We may not be able to solve every single problem afflicting the political system,
but we can transform it to a great degree, in shape and spirit,
by adopting a better election model.

BelModel

A Better Election Model

For

A Better India

A proposal for the consideration of the
leaders and people of India.

www.belmodel.in

Author's Profile

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Career:	Software Engineer / Architect • 1981-1989: ECIL, Hyderabad • 1996-2000: Founded and ran a software consulting company • 1989-2018: Various Companies, USA
Passion:	Psychology, Sociology and Philosophy • Personality Development workshops • Corporate workshops for organizational management and team building • Family workshops for parenting
Books & Papers:	Two concept papers • BelModel: Better Election Model for a Better India • Common 'lipi' and 'code' for Indian languages Three Books • Time to replace the Education System with Growth System • Sapien Architecture: Human Nature & Diversity • Translation of Valmiki Ramayana from Sanskrit to English
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BelModel
is designed by the author based on
years of research and
decades of observations of:

Indian Political System,
Constitution of India, Indian Psyche,
Principles of Democracy,
Political Science Concepts
and Democratic systems
in other countries,

This model, which requires
a constitutional amendment,
is presented here for the consideration of
the people and leaders of India.

Electoral System Design

Inspiration:

India developed UPI, a sophisticated payments system and launched the Chandrayaan mission on its own taking advantage of technological advances without importing or copying ideas from elsewhere.

We should do the same in the political field, replacing the archaic and rudimentary constituencies and FPTP based system with a better election system taking advantage of the digital technologies.

Guidance:

Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook

https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/electoral-system-design-new-international-idea-handbook?lang=en

We present
three new electoral system designs
each better than the previous one.

We discuss the pros and cons of each,
including the current design.

Certain Basics

- Four types of votes leaders get:
  - Positive votes: from voters who truly like the leader
  - Party votes: from voters who voted for the leader because of party ticket
  - Negative votes: from voters who do not like the other parties or candidates
  - Random votes: from voters who have no specific preference and have randomly chosen the candidate
- Four kinds of relationships elected leaders have with voters:
  - Love marriage: With voters who genuinely voted for the leader, i.,e., gave positive votes
  - Arranged marriage: With voters who accepted the leader because the party nominated him or her
  - Forced marriage: With voters who voted for the *other* leaders, but represented by the winning leader
  - Namesake marriage: With voters who did not vote at all, who do not care who represents them
- Two types of funds / money in the political system:
  - Good money: the money expended in elections within the legal limits, sources and distributions disclosed
  - Bad money: the additional money required to sustain a party and to put up a stiff campaign, raised and distributed under the radar

Political parties are extra-constitutional entities,
but drive the politics and run the governments at all levels.

They impose their ideologies on people and society.

They restrict choices, and smother the voices of
voters, leaders and super leaders.

- Three types of voter interests:
  - Special interests - caste, religion, divyangs, gender, etc.
  - Professional interests - farmers, weavers, teachers, construction workers, etc.
  - General interests - infrastructure, healthcare, climate, trade laws, taxes, defence, law and order, etc.
- What voters want
  - A working system, Justice, Services, Direct benefits, Favors, Freedom
- Leaders' Motives
  - Positive: Vision, Values, Passion (VVP)
  - Negative: Power, Profit, Prestige (PPP)
  - Mix: Most leaders have a mix of them in various proportions
- Super Leaders: Leaders of leaders
  - Aim for prime/chief minister positions
  - Parties are vehicles to gain and retain power
- Objectives
  - **SJ**: Social Justice, **SD**: Social Development, **SH**: Social Harmony
  - **NI**: National Integrity, **CV**: Constitutional Vision, **DP**: Democratic Principles,
  - **EP**: Ease of doing Politics, **SL**: Strong Leadership
- PVP: Proportional Voting Power
  - The voting power of elected leaders on the legislative floors in proportion to their vote counts, instead of being equal

Design 1 and 2

Design 1 (Current System):

