

CVOTER

FORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN

VOLUME - 9 ISSUE - 2 SEPTEMBER 2010

MORE THAN 60 PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS IN A CVOTER SURVEY AHEAD OF THE ASSEMBLY POLLS IN BIHAR SAY NITISH KUMAR IS THE BEST EVER CHIEF MINISTER

BREATHER FOR NITISH?



Traditionally regarded as one of India's most backward, ailing, "Bimaru" states with maximum poverty levels in the country, Bihar's development story, in more recent times, has been nothing short of miraculous. One of India's eight ultra poor states, Bihar became a "miracle economy", defined internationally as one with over 7 per cent growth. In a shocking subversion of its lagging-behind image, from 2004-2009, through the slowdown, the state averaged a stunning 11.3 per cent growth annually, making it India's fastest growing economy at par with Gujarat. And the credit for this stupendous turnaround should surely go to chief minister Nitish Kumar.

Yet, politics is never a simple matter of such perceptions. As Bihar stands on the verge of its six-phase assembly elections, beginning next month, the going could have hardly been tougher for the CM. Despite the applause he has had in mainstream media for development work done in Bihar during his tenure, Nitish Kumar faces a tough battle to retain power. On one hand, arch rival Lalu Prasad Yadav is itching to get back and regain his hold on state politics after having been marginalized at the centre, on the other hand, Kumar himself has many worries of his own.

The anti-incumbency factor is a big worry for any dispensation seeking a return to power. But in Bihar, what adds to the worries of the JD(U)-BJP ruling coalition is also the fact that sundry upper caste leaders have revolted against Kumar more recently. Then, there is also resentment in the masses over the Bataidari Bill even as reports pour in of massive corruption in government schemes. And finally floods in districts like Gopalganj and Siwan which are also going to polls couldn't have made matters worse for the ruling dispensation even though a high profile meeting chaired by the chief minister concluded that relief camps at par, with what had been set up in northern Bihar; after the devastating Kosi floods, be set up in these districts immediately.

Bihar PrePoll:

Field Dates: 15 May - 15 June 2010

Sample size: n = 10,000 +

For the recent survey on Bihar Poll read latest issue of "The Sunday Indian"

CVOTER | FORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN

But more than his performance and the above factors, it is also political permutations and combinations that may overwhelm Kumar. The Congress, for one, has queered the pitch by announcing that it will field its own candidates on all the 243 seats going to polls. This will make it a triangular contest between the JDU-BJP combine, Lalu Yadav's RJD and the Congress. And the pressure to perform is telling already. At least that's the reason being assigned to the cutting (though hugely entertaining) war of words that's been going on more recently between CM Nitish Kumar and Lalu Yadav. According to the latter, the CM is behaving like a girl during her bidai (send off from her parental home after marriage), while the CM has famously said that the people of Bihar shudder at the thought of Lalu returning to power.



Bihar Vidhansabha Results, November 2005

Party	Won	% Votes
BJP	55	16%
BSP	4	4%
INC	9	6%
CPI(ML)(L)	5	2%
JD(U)	88	20%
LJP	10	11%
NCP	1	1%
CPI(M)	1	1%
RJD	54	23%
SP	2	2%
AJVD	1	1%
CPI	3	2%
OTHERS/IND	10	11%



Amidst so much spectacle, what is the people's own perception. How do they see the performance of the Nitish Kumar-led government and who do they favour, the incumbents or the challengers? These are important questions to be answered to gauge the mood before the polls. A CVOTER survey carried out in the state recently did just that. In what will certainly come as a breather to the chief minister, a substantive majority of 60.8 per cent of the respondents voted for Nitish Kumar when asked who, according to them, had been the best-ever Bihar chief minister. In contrast, only 27.1 per cent said Lalu Yadav while an abysmal 2 per cent went along with Rabri Devi. Going by this, Nitish Kumar's personal popularity at least is quite safe and he leads by a clear margin. Interestingly, maximum people who favoured Kumar came either from the totally illiterate segment (where 75 per cent favoured Nitish Kumar) or from the educated

WHO HAS BEEN THE BEST CM IN LAST 20 YEARS?

