



Inspiration:

Late Mr. L.C. Jain,
Former Member, National Planning Commission and Former Indian Ambassador to South Africa

Dr. Manu Kulkarni
Senior Fellow, Institute of Social Sciences

Advisors:

Dr. Vinod Vyasulu
Researcher, Decentralisation

Mr. Chiranjeev Singh
Former Development Commissioner, Government of Karnataka

Mr. Meenakshisundaram Former Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India

Mr. Raghunandan Raghvan
Former Joint Secretary, Ministry of Panchayat Raj G.O.I, Principal Secretary to G.O.K, and State RDPR Secretary

Mr. Mahima Patel
Trustee, J.H. Patel Foundation and Congress Leader

Mr. Micheal Fernandes
Trade Unionist

Mr. Vinay Baindur
Researcher, Governance and Decentralisation

Steering Committee:

- Grama Swaraj Vedike
- Mahila Samakhya Karnataka
- The Concerned for Working Children
- Sugrama
- J.H. Patel Foundation

Secretariat:

The Concerned for Working Children

303/2, Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar, Vimanapura post, Bangalore-560017

Phone: 080 25234270, 080 25234272, 25234611

E-Mail: cwc@pobox.com, cwblr@gmail.com

Web:

www.theconcernedforworkingchildren.org

For the favour of publication:

Reclaim your vote, join the campaign:

'Me & My VOTE are NOT for SALE'

<http://myvoteisnotforsale.co.in>

'Me & My VOTE are NOT for SALE' celebrates the honour of the voter. It empowers each one of us as citizens to reclaim democracy. A democracy functions at its best when the citizens and the elected representatives, both, actively participate and engage in shaping the country - during elections and after. The digital component of this campaign, launched on March 18th, aims to bring on board a large number of youngsters to vocally assert their political dissent with the current situation where votes are bought through the exchange of material or monetary benefits which results in the moral subjugation of the citizen. The campaign, in particular, asks citizens to pledge - '**Me & My VOTE are NOT for SALE**' and then petitions candidates standing for the Lok Sabha Elections 2014 to ensure clean elections and clean governance thereafter by stating '**I will NOT BUY your VOTE, I will EARN it**'.

This campaign is hosted by the Grama Panchayat Hakkottaya Andolana (GPHA; Movement for Self-determination of Local Governments)

In relation to the Lok Sabha Elections the campaign on the ground has been active since December 2013. In Karnataka, where it is the most intense at the moment, people have been mobilized in Udupi, Bangalore and North Canara districts in which over 1000 citizens have taken part. Agencies such as Sugrama, Rotary Clubs, Navabharat Nirman Vedike have mobilised people. In the near future, the campaign will take place at Bellary, Belgaum, Dharwad, Haveri, Gadag, Raichur, Kolar, Mysore,

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Organising Secretaries:

Shri B.H.Naganna, Smt. Laxmi D.
Chief Organizing Secretaries

Shri Jambunath M, Shri Yakoob K.A. Shri Satish Gubbi, Smt. Annapoorna Anilanirvani, Smt. Chitramma, Smt. Mallamma, Smt. Kasthooramma, Smt. Dhoddamma

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Shri H.K.Bhoomakkanavar
Working President

Shri Nageshchandra Bhat
Treasurer

Website: www.gpha.weebly.com

Koppala, Yadgir, Chamaraja Nagar, Bagalkote, Bijapur, Gulberga and Bidar. Agencies such as Mahila Samakhya, APSA, Hunger Project and other agencies working with human rights issues have joined in, along with several youth and women's community groups.

The March 30th episode of Satyameva Jayate, anchored by Aamir Khan will showcase the campaign and aid to take this call to a wide national audience. On April 1st, a large gathering of all supporters of the campaign will come together at the Town hall of Bangalore, from 11 am to 4 pm to celebrate the vote and its function.

The campaign has several partners in different states and cities of India and is actively linking up with people's movements, organisations, colleges and public initiatives which promote electoral sanctity. The campaign congratulates the Chief Election Commissioner and his office for their unequivocal stand against the purchase of votes during the forthcoming general elections and his 'people's awareness programme' which is an extremely important step against corruption, inducements and illegal election related activities in the entire country. We express our solidarity with this and other such nation-wide initiatives.

Our campaign is not affiliated to any political party. It aims to restore the dignity of us, as voters and citizens, by reasserting our right to demand accountability of our elected representatives and uphold the sanctity of electoral democracy.

GPHA has been devoted to securing and safeguarding the provisions of democratic decentralisation and devolution of power enshrined in the Constitution of India for the last seven years. This campaign is rooted in the 2010 Karnataka Gram Panchayat elections where GPHA tirelessly worked on creating awareness and empowering voters regarding their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Over 20,000 individuals participated in the campaign from over 21 district of Karnataka. Last year, during the Karnataka State elections, the campaign was scaled up to the state level with over 21 organisations taking part, covering 46 taluks in 20 districts in Karnataka. What was also very significant was that several women's federations actively participated and spread the message in their respective villages.

The cure for an ill functioning democracy is a larger dose of democracy.
- Nandana Reddy

On behalf of the collaborating organisations:

Kavitha D
Director In charge, Mahila Samakhya, Karnataka

Justin Jonny
Hunger Project

Suresh Borkar
Association for Promotion of Social Action

Manohar
Human Rights Activist

Kavita Ratna
GPHA