,01,923 PwD Electors	
2.	Annexure II – The Data of 7,000 PwD Electors Registered in	
Cluster Camp (20 December 2020)		

(A) Background of Accessible Elections in Rajasthan

1. Accessible Elections in Rajasthan

The Rajasthan State has always strived to be prompt in consolidation of weak and vulnerable areas, pointed out by the Election Commission of India (ECI). While the State has always been anxious to incorporate every identifiable vulnerable section into the electoral experience - the basic right of each and every Indian Citizen, unless expressly denied by law - all-out efforts to incorporate the PwDs in the electoral foldin recent years is a significant step towards achieving absolute inclusiveness and participation.

While data were never specifically compiled, the participation of PwDs (Persons with Disabilities) in the voter turnout has always been robust in the State. For instance, the following PwD Facilitation in the State Assembly Elections 2013, may well illustrate the point:-

- (1) Ballot Paper in Braille was issued to the Visually Impaired
- (2) Facility of ramps was provided to the locomotory-disabled
- (3) Total 17,626 Visually Impaired Electors cast their vote in the Assembly Elections 2013 in the State

The real breakthrough came only in 2018, a year designated by the ECI to be the "Year of Accessible Elections". The State is home to a whopping 15 lakh PwDs persons (as per the official Statistical Report of the State), by taking the Census 2011 to be the base. This is in accordance with the 07 disabilities identified by the Central Medical & Health Department. The actual number is bound to be even more, as stressed by D. R. Mehta, a prominent ex-IAS and distinguished philanthropist in the field of PwD area.

3. Sabal Abhiyaan

The Election Department, Rajasthan initiated a special drive called 'Sabal Abhiyaan' (Enability Drive) -conducted from February 15 to March 20, 2018 -to incorporate the left-out PwDs in the electoral rolls in the State

Sabal Abhiyan achieved significant outcomes. Before Sabal, out of a total of 8.28 lakh eligible PwDs, only 1.09 lakh were registered. This figure shot up to 4.36lakh PwD Electors after the Sabal Campaign. Thus, 50% of the eligible PwDsgot registered on the Electoral Rolls in the State.

The Department of Social Justice & Empowerment was roped in as the valuable partner in this unique drive.

Sabal Abhiyan Strategy

1. Data Collection

The Social Justice & Empowerment Deptt. was roped in to help out in the correct evaluation of PwD data.

2. Earmarking of PwDs

The already registered PwD Electors were earmarked on the rolls.

3. Electoral Rolls Mapping

Undertaken to identify weak areas, where initiative needed to be taken.

4. Voter Registration Camps

Voter Registration Camps were organised in Colleges and Institutions

5. Door-to-Door Visits

Door-to-door visits were undertaken to eliminate the gaps.

The aforementioned PwD Strategy has served as the basic framework for undertaking the future PwD electoral drives in the State.

2. State Level Consultation on Accessible Election

The State was fortunate in that the ECI entrusted it with the task of organising the very first State Level Consultation on PwD Electors on 16 April 2018 at HCM-RIPA in Jaipur. Hon'ble Chief Election Commissioner Sh. Sunil Arora graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The deliberations undertaken in the aforesaid State Level Workshop, gave a fillip to the PwD efforts of the Election Machinery in the State subsequently.

Objectives of State Consultation

- 1. Identify barriers to electoral participation by PwDs
- 2. Specify challenges in view of the needs of PwDs
- 3. Recommend strategies for enhancing electoral participation of PwDs
- 4. Identify Concrete Actions that can be implemented for the 2019 General Election
- 5. Suggest a Long-Term Action Plan

The aforementioned objectives have served as the guiding path for PwD electoral drives in the State.

2. Basic Challenges in Incorporation of PwD in the Electoral Fold

(1) More Categories of PwDs

The disabilities incorporated too have been increased from 07 to 21 at present, to be the criterion for designating a person as a PwD person.

(2) Difference Criterion of PwD Definition

The medical definition for PwD and definition of the same for electoral purpose is likely to differ, provided that, while the Medical & Health (and consequently Social Justice) take into account 40% disability to be the desideratum for a person to qualify as a PwD one (opening up social security benefits), a BLO is not instructed to go by such rigorous measures, in order to map an elector as PwD in voter list.

(3) PwD May Shy Away from Joining the Mainstream

(4) Stigma Attached with Being Perceived As Disabled

With this rough ground to tread upon, while opening up the doors wider for the PwD Electors, the State has done a lot of groundwork (and is constantly doing still) in bringing on board its PwD fraternity.

(B) Accessible Assembly and Parliamentary Elections in Rajasthan

The Assembly Elections 2018 and Parliamentary Elections 2019 in the State, were Accessible Elections

Assembly Elections 2018 (7 December 2018)

PwD-specific SVEEP Activities in a run-up to the AGE - 2018 :-

- (1) Voters' Pledge was simultaneously taken by 20,000 Electors (with substantial participation of PwD Electors), juxtaposed together with colourful caps in a manner to create Indian Tricolour Flag pattern, in Ajmer as a unique SVEEP Activity
- (2) PwD Conclave was conducted in Chittorgarh, in which 5,000 PwD participated A special PwDs Day (Tri-Cycle Rally) was included in the 7-day 'Sargam Saptah' (Democracy Week) conducted across the State from 25/11/2018 to 1/12/2018 PwD Friendly website

(A) Total PwD Electors in Rajasthan

S.N.	Category	Total Number
1.	Visually Impaired	72,694
2.	Hearing Impaired	57,421
3.	Locomotor Disabled	2,51,964
4.	Others	54,046
	Total PwD Electors on the Rolls	4,36,125

(2) Total PwD Electors Who Cast Votes -

S.N.	Category	Total Number
1.	Visually Impaired	26,747
2.	Hearing Impaired	8,605
3.	Locomotor Disabled	44,134
4.	Others	16,903
	Total PwD Electors on the Rolls	96,903

{22.22% PwD Electors exercises their Voting Right in the Assembly General Elections 2018 in the State}

Poll Day Facilitation (PDF)

