

Unopposed Elections in Haryana Panchayati Raj Institutions: An Analysis of Fourth General Election, 2010

R. K. Kundu and S. L. Kundu

Department of Public Administration,

Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak - 124 001, Haryana, India

E-mail : rajeshkundu21@gmail.com

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Abstract - The success of democracy depends upon free and fair elections. Elections serve as a means of communication between the public and government. It is a process through which leaders are selected by vote for a political office. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 marked a new era in the democratic set up of the country as it created Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as a third tier of the federal set up. It gives considerable attention to the nature of elections for the three levels of panchayati raj institutions. Direct elections are specified for seats at all levels. The act provides for one additional potential avenue of representation and accountability of local government. Unopposed elections are the reflection of mature democratic trend. So, this paper examines an analytical study of unopposed elected members of PRIs of fourth general elections held in 2010. It goes through the local governance aspects discussed in Second Administrative Reforms Commission and Second Centre-State Relations Commission. It also highlights the decision taken by the Government of Haryana for making a provision of incentives to gram panchayats regarding promotion of unopposed elections. The authors offer some suggestions for strengthening the trend of unopposed elections.

Keywords: Unopposed Elections, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), State Election Commission (SEC), Haryana Panchayati Raj, PRIs General Election, Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis, Zila Parishads, Sarpanch and Panches.

I. INTRODUCTION

India is proud of being the largest democracy in the world. This was a lonely choice made in the 1950s among the emerging nations of the world. Since then there have been several instances when questions were raised whether democracy in India can endure the test of circumstances. And on each such occasion India has answered in the affirmative. In this regard, elections are considered as the foundation stone of any democracy. They constitute an indispensable political activity and indicate the general will of the common masses and provide legitimacy to the government. Absence of free and fair elections means the absence of democratic functioning. Therefore, elections are an acid test for all democratic institutions. Indian Constitution enjoins to the people of India to be democratic and all activities are executed within the framework of this Constitution. The system of

panchayati raj is a foundation upon which parliamentary democracy is erected. The success and failure of sovereign, secular and socialist India depends upon the panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) because these are the grassroot organizations of the Indian governance system.

The Constitution of India makes a provision for the ratio between the population of the territorial area of a panchayat at any level to the number of seats in such panchayat to be filled by election shall, as far as practicable, be the same throughout the state. Every panchayat shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first seating and no longer. An election of panchayat shall be completed before expiry of its duration and six months from date of its dissolution. It is provided that the legislature of state may, by law, make provisions with respect to all matters relating to, or in connection with, elections to the panchayats.

A. Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) on Local Governance

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission was constituted by the Government of India to prepare a detailed blueprint for revamping the public administration system under the chairmanship of Shri Veerappa Moily. So, local self governments were part of area of consideration for this Commission. In this regard, the Commission submitted its report on 'Local Governance: An Inspiring Journey into the Future' in October, 2007 and Government of India has taken the decision on the recommendations of this report. The main recommendations which are accepted by the Government of India regarding elections of PRIs are as follows:

'The task of delimitation and reservation of local government constituencies should be entrusted to the State Election Commissions (SECs); local government laws in all states should provide for adoption of the Assembly electoral rolls for local governments without any revision of names by SECs. It is necessary to ensure that the voter registration and preparation of electoral rolls by Election Commission of India is based on geographic contiguity. Similarly the electoral divisions for elections to local bodies should follow the

Building Blocks approach; the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, should be amended to define a 'Part' as a compact geographical unit in order to achieve convergence between census data and electoral rolls, the boundaries of a 'Part' and an 'Enumeration Block' should coincide. In the reservation of seats for single-member constituencies, the rotation can be only after 2 terms of 5 years each so that there is possibility of longevity of leadership and nurturing of constituencies. The conduct of elections for the elected members of District and Metropolitan Planning Committees should be entrusted to the State Election Commission. The State Election Commissioner should be appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of collegiums, comprising of the Chief Minister, the Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly and the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly. An institutional mechanism should be created to bring the Election Commission of India and the SECs on a common platform for coordination, learning from each other's experiences and sharing of resources'.

