

CHAPTER XVII.

PUBLIC LIFE AND VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATION.

FIRST GENERAL ELECTION OF 1952.

After the achievement of independence in 1947 the First General Election was held in 1952. This election presented a new feature in the history of representation because for the first time the election was held on the basis of adult franchise. In this election about 45 per cent of the population exercised their right of franchise. The other unique feature of the election was that it provided equal opportunity to women and the people of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes.

In the General Election of 1952 out of the total population of 25,15,343 in the district 11,34,281 were eligible for franchise. There were two constituencies, Champaran North and Champaran East for the purpose of the *Lok Sabha* (House of the People). As mentioned in the *District Gazetteer of Saran* a few constituencies of Saran were joined with Champaran which is called Saran-cum-Champaran constituency for which the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division was the Returning Officer. The details of these constituencies are as follows :—

Name of Constituency.	Number of seats.	Number of electors.	Total no. of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Saran-cum-Champaran	2	6,94,144	13,88,288	4,38,883	31.6
2. Champaran North ..	1	3,41,318	3,41,318	1,04,179	30.5
3. Champaran East ..	1	3,27,728	3,27,728	1,38,767	42.3

For four seats there were 14 contesting candidates. The Indian National Congress and Socialist Party contested all the four Parliamentary seats, Jan Sangh one, Kisan Majdoor Praja Party one, Forward Block (Marxist) one and the Independents contested three seats. The Indian National Congress captured all the four

Parliamentary seats. The number of valid votes polled by each of the contesting party was as follows :—

Party.	Number of valid votes polled.
1. Congress	3,65,233
2. Socialist	1,53,365
3. Independents	89,704
4. Jan Sangh	28,959
5. Kisan Majdoor Praja Party	21,907
6. Forward Block (Marxist)	22,661
Total	6,81,829

Thus from the above table it is apparent that the Indian National Congress fared better in the Parliamentary seats than the combined strength of the opposite party as the number of votes polled by the former was 3,65,233 or 53.50 per cent as against 3,16,596 or 46.50 per cent by the latter.

For the *Vidhan Sabha* (Legislative Assembly) there were 17 constituencies consisting of 20 seats in the district. The details of the constituencies were as follows :—

Name of constituency.	Number of seats.	Number of electors.	Total no. of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Bagha-cum-Ram Nagar.	2	1,18,509	2,37,018	72,910	30.76
2. Sikarpur-cum-Lauria.	2	1,23,052	2,46,104	63,568	24.73
3. Sikta ..	1	45,952	45,952	16,440	35.77
4. Dhanaha ..	1	53,805	53,805	15,065	27.99
5. Bettiah ..	1	66,151	66,151	25,113	37.96
6. Nautan ..	1	52,172	52,172	18,194	34.87
7. Sugauli ..	1	69,403	69,403	26,348	37.96
8. Harsidhi ..	1	51,795	51,795	16,554	31.96
9. Motihari-cum-Pipra	2	1,05,469	2,10,938	62,970	29.85

The details are not given in the *Saran District Gazetteer*. Therefore the figures are quoted here.

Name of constituency.	Number of seats.	Number of electors	Total no. of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Raxaul ..	1	51,179	51,179	19,101	37.32
11. Adapur ..	1	53,529	53,529	19,957	30.99
12. Ghorasahan ..	1	59,531	59,531	24,253	40.74
13. Dhaka ..	1	57,698	57,698	26,554	45.3
14. Patahi ..	1	44,626	44,626	22,857	51.11
15. Madhuban ..	1	59,165	59,165	25,874	49.72
16. Gobindganj ..	1	65,727	65,727	20,382	31.01
17. Kesaria ..	1	56,518	56,518	16,187	27.49

For the 20 *Vidhan Sabha* seats there were 89 contesting candidates—20 of the nominees of the Indian National Congress, 16 of the Socialist Party, 7 of the Forward Block (Marxist), 34 Independents, 3 of the Hindu Maha Sabha, 6 of the Jan Sangh, 1 of Communist Party. Out of the 20 Assembly seats the Indian National Congress captured 19 and the remaining one was bagged by the Socialist Party.

In the General Election of 1952 in Champaran 4,92,127 valid votes were cast out of which the Indian National Congress secured 2,50,930 or about 50.75 per cent of the total votes polled, the Socialist Party 73,458, the Forward Block (Marxist) 28,293, the Independents 1,09,895, the Jan Sangh 11,691, the Hindu Maha Sabha 40,616, U. Kisan Sabha 2,207, Communist 4,255 and the Kisan Majdoor Praja Party secured 882 votes. Thus on the whole in the *Vidhan Sabha* election also the Indian National Congress fared better than the other political parties as the number of the combined votes of the opposite parties was 2,41,197 as against 2,50,930 by the Indian National Congress.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the women took keen interest in the election and in some cases they fared better than the males. One was elected as the member of the *Vidhan Sabha* from the Nautan constituency. The cases of mal-practices and false personation were practically negligible.

THE SECOND GENERAL ELECTION, 1957.