Education	Don't Know/ Can't Say	Lalu Yadav	Nitish Kumar	Rabri Devi	Total
Illiterate (can't read or write)	14.3%	10.7%	75.0%		100.0%
Non-formal education (can read and write)	45.2%	22.6%	32.3%		100.0%
Up to primary level	11.1%	50.3%	38.0%	0.6%	100.0%
Up to High school	17.6%	11.8%	68.1%	2.5%	100.0%
Higher Secondary	4.6%	38.0%	56.7%	0.8%	100.0%
Up to Graduation	2.9%	26.0%	70.8%	0.3%	100.0%
Up to Post-graduate	14.8%	12.5%	56.8%	15.9%	100.0%
Professional	9.1%	13.6%	77.3%		100.0%





“professional” segment (where more than 77 per cent favoured the current CM). Clearly, his popularity then cuts across the educational divide.

Comparitively, more people from the middle and lower income groups seemed to favour Lalu Yadav than those in the higher income group where just 11 per cent said that Lalu had been the best ever Bihar CM. More than 39 per cent of the middle income group and 28 per cent of the lower income group voted for Lalu in this regard. However, the support for Nitish remained firm and clear with 53.9, 57 and 76.2 per cent from the lower, middle and higher income groups respectively going along with Nitish Kumar.

WHO HAS BEEN THE BEST CM IN LAST 20 YEARS?

Monthly Family Income	Don't Know / Can't Say	Lalu Yadav	Nitish Kumar	Rabri Devi	Total
LIG	15.4%	28.1%	53.9%	2.6%	100.0%
MIG	2.6%	39.4%	57.0%	1.0%	100.0%
HIG	10.7%	11.0%	76.2%	2.1%	100.0%



When it comes to occupational demarcations, the only place where the chief minister's popularity took a beating was with the landless labourers. More than 52 per cent of these preferred Lalu Yadav as the best ever CM in contrast to the more than 32 per cent who voted for Nitish Kumar. However, in all other segments Kumar surged ahead, with huge support from the students/unemployed (63 per cent) and those in the government services (76.3 per cent). In general, Nitish's popularity seemed to be higher amongst the urban educated with the gap between him and Lalu narrowing as one polled landowning farmers, and general labourers only slightly more than 34 per cent of whom voted for Nitish Kumar.

WHO HAS BEEN THE BEST CM IN LAST 20 YEARS?

Occupation	Don't Know / Can't Say	Lalu Yadav	Nitish Kumar	Rabri Devi	Total
Others	17.4%	7.0%	75.6%		100.0%
Student/Unemployed	12.3%	23.5%	63.0%	1.2%	100.0%
Land owning farmer	10.0%	37.3%	48.2%	4.5%	100.0%
Landless agricultural labor	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%		100.0%
Government Service	3.2%	20.4%	76.3%		100.0%
Private Sector Service	7.0%	30.4%	57.5%	5.1%	100.0%
Business/self employed	6.2%	26.3%	66.8%	0.8%	100.0%
General Labor	37.7%	27.9%	34.4%		100.0%



Amidst the hurly burly of caste politics, the only segment that stood with Lalu Yadav quite firmly were the scheduled castes/dalits with more than 51.7 per cent calling him the best ever CM while only 43.8 per cent voted for Nitish. There was clear preference for Nitish amongst the OBCs (61.9 per cent) and Upper Caste Hindus (84.4 per cent), something that the present chief minister can finally smile about. Amongst the muslims, a group that has said they feel let down by Nitish Kumar, the gap was thinner with 43.8 supporting Nitish with 37.6 per cent supporting Lalu for the best-ever CM tag.

All in all, while this survey firmly establishes the people's support for Nitish Kumar and his better image than his predecessor. What will certainly be a factor to watch out for will be Congress forcing a three-way split in the votes. Whether the chief minister returns to power will be a battle worth watching.



HEALTH BEING THE MOST CRUCIAL THING IN OUR LIVES, OUR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SERVICES OF DOCTORS LISTS AT THE TOP. IRRESPECTIVE OF HOW RICH OR HOW POOR ONE IS, HE/SHE CAN'T AFFORD TO AVOID GOING TO THE DOCTOR WHEN SITUATION ARISES. MEDICINE DEEMS TO BE THE MOST NOBLE OF PROFESSIONS...

ARE DOCTORS' ON STRIKES KILLING PEOPLE?



STRIKE BY DOCTORS HAS BECOME A COMMON TREND THESE DAYS.

Can't Say	7.3
Agree	67.9
Disagree	24.8
Total	100.0

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO AVOID ANY SUCH STRIKE IN FUTURE?

