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SHRED**(SHANTHINAGAR RESIDENTS' DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION)**

6 February 2008

The Chief Electoral Officer
Election Commission of India – Karnataka
KGID Bldg.
Bangalore 560001

Dear Sir,

Subject: Anomalies in the delineation of polling booths and other errors/confusions in electoral rolls

We wish to acknowledge with appreciation your untiring efforts to set right the electoral rolls in the State. We also note that you have been able to energise the enumerators to re-visit each house and repeat the enumeration. While we applaud your sincere efforts, we also wish to bring to your attention the following issues in order to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated again when the rolls are re-printed very soon.

CIVIC Bangalore and SHRED (Shanthinagar Residents' Development Association), who are constituents of *VOTE BENGALURU*, have been analysing the electoral rolls as on 01.01.2008 of **Assembly Constituency No. 84, Ward 70 (Shanthinagar, BBMP)**, as a sample, and wish to bring to your kind attention the anomalies, confusions and errors in the electoral rolls that were found. Though Ward 70 only has been studied, we are convinced that the findings apply to all electoral rolls.

We feel that these fundamental anomalies are the cause of the large-scale errors in the voters' lists. We are convinced that unless these are first set right, any amount of door-to-door surveys will not give us 100% accurate voters' lists.

Fundamental Anomalies

1. The Part or Polling Booth Area is not geographically unique.

For instance: **Part No. 51, Section 12**, Basappa Rd., contains House Nos. 1 to 55
Part No. 52, Section 3, Basappa Rd., again contains House nos. 1 to 43
but with a completely different set of names.

This is but just one instance. Several such can be found in every ward. This would not happen if it was insisted upon that the same portions of a road should not appear on more than one Part.

2. The Part or Polling Booth Area often does not encompass a geographically contiguous area.

The logic behind the way the different Sections are clubbed together to form a Part is not obvious:

For instance: **Part No 51**, which has Sections of Bangiyappa Garden and its cross-roads which are in the North-eastern portion of Shanthinagar layout are clubbed with Sections of K. H. Road and Basappa Road which are in the South-west corner of Shanthinagar.

Similarly, **Part No. 50**, which has Sections of Church Road which are in the South-eastern corner of Shanthinagar layout are clubbed together with Sections containing the western-most portions of Basappa Road.

These areas are not geographically contiguous.

3. The Map of the Part or Polling Booth Area is neither geographically accurate nor drawn to scale.

Part 46: In the map, Swasthi Main Road, Swasthi Rd. 1st Cross, Swasthi Rd. 2nd Cross and Bheemanna Garden (Sections 1 to 4) are shown to be directly linked to Langford Road (Section 5) which is incorrect.

These areas which are not geographically contiguous are shown as if they are contiguous on the map.

Part 46: Section 5 – Langford Road – Serial Nos. 1402 to 1435 belong to Langford Road Cross, a small cross-road off Langford Road. But this cross-road is not shown on the map at all and the false impression is being created that all these persons are living on the main road, Langford Road.

Part 47: The map is utterly wrong. Andree Road is a T-shaped road, not a straight road. It starts from K.H.Rd and ends in Langford Rd. and not as shown on the map. Munimarappa Rd., Muruges Mudaliar Rd., Pape Gowda Rd., Uttare Gowda Rd., Central Street and Circular Street do not emanate from and have no link to Shanthi Main Road, as shown in the map. In fact, most of these roads emanate from Central Street.

Part 51: Sections containing 1st to 5th Cross Bangiyappa Garden in the North-east of AT Halli Layout are combined with portion of K. H. Road in the western portion of Shanthinagar. The areas are not contiguous but the maps are manipulated to show as if they are contiguous.

Part 51: The map shows a single road as 1st and 2nd Cross Basappa Rd. and another single road as 1st to 7th Cross Lakshmi Rd.

Resultant Errors

The above three and other anomalies are giving rise to the following problems/errors/confusions:

- a. **Impossible task for enumerators:** Since the map of the Polling Booth Area is geographically not accurate, it will be an impossible task for any enumerator to identify the particular road or part of a road that he has to cover and do an accurate job of enumeration.
- b. **Impossible for citizens to identify their Part Number:** It will be impossible for citizens to identify under which part number their house falls.
- c. **Repetitions of streets in different Parts:** Since the geographical area defined as polling booth area is not unique, there is repetition of the same streets/locations in different part numbers. This leads to overlapping of polling booth footprints, duplication of streets and total confusion. Even short roads consisting of about 20 houses are shown in different Parts or Sections.
- d. **Sections created without logic or rhyme:** There does not seem to be any logic, rhyme or reason in the way Sections are created within a Part. The same roads are being repeated in different Sections of the same Part Number with a few house numbers under each. If the rolls were really consolidated, how could this happen? For instance:

Part 49: Section 8 and Section 11 - Gosaiah Street is a short street with only a few houses. Section 8 has only 3 houses of Gosaiah Street and Section 11 of the same Part has another three houses.