	Wheel Chairs				
(1)	Social Justice & Empowerment Department	4,200			
	(SJED)				
	(Fresh Procurement at the initiative of the ECI)				
(2)	Panchayati Raj Department/ NGOs/ Other	8,045			
	Institutions				
	Total	12,245			
	Note:- Wheelchairs were deployed at 8,399 po	lling stations in Assembly			
	Elections 2018 (out of 51,965 polling stations)				
	Deployment of Volunteers				
	(Two Volunteers per Booth)				
(1)	Scouts & Guides	94,606			
(2)	Others (NSS/ NCC/ Anganwari etc.)	9,103			
	Total	103,709			
Vehi	Vehicles Deployed (Free Pick-and-Drop Facility for PwD/ Geriatric Electors)				
	Total	5,309			
	Divyang Mitras (in some districts) and Divyang Doots				

Divyang Mitras (in some districts) and Divyang Doots (in some districts) were also deployed as an additional measure for taking care of the PwD Electors at the Polling Station (with functions other than helping in casting vote). The Divyang Doots were PwD themselves, and could better establish rapport with the fellow PwDs.

Parliamentary Elections 2019

(A) Total PwD Electors in Rajasthan

S.N.	Category	Total Number
1.	Visually Impaired	72,694
2.	Hearing Impaired	57,421
3.	Locomotor Disabled	2,51,964
4.	Others	54,046
	Total PwD Electors on the Rolls	4,36,125

(2) Total PwD Electors Who Cast Votes -

S.N.	Category	Total Number
1.	Visually Impaired	21,752
2.	Hearing Impaired	7,701
3.	Locomotor Disabled	65,906
4.	Others	22,243
	Total PwD Electors on the Rolls	1,17,602

{27% PwD Electors exercises their Voting Right in the Parliamentary General Elections 2019 in the State}

(C) Elections in the Time of Corona

Rajya Sabha Elections-2020 in Rajasthan

These biennial elections, 2020 for the Rajya Sabha in Rajasthan were to be conducted to fill up the three (3) seats, which had earlier fallen vacant in the month of April 2020.

These Rajya Sabha Elections, 2020 proved to be unprecedented in the electoral history of the State in being held in the shadow of the Global Covid-19 Pandemic, which is threatening the very existence of human lives until and unless appropriate drugs and vaccines are soon developed & perfected to contain its continuing depredations on a global scale.

Therefore, taking Covid-19 to be the biggest challenge of them all, and acting in tune with the directions of ECI, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India and the Department of Medical & Health, Government of Rajasthan, the following concrete steps were undertaken as Covid-19 safety measures during the Rajya Sabha Elections, 2020:-

- (i) The entire polling premises (the Vidhan Sabha Secretariat Complex), waiting areas and the Polling Room (Hall No. 751) were thoroughly sanitised one day in advance of the Poll Day.
- (ii) Separate Entry and Exit was arranged at the Main Gate along with facility for thermal screening and sanitisation of vehicles.
- (iii) Display of logos and posters bearing instructions, messages and 'Dos & Don'ts', created in consultation with the Medical & Health Department, Government of Rajasthan, was fully complied with, in order to enable 'Ease of Voting' in context of the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- (iv) Only Electors (Hon'ble Members of the House) who displayed IDs were allowed access into the Polling Station premises, and that too after mandatory thermal screening, wearing of face masks, hand gloves and sanitisation of body (especially hands and forearms).
- (v) Waiting Hall was kept ready with arrangements for the minimum 2 metre social distancing norms.
- (vi) Separate entry and exit routes were made for the Polling Room with appropriate Queue-position markings to ensure social distancing.
- (vii) Only one Elector was allowed at a time in the Polling Room.



Polling Party Performing while Observing Covid-19 Protocol

- (viii) One-time usable ECI approved Marker Pens were provided to each Elector, and these were later collected back after the Casting of Vote.
- (ix) A separate room was arranged to keep Covid suspects and possible Covid patients.



Social Distancing Being Observed in the Queue for Rajya Sabha Election, 2020

- (x) Media personnel were restricted at designated spots, and were requested to keep in small groups while following social distancing norms also.
- (xi) Dustbins with flappable covers were kept at convenient intervals for discarding used things and fomites.

(A) Consolidation of Accessibility Measures

1. State SVEEP Mission

State SVEEP Mission is built upon 06 Planks, referred to be "Vision Six" – "Vision Six"

- (1) Error-Free Electoral Rolls
- (2) Free & Fair Elections
- (3) Voter-Centric Activities
- (4) Inclusive Electoral Participation
- (5) Total Electoral Participation Which itself is defined as follows
 - To register as a voter
 - To cast vote in elections
 - To cast vote ethically
 - To motivate others for the previous three
- (6) Continuous Electoral and Democratic Education

2. Rajasthan SVEEP Model

In Rajasthan, a three-tier SVEEP Model is in operation since it was formulated in the Assembly Bye-Elections 2021:-

The four tiers of this model are as follows:-

(1) State Level - Environment-building
 (2) District Level - Bridging-the-Gap
 (3) ERO Level - Micro-planning

(4) Booth Level - Voter-Segment Centric

Filling the Last Mile Gaps

The booth level approach is the last mile effort to achieve sent percent registration and VTR at the booth level. The 25% lowest performing polling stations are identified for this purpose. The BLO creates voter category-wise list and WhatsApp groups for motivating the electors to register and cast their votes. Thus, we have PwD elector groups, Geriatric elector groups, MGNREGA workers elector groups, rural women elector groups etc. at the booth level at present all over the state.

From the level of planning to execution, including roll-out at the grassroots level as well as monitoring, this model is strictly being adhered to. While enough scope is provided at every level for mid-term corrections (with approval) as well as initiatives and innovations. Thus, this SVEEP Model blends rigidity & flexibility in ideal proportions.

The campaign for assimilation of the PwD Electors in the electoral fold, was also undertaken along the aforementioned lines.

3. Dealing with Accessible Elections

The Rajasthan Model of Accessible Elections

Stage (1) - Authentic Data Collection

The Social Justice and Empowerment Department (SJED) and the Disability Commission of Rajasthan, was roped in to provide soft copies of data of the Pensioners and Certified PwDs (40% Disability Criterion) of the State.