B. Second Centre-State Relations Commission and Local Governments

Government of India constituted a Commission on Centre-State Relations under the Chairmanship of Sh. Madan Mohan Punchhi, Retired Judge, Supreme Court of India on April 27, 2007. This Commission submitted its report on March 31, 2010. The Commission has divided its report into seven volumes i.e., Evolution of Centre-State Relations in India; Constitutional Governance and the Management of Centre-State Relations; Centre-State Financial Relations and Planning; Local Self Governments and Decentralized Governance; Internal Security, Criminal Justice and Centre-State Cooperation; Environment, Natural Resources and Infrastructure; Socio-Economic Development, Public Policy and Good Governance and Summary of the Report. There are four supplementary volumes to the report which covers the detail discussions on the above discussed subjects. Hence, Volume IV of the submitted report is a discussion on the subject of Local Self Governments and Decentralized Governance and suggests that:(i) Laws of all states should prescribe that the rolls for the Assembly elections be adopted for elections to local bodies;(ii) Article 82 needs to be amended for setting up of State Delimitation Commissions which should be required to align the panchayats and municipal wards to the existing assembly constituencies; (iii) The reservation of seats on the basis of the delimitation exercise should be in the preview of the State Delimitation Commission.

II. PANCHAYATI RAJ IN HARYANA

The Gram Panchayat Act was initially passed as far back as 1952 in the erstwhile State of Punjab and the panchayats at the village level have been functioning since then under the provisions of Punjab Panchayat Act, 1952 in Haryana. The other two tiers i.e. panchayat samitis and zila parishads, were formed under the Punjab Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1961 and continued to function till 1973, when on the recommendations of an Adhoc Committee, the zila parishads were abolished in Haryana. Elections even to the panchayat samitis were not held regularly and continued to be postponed frequently and only the institution of gram panchayats continued to be more or less intact throughout this period. According to the 1961 Act, the Samitis consisted of 16 members elected by panches and sarpanches of gram panchayats in the block, two members representing the cooperative societies, one member representing the market committees in the block. There was a provision of six co-opted members and MLA of the area and they were known as associate members without any voting rights. The Sub Divisional Magistrate and the Block Development Officers were also co-opted as ex-officio members. The gram panchayat at village level consisted of four to ten members and a sarpanch was elected from amongst its members.

In pursuance of the 73rd Constitutional amendment, the Haryana Government enacted the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. The Act provides for a three tier system, the zila parishads have been constituted afresh in the State after a gap of more than two decades. While the earlier act provided for indirect elections at the zila parishad and panchayat samiti levels, under the new Act, the members of the zila parishads are to be elected directly. It further provides for the co-option of Chairman of all panchayat samitis within the district as ex-officio members and the Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assembly whose constituency lies within district are to be associated as ex-officio members for zila parishad, who have a right to vote in the meetings except for election and removal of the President and Vice-President. Likewise, while the members of the panchayat samitis are to be elected directly from territorial constituencies within the panchayat samiti areas, one member of panchayat samiti is elected on the population of 4000 and the number of elected members will be 10 to 30 on the basis of population. MLAs representing constituencies, which comprise wholly or partly in the panchayat samiti area, as well as the Sarpanches of gram panchayats are to be co-opted as members. The Chairmen and the Vice-Chairmen of panchayat samitis and Presidents as well as Vice-Presidents zila parishads are to be elected indirectly by and from amongst its elected members.

So far as gram panchayats are concerned, the Sarpanch and panches are directly elected by gram sabha from amongst its voters by secret ballot. The panchayati raj rules state that there shall be six panches for a gram panchayat having population up to five hundred and for every additional five hundred populations or fraction thereof one extra seat shall be provided subject to a maximum of twenty seats. If a fraction forms part of the number of a seat or the office computed the number of seats or offices shall be increased to the next higher number in case the fraction consists of half or more of a seat or office and the fraction shall be ignored in case it consists of less than half of a seat or the office.

