

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

PHOTO EXHIBITION

AT

PUDUCHERRY

6th – 8th December 2010

... illustrative report

**CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER
PUDUCHERRY**

REPORT ON PHOTO EXHIBITION HELD IN PUDUCHERRY FROM 6TH TO 8TH DECEMBER 2010

In accordance with the directions of the Election Commission of India, the Diamond Jubilee Photo Exhibition was organized at the Ashram Exhibition Hall, Beach Road, Puducherry from 6th to 8th December 2010.

THE VENUE...



A good beginning is a work half done. This oft repeated quote was kept in mind while commencing the preparation work for the Photo Exhibition. Appreciating the fact that right venue is an important element for successful conduct of the exhibition; extensive search was made for an appropriate venue. Finally, the Ashram Exhibition Hall on the beach promenade was selected. It was a venue that had all requisite features for conduct of the photo exhibition in grandeur. The Ashram Exhibition Hall is exclusive for conduct of Art & Painting Exhibitions, with all infrastructure facilities including spot lightings and panels for paintings. Added to these positives was its location at Beach Promenade, the principal tourist attraction of Puducherry.

Given its location, facing the Bay of Bengal on the beach front, besides the Gandhi Square, it was definite that it would attract large number of foot falls.



True to expectations, the Photo Exhibition attracted a string of visitors throughout the three days of display. The fact is that the Exhibition was a bigger success than expected. Ample proof of this is the long list of anecdotes contained in the Visitors Register chronicled by visitors of various hues, and not every one did record his/her views, despite which it is a long list.

THE ARRANGEMENTS...

With the co-operation of the Staff of Department of Audio Visual & Publicity, Chennai the exhibition hall arrangements were made. The design concept for lay out of the Panels brought was made in such a manner that the hall had adequate natural light complimented by spot lightings.

Avoiding plastic flowers, the inner entrance was decorated with orchid floral decoration. Also placed at the entrance was a water bowl with floral decoration of National Tri Colour Flag



Indoor plants viz, crotons & Palms were placed besides each panel to give a green look to the hall. The photograph below, even if not to full extent, depicts the potted plants placed besides the panels and the green look it gave to the hall.



The campaign for National Voters Day was also taken up during the Photo Exhibition. Accordingly, two large vertical banners of dimension 10' x 4' carrying slogan as below were hung at the Venue.



The Short film was arranged in a separate hall at the end of the Exhibition Hall. It was so arranged that people would walk through the entire exhibition hall and after viewing the film, would again walk back through the exhibition hall for having a second view at the photos.



For the convenience of viewers, LCD TV was hired and put up instead of telecasting the film on a cloth screen.



THE INAUGURATION...

The Photo Exhibition was to be held from 6th to 8th Dec 2010. Normally, the North East Monsoon is active upto November end and recedes during beginning of December. But, this year, it was extremely active during the period in question. A depression hovered over Bay of Bengal at this point of time bringing in copious amount of rainfall throughout T.N. and Puducherry.



Fortunately, on the day of commencement of the exhibition, the rains abated, as if nature itself had decided to relent for the exhibition to have a good start.

While the previous day was cloudy with intermittent showers, on the day of exhibition, it turned out to be a day of mild showers making the climate pleasant and making it possible for people to flock in to the exhibition hall.

The Photo Exhibition was inaugurated by His Excellency the Lt. Governor of Puducherry in the presence of Chief Secretary to Government, Chief Electoral officer, District Election Officer, Jt. Chief Electoral officer, Regional Director of Audio Visual Publicity Department from Chennai and other senior officers of the U.T. Government.

His Excellency the Lt. Governor, Dr. Iqbal Singh, lighting the lamp



Chief Secretary to Govt., Shri R. Chandramohan, lighting the lamp



His Excellency the Lt. Governor and other senior Officers then took a tour of the Photo Exhibition hall. His Excellency the Lt. Governor viewed each and every panel with keen interest. He was briefed of the photographs by the Chief Electoral officer and Jt. Chief Electoral Officer. So much was his interest, that he did not leave out a single panel and saw every photograph at display.



His Excellency the Lt. Governor watched the short film produced by the Election Commission of India. He watched the entire film flanked by Chief Secretary and Chief Electoral Officer, Puducherry.



His Excellency the Lt. Governor was appreciative of the Photo Exhibition and the documentary "Indian Elections – A Mammoth Exercise". So impressed were the Ashram authorities who viewed the film along with His Excellency that they sought for a copy of the documentary film for screening it at their Educational Centre.



His Excellency the Lt. Governor, before departing recorded his views in the Visitors register. He wrote....

“ A well organized informative exhibition. This exhibition will surely generate public interest and awareness on elections.....”