Stage (2) - Elimination of Duplicate Entries

IT Tools were utilised to trace the overlapping of data; followed by deletion of duplicate entries.

Stage (3) - Sharing AC-wise Lists with the EROs

AC-wise Lists of Geriatrics and PwDs were shared with the EROs, for them to undertake PS-wise flagging of the Geriatric and PwD Electors

Stage (4) - Earmarking of Left-out Electors

Flagging helped in ascertaining the PwD Electors yet to be enlisted in the Voter List.

Stage (5) - Video-Conferencings to Steer the Course-Corrections

Through Video-Conferencing, the DEOs were enlightened about the process to be adopted for PS-wise flagging of the Geriatrics and the PwDs; followed by registration of the presently left-out Electors in the Voter List.

Stage (5) - D-Day of District Deliberations

The District Committees for Accessible Election (DCAE)

The Electors were provided hands-on training for online registration.

The Electors were provided hands-on training for online registration on nvsp portal. The SJED, Disability Commission and NGOs

The Electors were provided hands-on training for online registration on nvsp portal. The departmental personnel of the SJED, Disability Commission and volunteers of the PwD NGOs/ CSOs, were involved in the sensitisation/ hands-on programme for online voter registration process.

An intensive door-to-door voter-registration drive was undertaken by putting to service

The flagging-mapping-filling-the-gaps is, presently, being undertaken on a half-yearly basis in the State, in order to achieve absolute electoral inclusiveness.

4. State Network for PwD Electors

The State has established a proper administrative set-up to carry out the various SVEEP activities in a systematic and coordinated manner. This SVEEP Machinery has been further improvised & customised to accommodate the measures being undertaken for accessible elections.

The whole exercise for consolidation of PwD Electoral Registration Drive and associated SVEEP activities took place in the leadership and guidance of CEO, Rajasthan.

Following administrative structure is in place in the State for PwD Electors:-

- (1) State SVEEP Nodal Officer Jt. CEO at State Level
- (2) State Coordinator PwD (Directorate of Person with Disability)
 SJE Department is the key stakeholder.
- (3) 33 District SVEEP Nodal Officers
- (4) 35 PwD District Nodal Officers

Nodal Officers are appointed and actively engaged from State to the Block level. All these District Nodal officers are of the rank of Dy. Dir, SJED, and are operational in all 33 Districts.

नव और दिव्यांग मतदाताओं का किया सम्मान

संभागीय आयुक्त ने किया पोस्टर का विमोचन, दिलाई शपथ, सर्वश्रेष्ठ कार्मिक पुरस्कृत

● ग्यारहवां राष्ट्रीय मतदाता दिवस समारोह आयोजित

कामयाब कलम रिपोर्टर

बीकानेर। ग्यारहवें राष्ट्रीय मतदाता दिवस का मुख्य समार्थेष्ठ सोमार्था को टाउन हॉल में आयोजित हुआ। कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अतिथि संभागीय आयुक बी. एल. मेहरा थी। उन्होंने कहा कि मतदान, तोकतंत्र की महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रक्रिया है। इसमें प्रत्येक मतदाता की मार्गीयारी होनी चाहिए। इसमें प्रत्येक मतदाता की मार्गीयारी होनी चाहिए। इसमें प्रत्येक मतदाता की मार्गीयारी होनी चाहिए। इसमें प्रत्येक निवांच्य के किया की महत्त्वपूर्ण कही बताया तथा कहा कि निवांच्य के हो के सार्वेक के समर्पण की बदौलत यह प्रक्रिया सफलतापुर्वक सम्मन्न हो पाती है। संभागीय आयुक्त के कहा कि सिंसी भी पात्र व्यक्ति का नाम मतदाता सूची में



जुड़ने से नहीं रहे, ऐसे प्रयास हों। इस दौरान उन्होंने 21 बीएलओ, 7 पुपरावाच्डरा, 6 स्त्रीप कार्यकर्ताओं के अलावा 9 कार्मिकों, 5 नव मतदाताओं एवं 3 दिख्योग मतदाताओं का सम्मान किया। साथ ही पोस्टर का दियोचन किया तथा मतदाता प्रथाय दिताई। दिवाना परियद हे मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी एवं स्वीप प्रभारी औमण्डकारी में मतदाता दिस्स पर आयोजित कार्यक्रमों के बारे मतदाता दिस्स उन्होंने कहा कि इस अवसर पर जिले के सभी कार्यालयों में मतदाता शष्मध दिलाई हां। प्रत्येक मतदाता शष्मध दिलाई हां। प्रत्येक मतदात केन्द्र पर आयोजित कार्यक्रमों में बूध लेवल अधिकारियों द्वारा ई-इंपिक की जानकारी दी गई। इससे पहले स्वीप के सहप्रभारी राजेन्द्र जोशी ने स्वागत उद्धोधम दिया। उप जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी बलदेव राज धीजक ने आधार जाताय। अतिरिक्त जिला कलकटर (नगर) अरुण शर्मा भी बतौर अतिर्थि

इनका हुआ सम्मान

कार्यक्रम के दौरान नगर निगम आयुक्त ए एच गौरी, श्रीड्मारगढ़ की उपखण्ड अधिकारी दिव्या चौधरी, गोखा तहसीलदार द्वारका प्रसाद शर्मा, स्वीध सहग्रभारी राजेन्द्र जोशी, सहग्रयक निदेशक (जनसर्पक) हिर शंकर आवार्य, सामाजिक त्याय एवं औद्यक्तिराता विभाग के उपनिदेशक एक. डी. चंवा, सहायक निदेशक (कौर्टें जी शिक्षा) औं राकेश हु हों, लाध परिवद के आईईसी समन्वयक गोपाल जोशी तथा निर्वाचन कार्यालय के सुबना सहायक राजेन्द्र तिवाड़ी सहित अन्य कार्मिकों का सम्मान हुआ। इस दौरान दिव्योग मतदाता मोहन लाल वर्मा, देवी ताल सोखल और बाधू देवी के अतावा नव मतदाता के रूप में तुषार सिंह शेखादत, अदिति शर्मा, वर्षा सिंह, काव्या शर्मा तथा हैनी का अभिनंदन किया गया।