III. UNOPPOSED ELECTIONS IN HARYANA PRIs

It is provided that if for any seat, after the date and time fixed for withdrawal of nomination paper, there remains only one candidate whose nomination paper is found valid, the Returning Officer (Panchayat) shall declare the candidate duly elected to fill the seat and inform the State Election Commissioner through District Election Officer (Panchayat). If no nomination paper has been filed for any seat or if no candidate has been duly nominated for any seat, the Returning Officer (Panchayat) shall send a report of this fact to the State Election Commissioner through the District Election Officer (Panchayat) who shall take further action to fill the seat in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the rules.

Government of Haryana has emphasized on the promotion of unopposed elections in gram panchayats by providing special grant to them. Under the provisions of above said grant, the village panchayats are classified population-wise into three categories. The classified first, second and third categories are comprising upto 1500 population villages, above 1500 to 4000 population and above 4000 population villages respectively. In the first, second and third categories where the whole panchayat including sarpanch is elected unopposed the provisions of the grant are Rs. One lakh, two lakhs and three lakhs respectively. If only panches are elected unopposed from first, second and third categories, the provided amount is Rs. 75000, 1.5lakh and 2.5 lakhs respectively. When only a sarpanch of a village is elected unopposed then the provisions of the grant are Rs. 50000, one lakh and 1.5 lakh for respective category. This is great step of Haryana Government regarding strengthening the democracy in the State as well as become a touch bearer for Indian democratic practices.

A. First PRIs General Election, 1994

The first panchayat general election was held in December, 1994 in three phases i.e., December 11, 15 and 19,

1994. At that time there were 16 zila parishads, 110 panchayat samitis and 5958 gram panchayats in Haryana. Total 54159 panches including 17928 (33.10%) women, 11793 (21.77%) scheduled castes and 5648 (10.43%) backward class panches were elected in this election. Regarding panchayat samitis, total 2418 members including 807 (33.37%) women, 519 (21.46%) scheduled castes and 110 (4.55%) backward class members were elected. Total 303 zila parishad members including 101 (33.33%) women, 64 (21.12%) scheduled caste and 16 (5.28%) backward class members were elected in this election. Total 5958 sarpanches including 1994 women and 1199 scheduled castes, 110 chairpersons of panchayat samitis including 38 women and 21 scheduled castes and 16 chairpersons of zila parishad including 5 women and 3 scheduled castes were elected for public welfare. So, no data regarding unopposed elected representatives of PRIs is available of this election.

B. Second PRIs General Election, 2000

The State Election Commission issued a notification for holding the second general election to PRIs in three phases and later modified it into two phases. The dates i.e., 22 and 29 March, 2000 were fixed but again changed to 12 and 16 March, 2000 due to annual examinations of Board of School Education Haryana. Total 85,90,880 voters casted their votes at 15,998 polling stations to elect 6,035 sarpanches and 54,764 panches out of which 701 (12%) and 30,674 (56%) were elected unopposed respectively. Regarding panchayat samiti, total 2426 seats were fixed for members and 426 (18%) were elected unopposed. In case of zila parishad, out of 314 seats only 45 (14%) candidates were elected unopposed. In gram panchayats, panchayat samitis & zila parishads the representation of women was 18037 (32.99%), 842 (34.65%) and 108 (34.39%) respectively. For the posts of sarpanches, chairpersons of panchayat samiti and zila parishads, the representation of women was significant i.e., 2009 (33.29%), 52 (45.61%) and 7 (36.84%) respectively.

C. Third PRIs General Election, 2005

The third PRIs general election was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, total 26817 seats for panches, 2737 for sarpanches, 1256 for member panchayat samitis and 164 member zila parishads were scheduled for polling in 53 blocks of 18 districts on April 3, 2005 by State Election Commission, Haryana. As per the election programme, in the second phase total 33459 seats for panches, 3443 for sarpanches, 1577 for member panchayat samitis and 220 for member zila parishads were scheduled for polling in 66 blocks of 19 districts on April 9, 2005.