The Second General Election was held in 1957 on the basis of the electoral rolls prepared in 1952 subject to modification made therein in course of five years. So far as the *Lok Sabha* was concerned there were exclusively 2 constituencies consisting of 3 seats in the district and as before the Kesaria Parliamentary constituency (like

Saran-cum-Champaran in 1952) was formed with some constituencies of Champaran, Saran and Muzaffarpur districts of which the Returning Officer was the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division. The details of the Parliamentary constituencies are given below :—

Name of the constituencies.	Number of seats.	Number of electors.	Number of votes.	Total no. of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Bagaha ..	1	3,00,750	3,00,750	1,01,822	33.80
2. Champaran ..	2	6,79,590	13,59,180	4,84,364	35.21
3. Kesaria ..	1	3,39,047	3,39,047	1,31,716	37.00

Thus out of the total votes of 19,98,977 (including Kesaria) for the Parliamentary seats 7,17,902 or about 35 per cent valid votes were polled. For the four Parliamentary seats there were 12 contesting candidates in the field—4 of the Congress, 4 of the Praja Socialist Party, 2 of the Communist Party and 2 were Independents. All the four Parliamentary seats were captured by the Indian National Congress. Out of the total valid votes polled of 7,17,902, 4,62,047 were secured by the Congress, 1,85,056 by the Praja Socialist Party, 61,107 by the Communist Party and 9,692 by the Independents. On the basis of votes also the Congress fared better than the opposite parties as the former secured 4,62,047 votes as against 2,55,855 combined votes of the latter.

For the Bihar Vidhan Sabha there were 18 constituencies in Champaran consisting of 21 seats and for them there were 73 candidates—21 of the nominees of the Indian National Congress, 13 of the Praja Socialist Party, 10 of the Janta Party, 3 of the Jan Sangh, 7 of the Communist Party and 19 were Independents. Out of the 21 Assembly seats 16 were captured by the Indian National Congress Party, 1 by the Communist Party, 1 by the Praja Socialist Party and 3 by the Independents. Out of the total of 21 seats, 3 were secured by the women candidates of the Indian National Congress. The details of these constituencies are given below :—

Name of the Constituencies.	Number of seats.	Number of electors.	Number of votes.	Number of valid votes polled.	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Dhanaha ..	1	50,787	50,787	17,571	34.60
2. Bagaha ..	2	1,06,144	2,12,288	68,357	32.20
3. Shikarpur ..	1	49,884	49,884	17,640	35.40

Name of the constituencies.	Number of seats	Number of electors.	Number of votes.	Number of valid votes polled	Percentage.
1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Sikta ..	1	41,603	41,603	14,392	34.60
5. Lauria ..	1	52,382	52,382	15,811	30.18
6. Chanpatia ..	1	59,407	59,407	16,015	26.96
7. Bettiah ..	2	1,10,770	2,21,540	65,541	29.58
8. Raxaul ..	1	58,875	58,875	22,944	38.93
9. Adapur ..	1	67,427	67,427	24,209	35.90
10. Motihari ..	2	1,01,205	2,02,410	74,299	36.70
11. Ghorasahan ..	1	57,791	57,791	21,096	36.50
12. Dhaka ..	1	62,174	62,174	26,222	42.17
13. Patahi ..	1	55,291	55,291	25,585	46.27
14. Madhuban ..	1	66,647	66,647	26,893	40.35
15. Kesaria ..	1	50,226	50,226	22,098	43.99
16. Pipra ..	1	54,834	54,834	19,281	35.40
17. Harshidhi ..	1	61,089	61,089	23,781	38.93
18. Gobindganj ..	1	45,561	45,561	19,490	42.78

Thus out of the total votes of 14,67,216 in Champaran 5,21,225 or about 34 per cent valid votes were cast. Out of the total of 5,21,225 valid votes 2,69,944 were secured by the Congress Party and 2,51,281 of the combined votes of the Praja Socialist Party, the Janta Party, Jan Sangh, Communist Party and the Independents.

NEWSPAPERS.

As regards the newspapers of the district four weeklies in Hindi are published from Motihari except one published from Bettiah. They are (i) *Angar*, (ii) *Sabera*, (iii) *Masal* and (iv) *Nayee Abaj*, in which the last one had to suspend its publication in the year 1956.

All these papers have a local circulation and publish more of local and provincial news.

Angar was started in 1953. It is published from Motihari. It is an independent journal, not attached to any party.

The other weekly journals, *Nayee Abaz*, *Sabera* and *Masal* (a fortnightly journal), commenced from 1956.

The Indian Nation, *The Aryavarta*, *The Searchlight*, *Pradeep*, all either English or Hindi dailies published from Patna have a fairly good circulation here. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Hindustan Standard*, *The Statesman*, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, *Yugantar*, all in English except the last which is Bengali dailies have also good circulation here. It can be said that the demand of the public for newspapers, is fulfilled mostly from outside the district.

SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS.