Can't Say	8.8
There should be a security troop in hospital for doctors' protection	5.4
Government should seriously take the problems and considerat of doctors.	28.0
To reduce the work pressure on doctors more doctors should be recruited	29.8
A law should be constituted to ban strikes by doctors	15.4
All of the above	9.0
Others	3.6
Total	100.0

Those who are in this profession have become doctors because they had a true desire to help others and cure diseases regardless of the ability of the patient to pay. This has been the only profession where they actually work themselves out of their job. They make great sacrifices to save lives; they are on call any hour which involves lots of sacrifices; on the operating table they play God; they dedicate their lives to serve humanity. Such beliefs lent doctors mammoth respect and trust from all of us.

But sadly, what's seen these days is the respect they invoked in us is eroding. Corruption and greed has trickled down to this profession. The arrest by CBI, of Dr.Ketan Desai, the president of Medical Council of India for accepting bribes was pretty shameful. Code of Ethics put by the MCI reads that the prime object of the medical profession is to render service to humanity, reward or financial gain should be a subordinate consideration. Of late, money is becoming the principal motivating factor for a large fraction of the medical community thus reducing the noble profession to a mere money making means while the poor patient is made to pay through his/her nose.

True many hospitals suffer from lack of adequate infrastructure. Doctors have to work under miserable conditions. It's sometimes sufficient to say that such working and living conditions in addition to a not so promising salary makes it somewhat impossible for the medicos to work and to live with dignity. Sooner or later such oppressive working conditions are bound to result in suboptimal work quality. And any mistake by our healers instigates situations where patients or their relatives try handling the doctors and leading to mob attacks and police intervention becomes the subsequent solution. The indefinite strike called by the Rajasthan resident physicians is an exemplary example of such a situation. The protest was for the alleged lathi-charge by the police. Services in the hospitals were crippled rendering the innocent patients helpless. Dozens of such defenseless patients who could not afford the private hospitals succumbed to their illness. The medicos did wear the victory caps but at the cost of so many innocent lives. It is appalling to see doctors presumed to have oathed to take service to humanity as their main concern being accountable for mass deaths.

Doctors' strike has become a routine affair in India these days. Demand for extra security, seeking punishment for the grieving patient-party for alleged assaults on their medical colleagues and even to claim a higher pay scale from the authority are few of



DURING A RECENT DOCTORS' STRIKE IN RAJASTHAN MORE THAN 55 PATIENTS DIED. IN THAT CASE WHAT TREATMENT SHOULD BE DONE WITH DOCTORS?

Can't Say	18.6
Their degrees should be taken away from them	14.7
Case of unintentional murder should be undertaken	13.9
They should be fined	19.9
Rustigation	21.8
All of the above	5.4
Others	5.7
Total	100.0

WHO DO YOU FIND TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH DEATHS?

Can't Say	10.0
Doctors on strike	46.7
Hospital Administration	8.0
Government	21.6
Patients & their relatives	2.5
All of the above	10.7
Others	0.5
Total	100.0

AS DOCTORS' PROFESSION IS DIRECTLY LINKED WITH THE LIVES OF PEOPLE, IT SHOULD BE KEPT AWAY FROM STRIKE.

Can't Say	4.4
Agree	79.6
Disagree	15.9
Total	100.0



the reasons for their strikes.

But do doctors have any moral, ethical or legal right to join a strike that denies essential medical services for the ailing people? Who should be held responsible if innocent patients die without treatment because of doctors' strike? The government, hospital administration, unruly public and the members of the medical fraternity must ponder about these burning questions that are highly relevant.

A study by CVOTER was conducted to understand these questions and also to look into what the public feels about the strikes our medicos call and about the attendant sad demise of patients.

Strikes by doctors have become a common trend these days. Strikes, if we see by its meaning are a legitimate form of collective protest in a democracy. And the other fact goes that the very essence of medicine is to rise above all mundane needs....therefore the combination of these two things is contentious. The suffering that this strike causes gets on to life and death and it violates the very base of this profession. 68% of our respondents believed that such strikes are getting common and frequent.

The public opinion about the accountability of such deaths came in with much empathy. Almost half of our sample believed that its only the medicos who should be held responsible for such deaths, but then there were others (22%) who held government and its apathy towards them responsible, then 8% believed hospital administration to be responsible .10% of the sample believed its not just doctors who should be put to test but also the other two factors which leads them to take up such strikes. To highlight their view is to say that it's not unethical for doctors to strike work.