In this election, total 36645 (60.8%) panches were elected unopposed and the district Panchkula was at top with 75% in this regard but Karnal district secured the least position with 44.6%. In case of sarpanches, out of 6180 seats total 473 (7.7%) sarpanches were elected unopposed. District Sirsa and Rohtak observed at the highest (13.8%) and lowest (2.6%) place holders respectively regarding unopposed elected sarpanches. Total 302 (10.7%) panchayat samiti members were elected unopposed and the districts Ambala and Rewari attained the highest and lowest position with 22.5% and 3.3% respectively in this regard. Only two members from Yamunanagar zila prashed were elected unopposed in this election.

D. Fourth PRIs General Election, 2010

To ensure free, fair and peaceful conduct of panchayat elections, arrangement of supervisors and police teams have been made in such a manner that they can patrol each polling booth every hour and could reach a polling booth within 10-15 minutes in case of emergency. In the recent panchayati raj election, 2010, total 22931(39.02%) panches elected unopposed out of 58765 panches. In this regard, Panchkula district secured first position with 65.36%, Ambala (48.86%) and Fatehabad (47.14%) districts hold second and third positions respectively. The district Panipat is the backward district regarding unopposed elections with 25.85%. Overall 62 panchayats including sarpanches and 90 panchayats excluding sarpanches have been elected unopposed in Haryana. Total 8860 women panch elected unopposed in this fourth panchayat general elections, 2010. In this regard Bhiwani district holds first position with 725 women panch followed by Jind (595) and Ambala (581). Faridabad is the lowest scorer district with 150 women panch in this context. There are total 228 women panch belong to general category who have been elected unopposed from other than their reserved seats and Rewari district secured first position with 52 women panch in this regard followed by Sirsa (26), Bhiwani (26) and Sonipat(18) but Karnal and Kurukshetra districts elected only 2 women panch each in this regard. In case of scheduled castes, total 60 SC women panch have been elected unopposed from SC male reserved seats and Ambala district with 12 women panch is at the first place in this regard followed by Mahendergarh (6) , Sonipat (6) and Karnal (5) but four districts (Faridabad, Jhajjar, Mewat and Rohtak) have no representation in this regard. It is analyzed that the total strength of the unopposed women panch who have been elected from other than their reserved seats is 288. In this context Rewari district has more representation with 56 women followed by Sirsa(28), Bhiwani (27), Sonapat (24) and

the Mewat district has lowest representation with only two women panches. A district wise and category wise view of unopposed elected panches of PRIs fourth general election, 2010 is highlighted in Table I.

Table I highlights that total 9724 (16.55%) male and 6724 (11.44%) female panches of general category have been elected unopposed in 2010 panchayat elections. In case of scheduled caste panches total 1846 (3.14%) male and 2004 (3.41%) female panchayat members have been elected unopposed in this election. Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 provides for reservation of one seat in every panchayat for backward classes. So, total 2492 (4.24%) male and 141(0.24%) female panches have been elected unopposed from backward classes. Regarding district-wise and number wise performance relating to unopposed elected members, district Bhiwani gets first position with 1866 (41.06%) panches followed by 1530 (48.46%) and 1524 (45.82%) from Ambala and Jind districts respectively. This performance is lowest in Faridabad i.e., 385 (33.71%). The percentage wise analysis shows that Panchkula district secures first position with 65.36% regarding unopposed elected panches followed by Ambala (48.86%) and Fatehabad (47.14%) districts. The Panipat district is in the last with 25.85% in this hierarchy.

IV. SARPANCH AT THE CENTRE STAGE FOR VILLAGE GOVERNANCE

Sarpanch is the pivot of village development because he is the only moon among stars of village governance management. He is responsible for convening the meetings of gram sabha and gram panchayats as well as presides over these meetings. The general responsibility of executive and financial administration is vested in him. He exercises the administrative supervision and control over the working of the staff/employees/officers, whose services are falling in the jurisdiction of gram panchayat. He deals with the business of gram panchayat and other functions which are directed by the Government of Haryana. The sarpanch is authorized by the Block Development and Panchayat Officer to maintain the record and custody of the moveable or immovable property of the gram panchayat. So, a district-wise and category-wise view of unopposed elected sarpanches of fourth PRIs general election, 2010 is shown in Table II.