This was the beginning and what followed for two days was really beyond expectations. Many of the visitors volunteered to record their views. And for the next two days, the rains receded making it possible for many visitors to troop into to view the photo exhibition.

THE FOLLOWING DAYS...

The days of photo exhibition fell on week days starting from Monday. There was a general feeling that had the exhibition been slated on week ends it would have been a smash hit with the public of Puducherry, but since it was on week days, the crowd coming in might not be that great. Defying expectations, there were a stream of visitors on all three days and the evenings always had huge gatherings, so much so, the Exhibition that had been proposed until 6.00 P.M. was extended to 7.00 p.m., and had to be kept open even beyond 7.00 PM for an hour or more up to 8.00 p.m.



Despite being battered by heavy rains, the turnout for the exhibition was impressive. About 2500 people, including students from various colleges and tourists visited the exhibition. The Photo Exhibition not only attracted our citizens, but even foreigners. As a matter of fact many foreigners were overawed by the Photo Exhibition with few recording exhilarating comments in Visitor's Register.



The Elections Department, Puducherry brought out a write up in the form of pamphlet eliciting the ideals of democracy and the importance of elections in upholding the democracy and the role of Election Commission in ensuring free and fair elections.

The success of the exhibition could be measured by the comments, some really interesting, chronicled in the visitors' book.



Few of the comments narrated by a spectrum of visitors are gisted below :-

Comments of former Chief Electoral Officer, Puducherry

“A very well organized exhibition. Helped to recollect past memories of the elections held in the country and particularly Pondicherry. My hearty congratulations to the ECI, DAVP and the Elections Department, Puducherry.....”

S.Hemachandran, Retd.IAS, former Chief Electoral Officer, Puducherry

Comments of Principal

“ A excellent journey of election which make any democracy very strong....”

.....K.Kulshreshtha, Principal, Kendriya Vidyalaya 1, Ahmedabad

Comments of former Bureaucrats

“It is really satisfying to see the election process followed right from out forefathers and stalwarts of Indian Nation. Thanks.....”

E.Palani, Retd. Dy.Secretary to Government of Puducherry

Comments of Political Personality

“What I saw was excellent. Thank you for the opportunity”

S.Govindasamy, Secretary, Kamaraj Deshya Congress

Comments of Research Scholar

“ Good exhibition. Excellent arrangements. Useful very much to today’s youths and children to realize the value of the greatest democracy India..”

....Dr. Tiruppavai Parameshwaran, Research Scholar, Puducherry

Comments of Students

“ Very useful for me to know about the Election Commission and its function and especially the photos that were taken during the election period. It gives more information about elections and how important our vote is.....”

C.Sarumathi, Student of Achariya Arts & Science College, Puducherry

“The video was truly informative . The archives of photos truly awe inspiring. Kudos to ECI for having taken this initiative. The exhibition can utilize more of multimedia to attract more crowds.....”

Rajeev Garg, Engineer & IAS aspirant, Puducherry

“ Perfect.....”

.... Sneha Harish Chotai, Scholar in Master of Arts in South Asian Studies,
Pondicherry University”

Comments of Foreign Nationals

“Extremely delighted to see the exhibition showing democracy in full swing. All staff were very helpful.....”

B.Sisodia, Priestly Way, UK

“Very interesting walk through India’s Election history.Thank you.....”

Helen & Stephen Wilkes, Worester, UK

“Great. Photos were very interesting.....”

C.Rose, Southampton, UK

*“ Very useful, informative and visually arresting exhibition **an mhaith..”***

Donnacha S Beachain, Dublin City University, Ireland

“Thank you. Very informative and interesting. Well done. Hope India will be a true and strong democracy.....Jaya Jagadia Hare.....”

Miriam, Aurovillean, Puducherry

Comments of Teachers

“ I visited the exhibition with 600 students..... the photo exhibition on our great leaders building democracy was a new experience to our boys.....”

K.Rama, Lecturer, Calve College, Puducherry

Comments of Tourists

“It’s a very good, informative and important thing needed for every citizen to know. Thank you for organizing it.....”

Sumesh Dudani, IISC, Bangalore

“This is a good exercise to extend our democractic system to common man and educate him for strong democracy.....”

J.P.Moon, Sr.Manager, Bank of India, Mumbai

Comments with visual depictions

"Integration in diversity . EC↑"

M.Ashwin Shreshtha, Automotive Engineer

"Good 😊"

...Iqbal, Puducherry

Comments of Critics

" Some cartoons insult the stalwarts like Rajaji, Kamaraj and is in bad taste. These should be removed."

Mustafa, Puducherry

" The exhibition should have been conducted in rural areas."

K.Venkatachalapathy, MA B.Ed, Puducherry