कलक्ट्रेट परिसर में दिलाई शपथ

राष्ट्रीय मतदाता दिवस के अवसर पर जिले के सरकारी कार्यालयों में शपथ दिलाई गई। कलबट्टेट परिसर में उप जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी बतदेव राम धोजक ने शपथ दिलाई। इस दौरान अतिरक्त कटबटर अरुण प्रकाश शर्मा, उपखण्ड अधिकारी मीनू यमी सहित अन्य कार्यिक मीजुद रहे। उसर, जिला परिषद में मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी ओमाप्रकाश ने शपथ दिलाई। उन्होंने स्वीध गतिविधियों के बारे में बताया। उपखण्ड स्तरीय कार्यालयों में भी कार्मिकों को मतदान की शपथ दिलाई गई।

मौजूद रहे। राजकीय बालिक उच्च माध्यमिक विद्यालय की छात्राओं ने राष्ट्रगान की प्रस्तुति दी। संचालन संजय पुरोहित ने किया। कार्यकम में अतिरिक्त आयुक्त (आबकारी) अजीत सिंह राजावत, उपखण्ड अधिकारी मीनू वर्मा, नगर निगम उपायुक्त पंकज शर्मा, मुख्य जिला शिक्षा अधिकारी डॉ. राजकुमार श्रमां, अतिरक्त जिला शिक्षा अधिकारी सुनील बोड़ा आदि मौजूद थे।











(5) 255 Special Educators

Special Educators appointed to carry out sensitization about PwD. Have been appointed in all the 33 districts.

(6) 130 NGOs/CSOs

NGOs and CSOs in the field of disability, closely collaborating to make the State cent-percent PwD-inclusive in terms of elections.

130 NGOs/ CSOs at the State and District level are collaborating for voter registration.NGOs like Umang, Disha, SOS, Surman, Netraheen Vikas Sansthan, Pragya Niketan, Jodhpur etc.

(6) Electoral Literacy Clubs

- 52577 ELCs have been registered on the ECI SVEEP Portal as on 08.07.2021.
- Pop-ups (informing about NVSP Portal) with the help of DoIT were made available on the page for online admission forms on the official websites of the Colleges. This resulted in 3.5 lakh visits on NVSP Portal.

5. Meetings of PwD Committees

The meetings of SSCAE (State Steering Committee on Accessible Elections) are being conducted at regular intervals, in order to maintain the momentum of Accessible Election endeavours in the State.

The meetings of DMCAE (District Monitoring Committee on Accessible Elections) are also being conducted at regular intervals in all the Districts.

Including All the PwD NGOs to Make it Inclusive

On 14 September 2020, the DMCAE meetings were conducted simultaneously in all the 33 districts of the State. Almost all the NGOs/ CSOs, pro-actively engaged in PwD welfare in the 33 districts, were made to participate in the aforementioned DMCAE meetings. While, about 130 PwD find a prominent place in the State in the PwD welfare field at present.

6. Special Summary Revision (SSR-2021)

Cluster Enrollment for PwDs was conducted on 12 December, 2020 during SSR-2021 This resulted in inclusion of 7,000 new PwD Electors on the Electoral Rolls.

Cluster Camps

Centred on Geriatric and PwD Electors

Cluster Campaign was undertaken on 12 December 2020, with a view to register the young PwD Electors, enrolled in Disability Homes and Institutions.

The main aim of Cluster Camps was to create the impression that Election Department, will come to facilitate the PwDs for exercising their citizenship duties and electoral duties, in order for the PwD to feel proud in being a valuable citizen & elector of this great Democracy.

The Cluster Camp was part of the SSR-2021. It proved to be a resounding success in that, 7,000 PwD Electors were registered in a single day across the State. The inmates of the 130 PwD NGOs involved in the Cluster Drive, absorbed the feeling of being invaluable citizens of this great nation. They pocketed the feeling of being cared for by the powers-that-be in the Democratic Set-up of the Country. The felt being de-marginalised as well as empowered and equally-abled (if not more).

7. Mapping and Flagging of PwD Electors

4.81 lakh PwD Electors were flagged on the Electoral Rolls during the SSR-2021. This figure now stands at 5,01,923 (as on 08/07/2021).

8. Person to Person Contacts

The person-to-person and door-to-door approach was adopted to go the last mile in the endeavour to achieve cent-percent electoral inclusiveness.

The highlights of this approach are as follows:-

(1) Cluster approach was adopted for the two thrust areas - New Voters and the PwD Voters



Cluster Camp for PwD Voter Registration organized at "*Manav Dharam* Shikshan Sansthan" on 20 Dec. 2020

- (2) Exemplary Work by PwD NGOs Umang, Disha, PUCL etc.
- (3) Election Personnel Made Torch-Bearers BLOs were given the target to enrol 10 Electors; the other election officials were required to enrol 05 Electors each
- (4) Geriatric and Centenarian Electors were encouraged for electoral participation through door-to-door approach (by requesting through the Toll-Free Helpline)
- (5) The extensive network of more than 40,000 ELCs, was utilised to fill up the Gaps of different sorts
- (6) BAGs active at all Polling Stations
- (7) Miscellaneous Person-to-Person Contact Exercises
 - Raatri Chaupals
 - Door-to-Door Campaigns by Grassroots Macxhinery
 - PS-Level Meetings by BLOs
 - ELC Platforms
 - Aanganwari Workers
 - SHGs (Self-Help Groups)
 - NGOs and CSOs



9. Appeals by State Icons

Celebrities drawn mainly from the Sporting World have been officially appointed as State Icons, a few of whom from the PwD Category itself. They carry lots of weight in their personal voting appeals. Video and audio messages as well as personal contacts on the platforms provided by the Election Department have been instrumental in the prospective young voters catching the voting bug. Their appeals have been infectious, and have helped in opinion-making in favour of electoral participation, especially the youth of the State.