There are incidents which can't be ignored where patients do misbehave with the doctors, 2% of our respondents showed concern and believed if our healers are ill treated they for sure will be provoked to strike their work. On being asked if such incidents immunize doctors for such behavior and refusal to treat patients ,52% agreed and 40% of our respondents belonged to the school of thought that said, come what may medicos can't and shouldn't refuse a patient treatment.

58% of our voters were concerned about their working conditions, and felt that the doctors are over burdened and that there should be more recruitments.70% agreed to the fact that government doesn't do much about their problems even if it knows. Public (68%) did agree that till there is a strike they can't get their issues across to the government.

The fact that this noble profession has got diluted and it's become a money minting business was highlighted and voted for by 80% of our voters. The mass opinion (80%) that we drove to through this survey was, as this profession involves lives of people, medicos should stay above strikes.

Whether these striking doctors should face disciplinary action, whether their degrees should be taken away, or should they be fined, our study tried to grope into the minds

CVOTER | FORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN

ACTUALLY DOCTORS' PROFESSION HAS NOW BECOME A BUSINESS AND HENCE DOCTORS ARE NOT ABLE TO SEE THE PAIN OF PATIENTS FOR THE SAKE OF MONEY MAKING.

Can't Say	3.9
Agree	79.8
Disagree	16.2
Total	100.0

GOVERNMENT DOES NOT TAKE ISSUES OF DOCTORS LIKE SALARY, SECURITY SERIOUSLY; SO THEY HAVE TO TAKE SUCH STEPS LIKE STRIKES.

Can't Say	5.1
Agree	69.9
Disagree	24.9
Total	100.0

AS THE NUMBERS OF DOCTORS IN INDIA IS LESS, THE WORK LOAD OVER THEM IS HUGE; SO IT IS NATURAL THAT SOME MISHAPPENING OCCURS.

Can't Say	10.8
Agree	57.9
Disagree	31.3
Total	100.0

IF THE PATIENTS MISBEHAVE WITH DOCTORS, THEN DOCTORS SHOULD ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTEST (STRIKE)

Can't Say	7.4
Agree	40.3
Disagree	52.3
Total	100.0



of our 1059 voters ...a sweeping 81 %wanted such errant medicos to be punished, 20% believed they should be fined,14% said they should be striped of their degrees, 14% found it so repulsive that they wanted cases of unintentional murder to be filed against such doctors, 1% said there should be some law to ban strikes called by doctors.

Public views and opinions about how to do away with such strikes also came in plenty as precious solutions.90% of our voters believed a healthy and communicative link between hospital administrators and doctors would prove beneficial , 3% believed once there is some kind of a bond fill up, strikes can be curbed, 5% felt the only solution to do away with such life and death crucial situations is to have a committee formed by the government to look into their genuine problems, some(5%) were of the view that there should be security in the hospitals to protect the practitioners from unruly patients, and a good 15% opined that there should be a law that would ban them from striking, another overriding cause pointed by our voters(30%) was work pressure on them, the solution as per them is to recruit more doctors.

Such strikes shake the trust people have in the medical system. The trust in them is getting plummeted in the recent years for more reasons than one. The trade-union mindset of our medical leaders can only undermine the fragile trust between doctors and patients.

CVOTER CONDUCTS EXCLUSIVE KASHMIR SURVEY FOR HINDUSTAN TIMES

Team Cvoter conducted the survey “Young and Restless in Kashmir”, exclusively for the Sunday Hindustan Times, to gauge the opinion of India on J&K, Pakistan, militancy and Islam. The Indian political establishment thinks Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. It thinks the unrest in valley is fuelled by elements sheltered across border. But what do the people of Jammu and Kashmir, still reeling under the effect of militancy and counter-insurgency, think? Cvoter asked 2,369 Indians, all aged between 18-25, from the Kashmir valley, Jammu, Ladhakh and rest of India -6 key questions that make up for the ‘Kashmir problem’. The results show a clear divergence of views between Jammu, Kashmir, Ladhak and ‘mainland’ India.

To read the detailed report, Log on to:
http://www.hindustantimes.com/images/HTPopups/120910/12_09_10_many.html

