

Elections to BMP council

NGOs set out on task of cleansing poll process

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Do you cherish the dream of the Silicon Valley's metamorphosis into a Singapore? Do you want a responsive, capable and upright person as your representative to turn your dream into a reality?

Then, think twice before exercising your franchise in the forthcoming Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BMP) elections. Because, it was reported that 15 per cent of the candidates who contested the 1996 BMP elections had criminal background.

Hence make sure your candidate is a registered voter and resident of your ward; is neither close relative nor friend of contractors directly involved in executing public works or other services for BMP; do not have criminal background of any sort; have at least passed matriculation and are committed to make Bangalore a clean-

er, greener and safer place to live.

The above five critical eligibility criteria to screen and select candidates was provided by the two city-based NGOs - Public Affairs Centre (PAC) and Swabhimana - which have launched a campaign in association with a few residents' welfare associations (RWA) to educate and motivate voters.

As part of this, they have submitted a memorandum to all the major political parties asking them to adhere to the above five criteria while fielding a candidate for the electoral contest. Besides, nearly 150 RWAs are writing appeal letters to the parties and mounting pressure on them.

"As part of this campaign, we have organised a 'Choose the right corporator' programme on October 13 in which 20 RWAs will be trained on how to cast a informed vote. We provide them training and strategic and technical support about collecting all information pertaining to the con-

testing candidates, their agenda for the improvement of the ward and other details and its dissemination", observed Ms D G Poornima, Programme Associate, PAC.

"Besides education and motivation programmes, we have distributed information kits comprising posters, pamphlets etc., to all the RWAs to educate voters in their neighbourhood", she said. "A few RWAs have agreed to conduct open house meetings under which the contesting candidates will spell out their agenda and their commitment", she added.

Meanwhile, the Shanthinagar Residents' Development Association has decided to field its own member for the forthcoming BMP elections. "Having our own representative will surely make a difference and will enable us to have a clean, efficient, transparent and accountable municipal administration in the ward," said Ms Kathyayini Chamaraj, Secretary of the Association.