State Icons of Rajasthan:-

- (1) Apoorvi Chandela
- (2) Rajat Chauhan
- (3) Devendra Jhajhariya
- (4) Shatabdi Awasthi (name to be approved by the ECI)

10. National Voters' Day 2021 (11th NVD)

Each year the NVD Function acts as the refresh button for the SVEEP Programme; which, besides boosting the show & drive, directs us onto a hitherto insufficiently explored avenue in the form of the NVD Theme for the year.

The theme for NVD-2021 enunciated by the ECI was 'SIVE' - Safe, Informed, Vigilant & Empowered Voters.

The Hon'ble Governor of the State Sh. Kalraj Mishra graced the occasion as the Chief Guest of the State Level NVD-2021 Function, which was conducted online concurrently from the Raj Bhawan on the one hand and the Government Secretariat

and District Collectorates on the other. The distinguished Chief Guest, while administering the read-out of the Preamble and Fundamental Duties as well as the Voters' Oath, underlined the need to be a responsible and dutiful citizen, which includes the basic duty to be an elector and a voter.



The NVD-2021 introduced the following two new initiatives of the ECI to the citizens of Rajasthan:—

- (1) e-EPIC (virtual valid EPIC Card, much needed in the time of Corona)
- (2) Hello Radio (a periodical podcast, disseminating the latest SVEEP audio-video content of the ECI)

Web Radio Hello Voters

The Web Radio Hello Voters launched on the 11th NVD occasion has caught the imagination of the people of Rajasthan. It has also provided a robust platform for the State SVEEP personnel to express their creativity in a meaningful way as well on a big platform. The State has been contributing creatives to Hello Radio ever since its launch in the State. These creatives, planned Category-wise, have also focused on accessible elections.

All 33 Districts have been arranged into three 'Hello Voters' Group, to send SVEEP material for the web radio, on an alternative roster-system basis (e.g., April 21, July 21, October 21 and January 2022 for Group-I and so on).

The 18 'Hello Voters' Topics identified for the web radio, are as follows:-

- (1) Youth Voters
- (2) Women Voters (Rural/ Urban)
- (3) Service Voters
- (4) PwD Voters
- (5) Senior Citizen Voters
- (6) Geriatric/ Centenarian
- (7) Nomadic Tribes
- (8) Other Marginalised Groups (OMGs)
- (9) Voters affected by Covid-19/ under Quarantine
- (10) Chunaav Pathshalas and other ELCs
- (11) EVM/ VVPAT Awareness
- (12) e-EPIC download
- (13) Use of cVIGIL App
- (14) Voter Portal/ Voter Helpline App (online voter registration)
- (15) Covid-19 Protocol (w.r.t. SVEEP activities, voter registration and polls)
- (16) District Icons/ Campus Ambassadors
- (17) Good Practices being undertaken in the Districts
- (18) Historical (Innovations practiced/ implemented in previous elections)

Creatives contributed by the State to Hello Voters –

- (1) 14 Podcasts
- (2) 02 Short Films
- (3) 06 Audio Clips

(B) Assembly Bye Election - 2021

1. Overview

The CEO, Rajasthan conducted by-elections at 1145 Polling Stations in 24-Sujangarh (Churu), 175-Rajsamand (Rajsamand) and 179-Sahada (Bhilwara). The Bye-Election was held on 17th April, 2021 and counting was done on 2nd May, 2021.

Table - Assembly Bye-elections 2021 at a Glance :-
--

S.N.	Name of AC	Total Elector	Polling Stations		Poll %
			Main	Auxiliary	
1	24-Sujangarh (SC)	275940	267	151	58.29
2	175-Rajsamand	222531	244	96	67.51
3	179-Sahara	247287	280	107	56.76
	Total		791	1145	

In a run-up the poll day 17 April 2021, SVEEP activities were undertaken in a graded scientific manner, concluding in a crescendo. The PwD was the thrust area of the Election Machinery.

2. Accessibility during AC Bye-Elections 2021

- (1)PwD App Widespread awareness aboutPwD App
- (2)Sensitisation of poling personnel about the special needs of the PwD Electors. Sahara AC (Bhilwara District), Sujangarh AC (Churu District) and Rajsamand VC (Rajsamand) went to polls on 18 April 2021.
- (3) Voting Companion PwD Electors were made aware about provision under Rule 49N of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 that permit a companion to blind/inform voter inside the voting compartment.





PwD Tricycle Rally in Assembly Bye-Elections 2021

3. Covid Protocol

Diluting crowds being the basic logistical step to create the requisite a spaces for social distancing to operate, polling stations for the 04 ACs (including the still-to-go-to-polls AC Vallabhnagar AC in Udaipur District), were increased by a whopping 45% (bringing the number of total PS for the 04 ACs from 1074 to 1529).









- (1) Public education through different media about PwD facilitation, especially in view of the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- (2) Inclusion of Medical Experts in the State SVEEP Core Committee
- (3) Leveraging the Digital
- (4) A thorough Sanitisation of the polling stations inside-outside was undertaken a day prior to the Poll Day.
- (5) BLOs along with Volunteers ensured effective monitoring of the same.
- (6) Taking into Account the Covid-19 Preventive Measures :-
 - Thermal Scanners
 - Hand Sanitisers
 - Social Distancing
 - Face Masking
 - Hand Gloves, Head Caps, PPE Kits, wherever (PS-wise) warranted

Digital and Online Mode

- Digital SVEEP Material
- Online Processes and Procedures
- More and More Social Media (Election Department has a palpable presence on fb, twitter, Instagram and Pinterest)
- A total of 04.55 crore SMSes were sent out the State Electorate in the last and first weeks of November and December 2020 (PwD being incorporated as a thrust area)
- Customised IEC Material for the PwD Electors