Unopposed Elections in Haryana Panchayati Raj Institutions: An Analysis of Fourth General Election, 2010

TABLE I DISTRICT-WISE AND CATEGORY-WISE UNOPPOSED ELECTED PANCHES OF PRIS ELECTION, 2010

Categories Districts	Panchayat Members	General Category Panches		Scheduled Caste Panches		Backward Class Panches		Total Panches
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Ambala	3131	520 (16.60%)	387 (12.36%)	218 (6.96%)	194 (6.19%)	201 (6.42%)	10 (0.32%)	1530 (48.86%)
Bhiwani	4544	859 (18.90%)	581 (12.78%)	84 (1.84%)	129 (2.84%)	198 (4.35%)	15 (0.33%)	1866 (41.06%)
Faridabad	1142	175 (15.32%)	124 (10.85%)	29 (2.54%)	25 (2.19%)	31 (2.71%)	01 (0.08%)	385 (33.71%)
Fatehabad	2482	431 (17.36%)	317 (12.77%)	170 (6.85%)	134 (5.40%)	118 (4.75%)	Nil	1170 (47.14%)
Gurgaon	1818	367 (20.18%)	273 (15.01%)	45 (2.47%)	72 (3.96%)	91 (5.00%)	5 (0.27%)	853 (46.92%)
Hisar	3715	561 (15.1%)	409 (11.0%)	131 (3.53%)	123 (3.31%)	134 (3.61%)	7 (0.18%)	1365 (36.74%)
Jhajjar	2597	493 (18.88%)	328 (12.63%)	75 (2.88%)	69 (2.65%)	99 (3.81%)	2 (0.07%)	1066 (41.04%)
Jind	3326	628 (18.98%)	469 (14.10%)	151 (4.54%)	123 (3.69%)	150 (4.51%)	3 (0.09%)	1524 (45.82%)
Kaithal	2767	513 (18.54%)	330 (11.92%)	99 (3.57%)	108 (3.90%)	143 (5.17%)	Nil	1193 (43.11%)
Karnal	3595	407 (11.32%)	277 (7.70%)	71 (1.97%)	97 (2.69%)	110 (3.06%)	8 (0.22%)	970 (26.98%)
Kurukshetra	3151	594 (18.85%)	397 (12.60%)	118 (3.74%)	157 (4.98%)	176 (5.58%)	8 (10.25%)	1450 (46.01%)
Palwal	2458	413 (16.80%)	254 (10.33%)	34 (1.38%)	50 (2.03%)	97 (3.94%)	Nil	848 (34.50%)
Panchkula	898	280 (31.18%)	176 (19.60%)	24 (2.67%)	55 (6.12%)	51 (5.68%)	1 (0.11%)	587 (65.36%)
Panipat	1907	230 (12.06%)	143 (7.49%)	34 (1.78%)	41 (2.15%)	42 (2.20%)	3 (0.15%)	493 (25.85%)
Mahendergarh	3134	403 (12.85%)	287 (9.15%)	53 (1.69%)	61 (1.94%)	114 (3.63%)	10 (0.32%)	928 (29.61%)
Mewat	2950	520 (17.62%)	380 (12.88%)	17 (0.57%)	53 (1.79%)	130 (4.40%)	Nil	1100 (37.28%)
Rewari	2998	458 (15.27%)	298 (9.94%)	46 (1.53%)	94 (3.13%)	100 (3.33%)	38 (1.26%)	1034 (34.48%)
Rohtak	1771	266 (15.02%)	150 (8.47%)	30 (1.69%)	32 (1.80%)	46 (2.59%)	01 (0.05%)	525 (29.64%)
Sirsa	3389	484 (14.28%)	320 (9.44%)	178 (5.25%)	124 (3.66%)	159 (4.69%)	13 (0.38%)	1278 (37.71%)
Sonepat	3525	622 (17.64%)	439 (12.45%)	82 (2.32%)	112 (3.17%)	119 (3.37%)	8 (0.22%)	1382 (39.20%)
Yamunanagar	3467	500 (14.42%)	385 (11.10%)	157 (4.53%)	151 (4.35%)	183 (5.28%)	8 (0.23%)	1384 (39.92%)
Total	58765	9724 (16.55%)	6724 (11.44%)	1846 (3.14%)	2004 (3.41%)	2492 (4.24%)	141 (0.24%)	22931 (39.02%)

Source: State Election Commission Panchayat Statistics, 2010.