- e. **Sections with wrong road-headings or wrong names:**

Part 50: The Section given the heading Swasthi Main Road actually contains names from 1st Cross, Lakshmi Rd.

What is given the heading 1st Cross Lakshmi Rd. contains some names that belong to Lakshmi Rd.

Some names shown on Lakshmi Rd. V Cross actually belong to Lakshmi Rd.

Part No. 52: Names of persons from Basappa Rd. Nanjappa Rd. and Chowdappa Rd. are all mixed up in this part because of wrong road headings.

SI Nos. 1294 –1298 – K.V.George and Dr. Mohan Isaac's families live on Basappa Rd. not Chowdappa Rd.

- f. **Sections with illogical and non-existent nomenclature of roads and house nos.**

Part 47: Section 10 – A. T. Halli – A. T. Halli is a whole layout. It is not a road. It is also not shown on the map accompanying the Part.

Part 47: Section 9 – Andree Rd. – House nos. are shown as C-1, D-1, F-1,S-1, etc. These must be Flat Nos. within an apartment block and not street numbers of houses.

Part 50: This Part has the weirdest nomenclature for Sections and roads

Section 7 is titled Lakshmi Main Road and **Section 9** is titled Lakshmi Road - Lakshmi Main Road is Lakshmi Road. These are not two different roads.

Section 14 is titled “Nanjappa Rd. Church Rd. Basappa Rd.” – What kind of nomenclature for a Section is this? These are three very long independent roads. There are also separate **Sections (12, 13 and 18)** for each of these roads in the same Part. Why has no consolidation been done?

Section 15 is titled “Lakshmi Mn. Rd. I Cross Rd. Swasthi Rd.”, which makes no sense at all.

Section 16 is titled ‘Basappa Rd. Nanjappa Rd’. Does it mean the people listed under this Section straddle two roads?

Section 17 is titled “3rd 4th Cross Rd. Church Rd” which is non-existent and impossible

Part 51: Section 1 is titled Bangiyappa Garden – This is a whole area, not an individual road. It should be probably 1st Cross Bangiyappa Garden

Section 2 and Section 10 are both 2nd Cross, Bangiyappa Garden. Where is the consolidation?

Section 11 is titled “Bangiyappa Garden Lakshmi Rd. 1-7th Cross” – Does it mean the names of persons living on 7 crosses are in this single Section and are these cross-roads of Lakshmi Rd. or of Bangiyappa Garden?

Section 16 is titled “Lakshmi Rd. I Cross to 8th Cross Rd.”

Section 18 is titled “ Shanthinagar 6th Cross, Laskhmi Rd. 7th Cross” which makes no sense.

Part 54: Section 18 is titled “Shanthinagar” with no further address.

- g. **Non-existent persons:** Persons who have moved out four years ago are shown to be still living on the road. How could this happen if a fresh enumeration was really done in October 2007?

Part 50: Sl. Nos. 1519 – 1524 – Sarayu Sampath, Ivy Manohar, Vijaya Hegde, and their families - These persons moved out four years ago.

h. Repetition of names:

Part No. 47 – Sl. Nos. 1263 – 1265 – S. R. Chandramohan and family have been repeated again under **Part No. 51 – Sl. Nos. 1523 – 1527**

Part No. 46 – 12 Swasthi Main Rd, – Mr. N. Thimmaraju’s family – Their names have been repeated again under Part 48 – Again Swasthi Main Road, House No. 12/1

- i. **Errors repeated:** Many errors that we had pointed out in 2004 itself are being perpetuated in the latest rolls. How could the same errors continue if a fresh enumeration had been done? It looks like someone merely copied the old erratic rolls without doing a fresh house to house enumeration.

Part 52: Section 2 – Nanjappa Rd.- SI. Nos. 412 – 417 – Babu Abraham and family live on Chowdappa Rd. and not Nanjappa Rd.