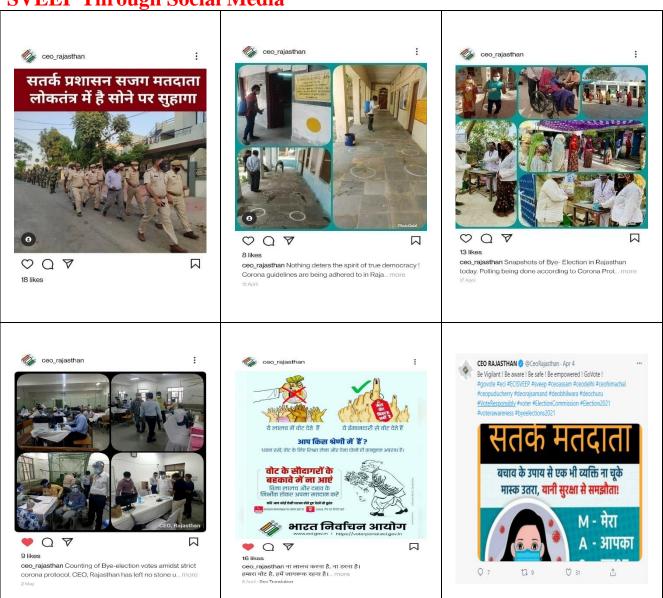
Virtual Trainings

- MS Team, Google Meet, Zoom and Webex utilised to impart online training and hold webinars. Series of webinars were conducted with the Nodal Officers of ELC (Schools, Colleges), NSS, SJED etc.
- *nvsp.in* and Voter Helpline App were popularised through the various media platforms available

Mix of Online and Offline Wherever Needed

- Hands-on training was imparted through online mode, and through door-to-door visits by BLOs and grassroots functionaries
- In SSR-2020, online voter registrations were 15%, which enhanced to 65% in SSR-2021

SVEEP Through Social Media



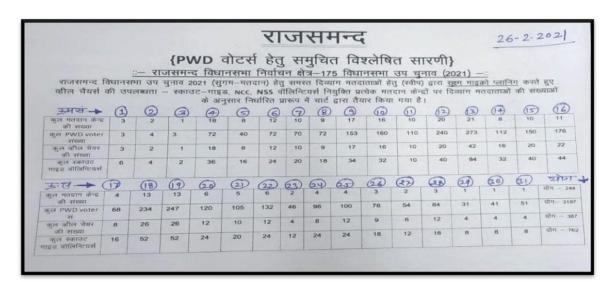








4. PS-wise Mapping of PwD Electors



PS-Wise Mapping of PwD Electors and Requisites The total electors mapped are as follows:-

S.N.	Name of AC	Total PwD Voters
1.	Sujangarh	2630
2.	Sahara	2749
3.	Rajsamand	2494
	Total	7863

Total PwD/ Geriatric Electors for the 04ACs (including Vallabhnagar AC):Table :- PwD/ Geriatric Electors

S. N.	Details	Total
1.	PwDs Electors	39,155
2.	Geriatric Electors	29,514
	Total	68,669

5. Customised SVEEP and Special Drives for PwDs

Special SVEEP Drives undertaken for voter awareness of PwDs, as well as making the elections accessible in the State are as follows:-

S.N.	Item	Description
1.	SVEEP Mobile Vans	EVM-VVPAT Hands-on were conducted for
		Geriatrics and PwDs
2.	Awareness about AMF	Through various media, Geriatrics and PwD were
		made aware about AMF Facilities at all the polling
		stations in the State.
3.	Voting Oaths	Voting Oaths were administered to the Geriatrics and
		the PwDs in in Old-Age Homes and PwD Hostels and
		Institutions
4.	Customised Group	Group activities that are suitable for Geriatrics and
	Activities	PwDs were carried out.
		Tricycle Rallies brought out by the PwDs are
		presently a regular feature of the State SVEEP
		Programme.
5.	ELCs	Inclusion of PwDs has been ensured in all categories
		of the ELCs in the State.
6.	Hello Radio	The latest initiative of the ECI w.r.t. propagation of
		SVEEP messages, has taken firm roots in the State in
		a short time.
		Besides preparing Geratric and PwD-centric Creatives
		to be shared with the ECI on a regular basis, Hello
		Radio is also being popularized among the PwD
7	C: -1 N / - 1: -	population of the State.
7.	Social Media	On all the Social Media handles of the Department, be
		it twitter, facebook, instagram and pinterest, Geriatric-
		centric and PwD-centric messages are being uploaded
		on a regular basis.
		Mrs Shikha Soni, SVEEP Consultant is presently
		appointed as the dedicated OIC to look after the
		appointed as the dedicated OTC to look after the

		Social Media handles of the Department.
8.	e-EPIC Card Hands-ons	Doorstep hands-ons on e-EPIC download were given to the Geriatric and PwD Electors by the BLOs
9.	c-VIGIL Hands-ons	Doorstep hands-on about c-VIGIL use were given to the Geriatric and PwD Electors by the BLOs
10.	Voter Guide Distribution (03 Districts, in the ACs of which Bye-Elections, did take place, being the focal point of the programme, rest of the 30 Districts were also included)	Voter Guides were distributed in the 03 bye-electiongoing ACs of the State.
11.	Webinars for Sensitisation	In Corona Times, Webinars have acquired the status of the preferred platforms for conduct of trainings, sensitisations as well as information dissemination in a timely & effective manner. Inclusion of Geriatrics and PwDs is, now, a permanent feature of these Webinars.
12.	Online Trainings	Online mode is the preferred mode of imparting trainings in the Corona Times. Geriatrics and PwDs also feature permanently in these
13.	Voter (NVSP) Portal and Voter App	online trainings. Extensive hands-ons were undertaken in all the nooks & corners of the State, especially through ELCs, Colleges, PwD Institutions, Old Age Homes etc. While the youth segment (belonging to all Target Voters Groups) is the major target area of the programme, Geriatrics and Senior Citizens have also been included in larger and larger numbers.
14.	Postal Ballot Information	Pre-poll awareness drives were undertaken in a vigorous & rigorous mode in order to make the Geriatric & PwD Electors aware about the innovative facility of voting from the comfort of home (by Postal Ballot)
15.	Bulk SMS	In the first week of March 2021, 02.20 lakh SMSes were sent out for e-EPIC download

BLOs were directed to create Elector Category-wise WhatsApp Groups, including the PwD Electors. AC-wise WhatsApp Groups (SVEEP Sahara, SVEEP Rajsamand and SVEEP Sujangarh) were created as dedicated forums for mutual communication, information & material sharing, and Audio-Video Guide for HI (Hearing Impaired)

Voters and VI (Visually Impaired) Voters were issued for use by the PwD Electors.1275 Voter Information Slips in Braille and 1255 Dummy Ballot Papers were filled up.