TABLE II DISTRICT-WISE AND CATEGORY-WISE UNOPPOSED ELECTED SARPANCHES OF PRIS ELECTION, 2010

Categories Districts	Total Sarpanches	General Category Sarpanches		Scheduled Caste Sarpanches		Total Unopposed Sarpanches
		Men	Women	Men	Women	
Ambala	405	12	6	2	-	20 (4.94%)
Bhiwani	460	2	3	-	-	5 (1.23%)
Faridabad	111	3	2	-	-	5 (4.50%)
Fatehabad	244	9	6	1	2	18 (7.37%)
Gurgaon	210	4	3	3	1	11 (5.24%)
Hisar	309	3	1	-	-	4 (1.29%)
Jhajjar	249	-	1	-	-	1 (0.40%)
Jind	300	2	6	-	-	8 (2.66%)
Kaithal	270	13	7	2	-	22 (8.15%)
Karnal	372	7	2	1	1	11 (2.95%)
Kurukshetra	381	12	6	4	-	22 (5.77%)
Palwal	239	3	-	1	-	4 (1.67%)
Panchkula	121	7	3	-	-	10 (8.26%)
Panipat	167	-	1	-	-	1 (0.59%)
Mahendergarh	344	-	1	-	-	1 (0.29%)
Mewat	311	5	1	2	-	8 (2.57%)
Rewari	351	3	2	-	1	6 (1.71%)
Rohtak	141	1	-	1	-	2 (1.42%)
Sirsa	334	4	2	-	-	6 (1.79%)
Sonepat	323	2	1	-	-	3 (0.93%)
Yamunanagar	441	8	7	1	-	16 (3.63%)
Total	6083	100 (1.64%)	61 (1%)	18 (0.29%)	5 (0.08%)	184 (3.02%)

Source: State Election Commission Panchayat Statistics, 2010

It is clear from Table II that total 184 (3.02%) sarpanches have been elected unopposed in Haryana out of 6083 sarpanches. District Kaithal is at the first place with 22 (8.15%) unopposed elected sarpanches followed by Ambala-20 (4.94%) and Fatehabad-18 (7.37%) districts but Mahendergarh-1 (0.29%), Jhajjar-1(0.40%) and Panipat-1 (0.59%) districts have lowest representation in this regard. Total 100 (1.64%) male and 61 (1%) female unopposed elected sarpanches belong to general category and 18 (0.29%) male and 5 (0.08%) female sarpanches represented by scheduled castes in this context.

V. PANCHAYAT SAMITI

The Government of Haryana is responsible for specifying the area of a block by dividing a district and establishment of panchayat samiti. Panchayat samiti has empowered to convene its six general meetings in a year for transaction of its business. The quorum of calling a general meeting is one- third and one- half for special meeting. The decision in the meeting is taken by majority vote. In this regard, a district-wise and category-wise view of unopposed elected panchayat samiti members of fourth PRIs general election, 2010 is depicted in Table III.