Elections are conducted at constituency level; electorates consists of mixed sections of population; the candidate with maximum number of votes wins, represents the entire constituency including those who voted for other parties and those who did not vote at all (FPTP, 'Winner Takes All' System), with reserved constituencies for weaker sections and women

Pros/Benefits

- Major democracies follow this system
- Easy to conduct with paper ballots (or EVMs)
- Locally known leaders in national and state legislatures

Cons/Issues

- EP: Leaders can lose by a small margin of votes; tooth and nail fights
- SH: Outsmart and outspend each other, crossing the ethical line
- SH: An arena for local factions to fight for local dominance
- SD: Generic politicians, with no passion or commitment for any particular section
- SD: Local clout over national vision, spirit, outlook and appeal
- CV: Three-tier administration failure; local leaders cannot serve well in national and state legislatures lacking the vision, spirit, outlook and appel; cannot serve local issues lacking the statutory power
- DP: Voters choices limited to the nominated candidates of major political parties
- CV: No collaboration in legislatures; one party proposes, other party opposes
- CV: Same party controls the legislature and executive; no accountability
- SJ: Upper caste domination - many sections do not have leaders of their own in power - asking for caste census and more reserved constituencies
- SH: Reserved constituencies lock political system along caste lines
- SJ: Candidates from weaker sections are facades; rich and powerful in the background
- DP: Majority of the electorate not represented by a candidate of their choice; voter apathy
- DP: Small change in voter share, big change in seat share
- EP: The cost of inadvertently fielding 'wrong candidates' is high for parties
- SL: Leadership Leak

Design 2 (OOB* Model):

Top two candidates in every constituency are declared elected; Proportional Voting Power (PVP) in legislatures

Pros/Benefits

- EP: Leaders will not lose an election because of a small margin of votes
- DP: PR (Proportional Representation) for parties
- SH: Contests become less contentious; leaders may take chances at cutting down on cash and other enticements; less bad money
- EP: Chances of reelection high for the leaders
- DP: Guaranteed majority representation
- SH: Party hostilities in elections come down
- CV: Party confrontation in legislatures may increase or decrease
- CV: Parties may lean to issue-based voting
- DP: Majority (about 70%) voters are represented by a leader of their choice
- EP: Political parties will not have the risk of fielding a 'wrong candidate'
- SL: No 'leadership leak'

Cons/Issues

- Generic politicians, with no passion or commitment for any particular section
- SD: Local clout over national vision, spirit, outlook and appeal
- CV: Three-tier administration failure; local leaders cannot serve well in national and state legislatures lacking the vision, spirit, outlook and appel; cannot serve local issues lacking the statutory power
- DP: Voters choices limited to the nominated candidates of major political parties
- CV: No collaboration in legislatures; one party proposes, other party opposes
- CV: Same party controls the legislature and executive; no accountability
- SJ: Upper caste domination - many sections do not have leaders of their own in power - asking for caste census and more reserved constituencies
- SH: Reserved constituencies lock political system along caste lines
- SJ: Candidates from weaker sections are facades; rich and powerful in the background

OOB*: Out of the Box

Design 3 and 4 (BelModel)

Design 3 (Open Elections):

No constituencies; voters vote for any leader from anywhere; EC ranks the leaders based on their vote-counts, and declare the 'top 543' elected (top-rankers system); Parties declare 'endorsed lists' of candidates instead of fielding candidates by constituency; Proportional Voting Power (PVP) in legislatures

Pros/Benefits

- All the benefits of Design2, plus
- SJ: Every section of voters (identity-oriented, identity-averse, identity-indifferent) can elect a leader of their own
- SJ: Every section of of voters will have voting power in the legislatures in proportion to their numbers
- SD: Leaders can attract voters with vision, passion and commitment, instead of enticements, appeasements and freebies
- SL: Leaders can build their own voter bases; less reliance of 'party votes'
- CV: Three-tier administration; leaders with national-level outlook get elected to Lok Sabha, leaders with state-level outlook get elected to Vidhan Sabhas, leaders with local outlook get elected to local bodies
- SH: Balance to national-state relationships
- SH: No reserved constituencies, political system decoupled from castes
- SJ: Parties can diversify candidates without risk
- DP: May be necessary to increase number of seats to guarantee majority (about 70%) representation, but easy with 'top-rankers' method
- NI: Imbalance in the representation between less populous and more populous states made moot
- SH: Less 'bad money'

