Short Communication

Empowering masses via transparency in election system

Shilpa Jain[*] and Ashok Kumar Behera
Department of Computer Science & Engg., Bhilai Institute of Technology, Drug, CG, India
sjshilpa27@gmail.com

Abstract

Owing to ever increasing corruption and other societal evils, very often a dilemma is faced by voters groping to select their perfect candidate. Voters are misled on account of their unawareness. They fall trap either to selling their precious vote or are influenced by false publicity further casting their vote by peer choices. In order to give everyone a right to vote by their own well versed cerebration, we introduce a web portal which incorporates all the necessary information of a candidate contesting for an election. The information will include proofs which make them eligible to contest, their past reforms, their future prospects and all their details with legitimate proofs. These details would be authenticated by the authorities and would stay open to public. The electorate can question and compare their leaders. Policies from one area can be suggested to another area for betterment. This system would be handy and versatile enough to reach the masses and cater their needs so as to enable them to choose candidates on their own volition.

Keywords: Commission, Corruption, Candidate, Legitimate, Portal, Tenure, Volition, Vote.

Introduction

This article discusses a way for implementing transparency in the election system. An election in any nation plays the key role in determining its future, and the concern is more when it is a democratic nation[1]. Since the government here is "Of the people, for the people and by the people"[2], therefore there lies an inherent need to avail the rights which are otherwise snatched by others, owing to the mass corruption in the system and also the key factor of "unawareness" among the masses[1].

Thus, a methodology is needed to uproot this deeply grounded evil, which has to be done from the initial government-formation levels[3]. We here propose a web-portal which will broadcast unfiltered yet authenticated information about the candidates along with the legitimate proofs to the masses, further rendering transparency in the system. The Electorate will have the real right to choose with all information present in front of them and would no longer be misled due to unawareness[1].

The simple user-interface of the proposed method will allow it to be accessible to each and every section of the society and even in popular native languages. The method is intended to be unbiased and would stand true to its existence owing to several levels of proper authentication of the details being fed.

Therefore, we not only plan to bring in all the citizens at the same level while claiming their national right but also to enable them to take this privilege in accord with their own needs and cerebration; in short, empowering them.

The Need for the Change

According to the recent statistics, 162 MPs of the 15th Lok Sabha had pending criminal cases while they were still in tenure. These cases ranged from a minor peccadillo to even several serious felonies like murder or rape[4].

Same is the situation in state and local levels, though somewhat curbed and not exposed. The graph (Figure-1 and Figure-2, Crime but no punishment in Indian Elections by Milan Vaishnav January 24, 2014) below depicts one of the many aspects[4].
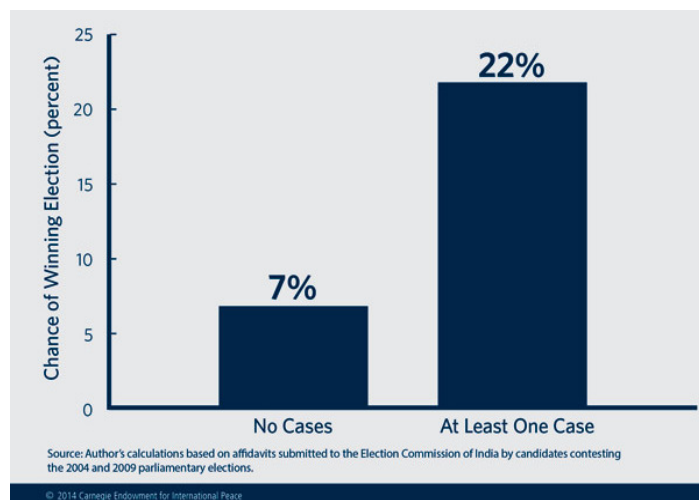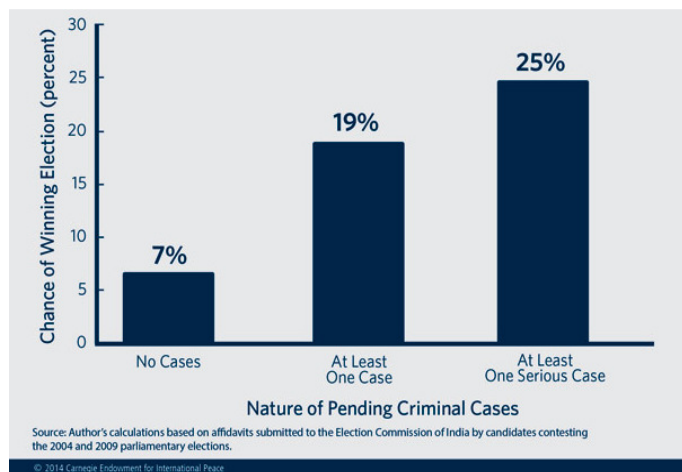