Unopposed Elections in Haryana Panchayati Raj Institutions: An Analysis of Fourth General Election, 2010

TABLE III DISTRICT-WISE AND CATEGORY-WISE UNOPPOSED ELECTED PANCHAYAT SAMITI MEMBERS OF HARYANA PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS, 2010

Categories Districts	Total Panchayat Samiti Members	General Category Members		Scheduled Caste Members		Backward Class Members		Total Unopposed Elected Members
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Ambala	119	1	1	-	1	-	-	3 (2.52%)
Bhiwani	211	-	1	-	1	-	-	2 (0.94%)
Faridabad	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
Fatehabad	130	1	2	-	-	-	-	3 (2.31%)
Gurgaon	86	1	-	-	-	1	-	2 (2.32%)
Hisar	217	1	4	-	-	-	-	5 (2.30%)
Jhajjar	118	-	-	-	-	1	-	1 (0.84%)
Jind	172	1	1	-	-	-	-	2 (1.16%)
Kaithal	141	-	1	-	-	1	-	2 (1.42%)
Karnal	174	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.57%)
Kurukshetra	117	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.85%)
Palwal	112	-	1	-	-	-	-	1 (0.89%)
Panchkula	40	-	2	-	-	1	-	3 (7.5%)
Panipat	111	1	1	-	1	-	-	3 (2.70%)
Mahendergarh	140	-	-	-	1	-	-	1 (0.71%)
Mewat	128	2	-	-	-	-	-	2 (1.56%)
Rewari	107	-	-	-	-	-	1	1 (0.93%)
Rohtak	123	-	-	-	-	2	-	2 (1.62%)
Sirsa	170	-	3	1	1	-	-	5 (2.94%)
Sonepat	177	1	1	-	-	-	-	2 (1.13%)
Yamunanagar	122	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.82%)
Total	2772	12(0.43%)	18(0.65%)	1(0.03%)	5(0.18%)	6(0.21%)	1(0.03%)	43 (1.55%)

Source: State Election Commission Panchayat Statistics, 2010

Table III discusses about the unopposed elected panchayat samiti members and total 43 (1.55%) members have been elected in Haryana. The districts Sirsa and Hisar got first place with 5 members each followed by Ambala, Fatehabad, Palwal and Panipat districts with 3 members each and Faridabad is the only district which does not have any unopposed elected member.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

The main observations regarding unopposed elections, 2010 are:

1. There are 140 gram panchayats where all panches and sarpanches have been elected unopposed and Kaithal district has 18 such panchayats followed by Kurukshetra (17) but no panchayat have been elected unopposed in Jhajjar and Rohtak districts in this regard.

2. There are total 176 gram panchayats, where only panches have been elected unopposed. Ambala district is at the top with 25 such gram panchayats followed by Yamunanagar (18) and the district Panipat has no representation in this regard.
3. Total 45 gram panchayats have elected unopposed sarpanches only but not all members. In this context, Ambala district is at the top with 6 gram panchayats followed by Fatehabad and Kurukshetra with 5 sapanches and Panchkula, Panipat, Mahendergarh, Mewat and Sonapat districts have no such representation.
4. Total 6 villages boycotted the 2010 panchayat elections and Jind district is at the top with 2 villages i.e., Sangatpura of Jind block and Singhwal of Narwana block followed by Bhiwani district (Bapoda village of Bhiwani block), Kaithal district (Karora village of Rajound block), Panipat district (Khukhrana of Madlauda block) and Rewari district (Ram singh Pura village of Bawal block).
5. All the seats (reserved and unreserved) have been won by women candidates in Lalheri village of Ganaur block in Sonapat district.
6. Three backward class male panches have been elected unopposed from SC reserved seats in Gurgaon district.
7. Total 16 general category male panchayat members have been elected unopposed from women reserved seats in Rewari district.

VII. CONCLUSION

Unopposed elections are the reflection of mature democratic trend in Haryana local governance process. Special grant decision taken by the Haryana government regarding unopposed elections not only saves the candidate money but also preserves the social unity, promote bhaichara culture, avoid court disputes, develop the positive thinking in the village community and reduce the administrative work also.

Some suggestions may be helpful for strengthening the case of unopposed elections trend. The provision of the special grant should be extended to an individual panch since there has been a less possibility of whole unopposed panchayat being elected. This support should be provided to panchayat samitis, zila parishads and urban local bodies also. There should be a separate ward fund for panches regarding such grants. In the last but not the least, it is the result of positive mind set of the Haryana Government. Due to this Haryana may be a role model for India as well as for world.

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