Section 3 – Basappa Rd.- SI Nos. 608 – 611 - Shyam Family live on Nanjappa Rd. not Basappa Road

We had pointed out these errors in 2004 itself.

- j. **Postal address not used:** Some old revenue survey names or other names of areas and not the current postal address of the road is being used in some cases. This is causing confusion.

Part No. 53: Terms such as Yellamma Garden, Thayappa Garden, Aga Garden are being used in the Sections. These areas could also be having the postal address as 9th Cross Lakshmi Rd. or Food Godown Street which are again shown separately in a different Section. This could lead to duplication of the same area under the road or cross-road name as well. It would be better to use the current postal address and give the historic or traditional names in brackets, to avoid duplication.

Suggestions for remedy

To set right the anomalies, we suggest the following drastic reforms in the electoral roll preparation. The Parts need to be re-organised to weed out duplication of street names, if any degree of accuracy of the roll is to be achieved:

1. **Geographically unique Part:** A Part should encompass a geographically unique and contiguous area.
2. **GIS Map to be basis for Polling Booth Area:** The Map of the Part should be based on the GIS Map of the area or at least be geographically accurate and drawn to scale.
3. **Colour-coded Polling Booth Area (PBA):** Mark each Polling Booth Area in a different colour on the ward map and print the Ward Map and Polling Booth Area map in the electoral roll of that Part Number.
4. **Section within Part not to be a conglomeration of roads:** A Section within a Part should not list a conglomeration or combination of roads.
5. **Section to contain single road or unique portion of road:** A Section within a Part should encompass a unique portion of a single road which is not replicated in any other Part or another Section of the same Part.

6. **Ward number to be included in Part identification no.:** In the unique identification number of each Part, the ward number could also be shown, since the municipal ward is the smallest administrative unit in urban areas. Three digits could be provided to indicate the ward number between the assembly constituency number and part number: For example:

**To indicate Part No. 46 in Ward 70 in Assembly Constituency No. 84 (Shanthinagar)
- Suggested unique identification number : A084070046**

7. **Postal address to be basis for naming Sections:** The latest postal address should be used at all times to identify the roads within Sections .
8. **Both sides of a road to be in single PBA:** Both sides of a road could be included in the same Part while drawing the boundary to avoid confusion and repetition of the road name in different Parts.
9. **Unique identification number for portions of roads:** If there is a long road which has to necessarily appear in several Parts or Sections, each portion of the road in the different Part/Section should be given a unique identification number, such as Lakshmi Rd.(1st portion), Lakshmi Rd.(2nd portion), etc. This identification number should be written on the street and house and included on the citizen's voter id card also to avoid the same portion being repeated in several Parts/Sections and voters running from booth to booth looking for their names.
10. **Part delineation without repetition of roads:** It is suggested, as a sample, that all the roads in Shanthinagar could be grouped into the following Parts so that no road or portion of it is repeated in two different Parts/Sections:
- i) Church Road and its cross-roads (Western portion or Portion 1)
 - ii) Church Road and its cross-roads (Eastern portion or Portion 2) and Chowdappa Layout
 - iii) Nanjappa Road (Western portion or portion 1) and its cross-roads
 - iv) Nanjappa Road (Eastern portion or portion 2) and its cross-roads
 - v) Basappa Road (Western portion or portion 1) and its cross-roads
 - vi) Basappa Road (Eastern portion or portion 2) and its cross-roads
 - vii) Lakshmi Road (Western portion or portion 1) and its cross-roads
 - viii) Lakshmi Road (Eastern portion or portion 2) and its cross-roads
 - ix) Swasthi Road (Western portion or portion 1) and its cross-roads
 - x) Langford Road and its cross-roads
 - xi) K. H. Road, Shanthi Road and Andree Road
- And so on.
11. **Cover page to carry page nos. of Sections:** The cover page could list the Sections along with the page number on which they begin.
12. **Names of flats to be carried as headings:** Names of persons living in flats could be given a separate heading carrying the name and street number of the flat. The individual names of flat-dwellers could carry the individual flat nos. against them.

13. **Penalisation of officials:** Strict action / monetary penalisation should be undertaken against officials duplicating the same portions of roads in different Parts and / or in different Sections of the same Part. Penalties should be imposed for every error.

We hope that action will be taken to implement our suggestions which we are sure will lead to more accurate electoral rolls, the first and most fundamental requirement in a democracy.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Kathyayini Chamaraj
Executive Trustee, CIVIC
& Hon. Secretary, SHRED

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