

Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya

Established in 1954, Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya is situated within the premises of the Theosophical Society at Kamachha, Varanasi. It has a glorious past having been the *Karmabhumi* of none other than the great visionary, Dr. Annie Besant. When the college, founded by her, shifted to Rajghat, Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya dedicated to the principles and thoughts of Dr. Annie Besant was established. Adopting the motto "Education as Service", the college seeks to blend the seemingly opposite principles of tradition and modernity. It aims to fructify the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual and aesthetic capacities of its students and instill in them a love for discipline. Admitted to the privileges of Banaras Hindu University, it has been able to carve a niche for itself among the topmost institutions of the country dedicated to women education by its excellent academic result and various cultural and extra-curricular activities. The college now runs Ph.D., Post-graduate and Undergraduate courses as well as Diploma Courses sanctioned by UGC.

Varanasi, the most ancient city of India, has been the seat of the nation's cultural and ideological progress. Situated on the western bank of the holy Ganga, it has been, since time immemorial, the centre of Vedic, Jain, Buddhist and Shaivist studies. It also has the honour of producing great saints and thinkers like Kabir, Tulsidas and others. In modern times, many streams of thought leading to the cultural awakening of India, have either originated from the city or have been closely associated with it. Swami Vivekananda himself first came to Kashi as a wandering ascetic. Dr. Annie Besant, after her advent to India, settled in Kashi and made it the centre of her educational activities. Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya established two great Universities here during national movement. Varanasi has the honour of having four Universities imparting education to national-international students. Being Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency, it is quite apt to have this debate on electoral reforms in Varanasi.

Patrons

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Smt. Uma Bhattacharya, Manager
Sri. V. Narayanan, Officiating Manager
Dr. Rachna Srivastava, Principal

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The Convener
A Debate on Electoral Reforms in India
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VASANT KANYA MAHAVIDYALAYA
(Admitted to the privileges of Banaras Hindu University)
KAMACHHA, VARANASI-221010
(Institution Accredited 'A' by NAAC)



Deptt. of Political Science

*Invites you
in the*

National Seminar

(Sponsored by ICSSR)

A Debate on Electoral

Reforms in India

17-18 September, 2018



Dr. Rachna Srivastava
Principal

National Seminar
A Debate on Electoral Reforms in India
17-18 September, 2018
(Sponsored by ICSSR)

Concept Note

The best electoral system is the one that straight forwardly and most accurately reflects the preferences of voters. But there is no definite answer as to which systems fits the bill.

India following in the footsteps of UK follows the Westminster electoral model, in which the voters elect their representatives respectively to the Lok Sabha and its counterpart, House of Commons. The voting procedures as well as the election of candidates is based on the First Past the Post (FPTP) system, electors vote for one candidate in one constituency. The candidate with the highest number of votes, irrespective of the margin of victory or percentage of votes polled, is declared the winner. In recent years both countries have questioned this system. U.K., in 2011, held a referendum on whether to retain FPTP or not in which 68% voted in favour. However the voter turnout for the referendum was only 41% which means a majority did not participate in the decision making process. In India too, the electoral system is under scrutiny.

Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi has also taken up the electoral reforms issue at all party meet and serious discussions are in place on poll funding, simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha & State assemblies. With simultaneous elections, the development programmes, that get adversely affected otherwise, due to model code of conduct and deployment of officers, will not be affected.

The Parliamentary standing Committee on Personal, Public, Grievances, Law & Justice, headed by Congress leader, Sri Anand Sharma has also taken up the issue of electoral reforms and has sent a six page 'Questionnaire on Electoral Reforms' to all parties and the Election Commission. The letter raises five issues related to electoral reforms in India – Electoral Funding; Systems of Elections; Media/Free Airtime; Internal democracy in Political Parties; and Miscellaneous.

There is need of a public debate on all the above-mentioned issues. VKM which is affiliated to BHU and is one of the premier educational institutions for young women in Varanasi proposes to hold a Two day National Seminar on the Issue of Electoral Reforms in India. With the next elections due in 2019, the debate would be timely and also worthwhile, with concerned academicians, electoral experts etc. from Varanasi, UP & outside UP brainstorming over the issues.

The outcome will be reported to the funding agency and will be a feedback from the public to the Government.

Suggested Themes:

Papers are invited on the following and related issues in the context of Seminar:

- *System of Elections in India.*
- *Retaining/Reforming First Past the Post System.*
- *Political Funding.*
- *Examining Transparency and Accountability in Elections*
- *Role of media in Elections.*
- *Internal Democracy in Political Parties.*

Participation:

Participants are required to send the abstract (softcopy and hardcopy) of their paper in Hindi (Kruti Dev 010) and English (Times New Roman) in about 250-300 words to the Convener by August 31, 2018 and full paper by 10 September, 2018 or poster presentation also can be made.

vkmdegree.college@gmail.com
vasantkanya@gmail.com

Registration Fee:

Faculty Members	Rs. 700/-
Students	Rs. 500/-

Registration fee may be remitted in advance through a bank draft in favour of: *Principal, Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya* payable at Varanasi.

Venue:

Conference Hall,
Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya,
Kamachha, Varanasi
Pin- 221010

National Seminar
A Debate on Electoral Reforms in India
17-18 September, 2018
(Sponsored by ICSSR)

(Please return by September 5, 2018)

REGISTRATION FORM
(Can be xeroxed for multiple use)

Name _____

Designation _____

Postal Address _____

_____ Pin _____

Telephone (R) _____ (O) _____

Fax _____ Mobile _____

E-mail _____

Title of Paper _____

Audio Visual Facility: Required Not required

Date:

Place:

Signature

Please return the Registration Form to –
Dr. Ashish Kumar Sonker, Convener
National Seminar
Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya,
Kamachha, Varanasi 221010.
Tel. No. 9415270277, 0542-2455382