The voluntary social service organisations of local importance are (i) Bharat Sewak Samaj, (ii) Bharat Scouts and Guide, (iii) the Bettiah *Baderiya Yateem Khana* (orphanage), (iv) Motihari Sports Club, (v) Champaran District Sports Association, (vi) Bhartendu Sangh, (vii) Social Service Squad of M. S. College, Motihari, (viii) Depressed Classes League, (ix) Bengali Institute, Motihari, etc. Of these organisations, the first two are branches while the rest are local ones.

Bharat Sewak Samaj.—The Bharat Sewak Samaj which has been recognised as an agent of the voluntary sector of the Plan, was organised as a district branch in Champaran in 1953. Since then it is functioning here with its branches in 20 out of 24 thanas of the district. It has its regular office and operates through its following wings :—

- (i) Information Section, (ii) Anti-Corruption Section, (iii) *Mahila* Section, and (iv) Youth and Camp Section.

Through its Information Section effort is made to popularise the working of the Plan.

In its Anti-Corruption Section, a worker is employed to help the litigant public in their difficulties. Through the *Mahila* Section, steps are taken to bring the ladies to constructive work.

Through the Youths and Camp section, local and district Camps have been organised at some places in the district.

Bharat Sewak Samaj has also arranged for sanitation drives and relief work during the time of heavy floods or droughts.

Bharat Scouts and Guide.—Bharat Scouts and Guide is a semi-Government social service organisation having troops in some fifty High and Middle Schools of the district.

Bettiah Baderiya Yateem Khana.—There is one orphanage at Bettiah, known as *Yateem Khana Baderiya*, Bettiah. This institution was established in 1942 for the maintenance of the orphan boys and girls up to a period when they should be trained in a manner to benefit them for any profitable employment.

This orphanage at present (1959) maintains 73 boys and 24 girls, 97 in all.

For general education of boys and girls there is one school recognised by the Government upto VII class. Besides this, there are separate schools, one each for boys and girls, where technical education is imparted. The boys' school named Sobai Santo Hirfat Karkhana, has one teacher for each of the subjects like weaving, shoe making, tailoring and blacksmithy. And in this way the girls' school named Madaeseya Niswan, Darul Benat (Girls' home) has three teachers for giving general knowledge, one for tailoring and one for *majhabi talim*. In all these schools there are 152 boys and girls, taking training, who include both the mates of the *Yatim Khana* and the outsiders.

As regards the sources of income, there is no fixed arrangement but it has been somewhat conventional among the persons of this locality to contribute regularly for this institution. For instance, when grains, after threshing, etc., become ready for being stocked, a portion of them is separated for the orphanage. Recently (1958) a sanction of Rs. 11,600 has been made and extension of the present establishment had been started.

THE SPORTS CLUB, MOTIHARI.

The Sports Club is the oldest institution of the Motihari town. It was established by late W. S. Irvine, the proprietor of the Motihari Indigo Concern in 1911. Mr. Irvine donated land for the playground and also got a building erected on it for the club. The main objective of the founder of this institution was to make the school boys sports-minded and the fee for membership was kept at only two annas per month. The club used to arrange for outdoor games like football, tennis, etc., and the indoor games like cards, chess, carrom, etc. Besides these the club had a very good library of its own. In the beginning the club was primarily a student's club, but now the membership is thrown open to adults. The membership fee has been raised from two annas to rupee one.

THE CHAMPARAN DISTRICT SPORTS ASSOCIATION.

This Association was organised in 1944. It is affiliated to the Bihar State Sports Association which forms part of an All-India Organisation. The main work of this Association is to give affiliation to sporting clubs and teams of the district. It runs several trophies for different games. The Association has done good work in the field of physical education.

BHARTENDU SANGH, MOTIHARI.

The Bhartendu Sangh was formed in 1939 to commemorate late Shri Bhartendu Harischandra who is a landmark in modern Hindi literature. The Sangh has a library containing about a thousand books. The Sangh is trying to bring standard Hindi literature within easy access of the public.

SOCIAL SERVICE SQUAD OF M. S. COLLEGE, MOTIHARI.

The Social Service Squad of M. S. College, Motihari was organised in the year 1950. The aim of the squad is to carry on rural uplift work, education and allied social services in villages round about the college. The squad selected Kolawarva, as the first centre to begin the work of village uplift.

DEPRESSED CLASSES LEAGUE.

Through the efforts of Shri Jagjiwan Ram, Railway Minister, Government of India and a few others this League has been organised throughout India. The branch at Champaran is closely associated with social reforms among the Harijans.

Originally the League had mainly political activities. During the Round Table Conference in 1932-33 this was an independent organisation although it had affiliations with the Indian National Congress. In 1936-37 Election the League had run candidates in collaboration with the Congress. It is now essentially a body for bringing in social reforms and removal of untouchability.

BENGALI INSTITUTE.

This institute has the arrangement for a library called Beenapani Library (estd. 1918), dramatic club, religious functions, indoor games and physical culture. The library with almost 2,000 books of Bengali, Hindi and English languages serve as a centre of knowledge and exchange of thoughts. About the religious functions of the Institute special mention may be made of their performance of Buddha Jayanti. The Institution has a building of its own.