The four mandatory posters were sufficiently publicized as part of the mass awareness drive. These four mandatory posters were on the following topics:-

- (1) Braille
- (2) EVM-VVPAT
- (3) PwD
- (4) Covid-19
- Postal Ballots were issued to PwD Electors and 80+ Geriatric Electors.
- At the RO Level, Polling Stations were earmarked for customised PwD requirements
- Scouts & Guides were deployed as Voting Volunteers for helping the PwD Electors as Voting Assistants.
- Audio Aids were circulated for the Visually Impaired and Visual Aids for the Hearing Impaired Electors were circulated.
- BLOs circulated Voters' Guide through Category-wise WhatsApp Groups at the Polling Station level.
- As per the official Google Drive created for the purpose, as many as 01.67 lakh were recorded as the beneficiaries of the online SVEEP orientation programme.
- As per the ECI Guidelines, following the reduction in number of Electors from 1500 to 1000 for each Polling Station, the number of Polling Stations in the 03 AC (Assembly Constituencies) increased from 791 to 1145.

Tricycle Rally in Bidasar (Churu District)

This tricycle rally was organised in the Sujangarh AC to raise awareness among the PwD Electors about pre-poll (registration-related, AMF etc.), poll-day, Covid-19 related in view of the forthcoming Assembly Bye-Elections-2021. The SJED, DLB, District Administration collaborated to make the rally a success, and drive home the message. "अविभिन्नस्विभाग्रेकामस्वर्धपहलकरोमतदान" (Let everything else wait; the first duty is to vote) was the key message disseminated through the rally. EVM-VVPATs were strategically placed along the route of the rally, which meandered through the main thoroughfare, lanes and alleys of the Bidasar town. Media coverage was carried out to amplify the message among the wider population. SVEEP Partnerships were synergised to achieve maximum impact.

6. Trainings in a Run-up to the Bye-Elections 2021

Training is the backbone of a gargantuan administrative exercise like elections. Therefore, the various trainings imparted to the Election Machinery and the associated stakeholders, were undertaken in a spirit of due gravity and seriousness. Provided that

Covid-19 Pandemic restricted the use of offline mode (physical trainings), most of the trainings/sensitizations were imparted through the online platform.

Highlights of Training Programmes Undertaken:-

- (1) Training for e-EPIC download was imparted on 22-23 January from DEO to the BLO level. The cascade mode of training was immensely successful.
- (2) Online Training to District PwD Nodal Officers 18 November 2020
- (3) Hands-on Training for NVSP registration process Conducted on 04 diffrent days of November 2029. Meant for District PwD Nodals, PwD-related NGOs and CSOs and Government Homes for Intellectual Challenged
- (4) PwD NGOs were imparted training/ sensitised about NVSP portal registration process and facilities regarding accessibility in the month of November 2020 on the following dates:-
 - 02 November 2020 Disha NGO
 - 03 November 2020 Umang NGO
 - 06 November 2020 Jamdoli Home for Intellectually Challenged

She Can See the Light of Day

Story of Sita Laxmi

Father called her Sita; Mother called her Laxmi, so she came to be called Sita Laxmi. She began life's journey with two big disadvantages - the parents left earlier than usual for their Heavenly Abode (a mysterious disease took them away); she herself flung into a Homeless Persons' Abode. Other disadvantage she got condemned to carry, was the loss of her vision at an early age.

She has been an incumbent of earlier the Homeless Persons' Abode and, presently, Udaipur Visually Impaired Home (नेत्रहीन संस्थान, उदयपुर) for all these 15-16 years that she has been parent-less.

Her world is all dark. Deeply ingrained in her psyche, and acutely felt by her, is the feeling of being utterly alone and lonely in the world.

Then, it was 20 December 2021. The Election People set their Help Desk in the Udaipur VI Home. They were there to realise the targets of the innovative Cluster Camp approach for PwD voter registration. Sita Laxmi, shortly to be 18+ age (by 01/01/2021), was registered by the Cluster Team as a voter. She was presented with the iconic 'Proud to be a Voter' Cap.

The euphoria of being an authorised voter of the country, has stayed in her mind forever. For once, she feels neither alone nor lonely anymore. There are people out there (her countrymen), who care for her. Even more pronounced is the feeling that she may care for others by being a responsible voter (even a single vote may change the destiny of a state, she was told).

But, the most important feeling is that she is not a not-able (or disabled) person, but a notable person. Because, she can see - a light at the end of the tunnel. Not with the physical eyes; but with the eyes divine. Being an enlightened elector.

(Composite Experience of PwD Electors in the State)

7. Assured Minimum Facilities

Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) is the basic barometer of accessibility of elections to the PwD and the infirm voter categories. All 52,009 Polling Stations in the State are presently equipped with Assured Minimum Facilities mentioned hereunder.

- Drinking Water
- Shaded Waiting Area
- Toilet Facility (with ample water supply)
- Adequate Furniture
- Adequate Electricity
- Adequate Lighting Arrangement
- Proper Ramps
- Help Desk
- Mandatory Signages
- Proper Approach by Road
- Wide Entries and Exits
- Separate Queue Arrangements

8. Poll Day Facilitation

Bye Election were held on 17th April 2021. The Poll Day Facilitation provided to the Geriatric and PwD electors was as follows:-

- **1.** Wheelchairs 925 wheelchairs deployed at the polling stations in all the three ACs that went to polls on 17 April, 2021
- 2. Vehicle 137 vehicles were deployed for picking and dropping Geriatric and PwD voters from their homes to the polling station and back.
- **3.** Sign Language Banners displaying the basic sign language gestures, were put up prominently at the polling stations. Instructions in Braille in English, Hindi as well as Regional Language, were widely circulated.
- **4.** Volunteers At about all polling stations where PwD and Geriatric electors were to cast were provided with poll-day volunteers, to act as Voting Assistants for PwD, Senior Citizen and Infirm Voters (drawn from Scouts & Guides, NCC, NSS etc.)
- 5. Voter Information Slips in Braille
- **6. Public Address Systems**

Public Address Systems to guide the Visually Impaired (VI) and Infirm Voters.