Design 4 (BelModel):

Design 3 + Multiple votes that the voters can distribute to multiple leaders of their choice, in equal or unequal proportions; resulting in voter sharing

Pros/Benefits

- All the effects of Design 1 and 2, plus
- SL: Voters can elect multiple leaders dedicated to their multiple interests
- SD: Dignity and aspirations over appeasements and freebies
- SD: No issue goes unnoticed or unattended
- SH: Reduces 'blind supporters', vote-bank politics, polarization
- CV: Collaborative legislatures because of voter sharing, and transparent vote counts
- CV: Checks and balances between the Legislature and the Executive
- SH: Limit the power of super leaders

BelModel Voting Process

Leader Cards



Vote For
Bharat Kumari

Front

LIN: IN34968475

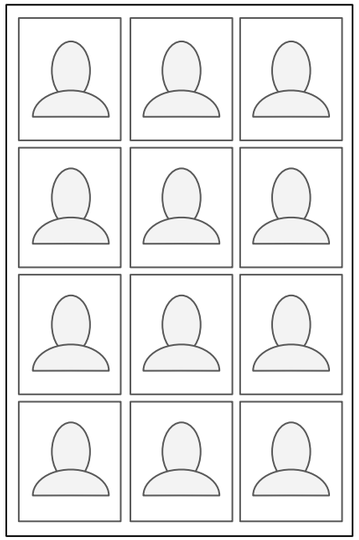
Name: Bharat Kumari
DoB: 10-10-1970
Phone: XXXXX XXXXX
Party: XYP

Contesting for
National Leadership Council

Back

- Election Commission issues LIN (Leadership Identification Number to leaders instead of election symbols
- Leaders create their own ‘Leader Cards’ and distribute to voters in paper and electronic form
- Voters obtain Leaders Cards of their chosen leaders well before the polling date, from websites, social media, eSeva centers, sending SMS or missed call to leaders, etc.

Advanced Voting Machines (AVMs)



Before Voting



After Voting

- Polling booths equipped with AVMs with touchscreens instead of EVMs and RVMs
  - With the same security and VVPAT
  - Anywhere Voting
- Voters take Leader Cards to the polling booth and scan them into the AVM, after selecting one of the twelve boxes on the touchscreen
  - Dummy AVMs at polling stations for practice

Additional Recommended Changes

Nomenclature:

Rename Lok Sabha as National Leadership Council
Vidhan Sabha as State Leadership Council

Rationale:

The terms like Lok Sabhas, Vidhan Sabhas, MPs, MLAs do not capture the breadth and depth of the role the elected leaders play; the roles and responsibilities of legislators extend beyond legislating, both officially and unofficially

Official:

- Legislators become the part of the executive as ministers
- They serve on various committees
- The hold the executive accountable

Unofficial:

- People expect leaders to provide solutions for various issues, isolated and systemic
- Serve as access points to government institutions and services
- People expect leaders to provide moral and material support in good times as well as bad times

Online Debates and Voting:

Build an eCouncil online platform for legislators to post, bill and resolutions, comments on them, and vote online

Benefits:

- No need for the leaders to travel to capital cities, physically assemble in the halls of legislatures, wait for their turn to talk, and compress their message into few minutes allotted
- Legislation can be done entire year; and leaders can spend time with constituents all through the year
- Leaders can post comments at any time from anywhere, of any length in any language, and any format - text, audio and video, and; can be instantly translated to all other languages by human translators assisted with digital translators



Latest version of this presentation is available at:
https://belmodel.in/pub/cnt/bel/BelModelOverview.pdf

The paper with full details of BelModel is available at:
https://belmodel.in/pub/cnt/bel/BelModel.pdf