9. Counting Day

The Covid-19 Protocol was religiously followed and Covid appropriate behaviour adhered to, on the Counting Day at the Counting Venue. Only personnel bearing certificate of vaccination and certificate bearing RT-PCR negative, were allowed in the counting premises.

10. Postal Ballot Facility

The ECI extended the Postal Ballot Facility to a few special categories by its letter dated 09 February 2021.

The Postal Ballot facility was extended to the following categories:

- 1) 80+ Senior Citizens, (AVSC Absentee Voter Senior Citizen)
- 2) PwD Electors(AVPD Absentee Voter PwD Elector)
- 3) Covid Suspects (AVCO Absentee Voter Covid Suspect) (both hospitalized as well as home and institutionally quarantined)



The Postal Ballot (PB) facility was provided to only those persons who belong to one of the aforementioned categories, and also opted for this facility by filling the prescribed Form No. 12D.

Sensitization about Postal Ballot Facility

Senior, Geriatric, 80+ and Centennial Electors were made aware & educated through WhatsApp Groups, Chunav Pathshalas about the provision of Postal Ballot Facility. They were also made aware about Poll Day Facilitation.

Postal Ballot Process –

- The applicant was to apply for PB within 05 days of the notification of elections.
- The applicant was required to fill-up form 12D for the purpose.

- The RO was to ensure that 'PB' was marked against the name of the applicant on the final Voter List.
- The person who had opted for the PB could not what in person after being marked so on the voter list.
- Polling Officials along with Micro-Observer visited the home of the Elector, who opted for postal ballot, and got the vote cast. The PB opting elector was informed in advance (through SMS or BLO) about the time of visit of polling officials for having his vote cast in the ballot box.
- The entire vote cast process was recorded through videography for the purpose of fair and free elections.

"Loktantra Ka Mahatyohar" Comes to the Doorstep

Voting in an Election is breaking the lethargy for Citizenship Duty. While this wisdom holds true in case of the majority, for Geriatrics and PwDs, willingness not supported by well-being, is the cause of non-voting in majority of cases.

Undoubtedly, the-ECI-mandated Postal Ballot facilitation for Geriatrics and PwDs, proved to be a bonanza for the voter kitty in the recent Bye-Elections in the State.

In Sahada, the Postal Ballot Facilitation, conveniently spread over a few days in row, proved to be a boon for the electoral battle-scarred Geriatrics and the 'New Warriors of Democracy', who used to remain hidden and unvoted-by.

In the Sahada AC, the total Postal Ballots issued against the Form 12 D Applications, were a substantial 345. The facility for voting by the door-step postal ballot was open on 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14 April 2021 (the 17th April 2021, being the date of the regular polls).

The PwD Electors chose the PB option in overwhelming numbers, and proved themselves to be pro-active electors.



Doorstep Version of Polling Station

S.N.	Details	Total Postal Ballots	
		Total Issued	Total Cast
1	80+ Voters,	753	745
2	PwD Voters	151	150
	Total	904	895

The DEOs and Micro-Observers ensured smooth facilitation of this service for the voters.



Sign Language Poster at a Polling Station in Sahada

The metallic ballot box was provided for, and meant to be placed not too far away from the Secret Compartment, in order for the Elector to cast her or his vote.

The postal ballot and metallic ballot box brought the smile back on a number of geriatric voters, what with its nostalgic value, as well as the easy comfort of home.

The ECI uniquely facilitated the PwD and Geriatric Electors with the option of filling up the Form 12, thereby making them eligible for casting the vote by paper ballot.

Each door-to-door mini PS set up, consisted of the ECI-prescribed Grey Compartment for the Elector to stamp the arrow-cross seal on the paper ballot in personal secrecy & confidentiality.



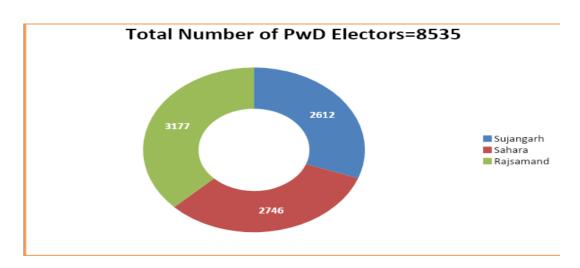


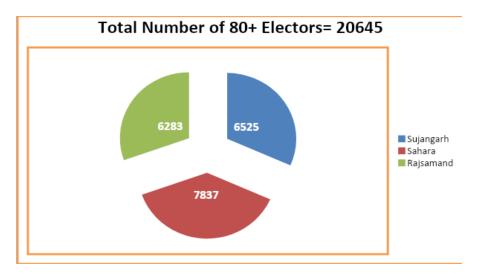


11. Outcome

Details of ACs-

District	AC	Total PS	Registered Electors	Voter Turnout
Bhilwara	Sahada	387	247287	56.56%
Rajsamand	Rajsamand	340	222531	67.18%
Churu	Sujangarh	418	275940	59.76%
T	otal			60.91%







Digital EPIC Card Proved Handy for Accessible Elections

(E) The Road Ahead

- 1. Nomination of PwD Councilorshas been allowed in the urban bodies in Rajasthan recently by the State Government. They may be requested to support the future PwD Voter Drives.
- 2. Emphasis on further consolidation of existing drives and programmes followed by undertaking new initiatives if needed.
- 3. More and more involvement of PwDs in thepre-poll activities in non-political capacity.
- 4. The need to break the still prevalent apathy of PwD persons towards their voting rights.
- 5. More IEC material in Braille Script.
- 6. Disability Certificate should be made online on 'Swavlamban' Portal.
- 7. More and more IEC material in the Audio and Sign Language Format.
- 8. More and more SVEEP Activities to be either devised anew for PwDs or customised for PwDs.