Figure-1: Criminality and Electoral Success[4].

Figure-2: Electoral Performance and Severity of Criminal Charges[4].

Crime is just one criteria, there are many other like qualifications, background, skills and abilities and many other. There is a need to fight with this condition[5]. Electorate tends to vote any of the contestants without even knowing full background details and without worrying about the future prospects of the candidate. Many leaders come and go, promising many a things but hardly fulfilling any of them. They get votes on the basis of their vows and fake promises. Awareness factor stands crucial in order to prevent this[6]. Complete profile of every candidate must be scrutinised well by all the voters before casting the vote. Doing this at the root levels such as college elections, compound elections and further in assembly elections may strengthen the nation.

A Brief Review

The proposed research solution aims to create awareness among the masses and allow everyone to well analyse a candidate and review them in every possible aspect like, education, policies proposed, supporters, past reforms, criminal records, viewpoints on various sectors of society[7]. They can get connected with the politician and make queries, cast comments and post suggestions to them for improvement of the nation. And compare several candidate irrespective of their locality and support their policies and suggest their policies to others also. They will be able to highlight the flaws and appreciate the deeds done by the candidate and keep a check on the appointed candidate and pester them if any of the pre-election promises remains unimplemented, as the records or the portfolio will be on the internet till their tenure or even beyond that. This gives the voters their actual right with transparency as everything will be open to public, further empowering the citizens of the nation.

Proposed Method

In order to overcome this problem, we propose the following method: i. A web portal portraying all the necessary information of a candidate contesting for elections like his past reforms, his manifesto, agenda, his criminal records, qualification credentials

and all his details with proofs[7]. ii. Details would be authenticated by the authorities [Nomination Panel] hierarchically and would stay open to public ensuring its veracity[7]. iii. The electorate can even communicate with, question and compare their leaders, providing an open-interaction platform. iv. Policies from one area can be suggestedto another for implementation encouragement adoption of better and varied ideas. v. Details will be available until the completion of tenure, giving everyone a right to question any policy which remains unimplemented even though previously promised, preventing fake pre-election promises for mere publicity and attracting vote banks. vi. Mapping voters' expectations with Candidates' commitments, statistically. vii. Multi-lingual system to reach masses enabling them to choose candidates on their own volition owing to Digital India Movement.

This platform acts as an intermediate for direct interaction between citizen and government. A real problem-solution discussion platform as shown in Figure-3.

Process

The proposed methodology is implemented in following steps: Firstly, Person interested in contesting election visits the regional office for filing his nomination. The authorised person (of Nomination Panel) over there has account allotted by Government using which he enters the details of the candidate. While filing the nomination, the Election Commission verifies all the mandatory information which would make the person eligible. All such crucial information like criminal records or educational qualification etc. are filled up on the web portal by the officer-in-charge and legitimate proofs are also uploaded. These sort of information can only be altered by the Nomination authority, whenever the need be urgent, on request of the candidate. Next, after all the verification of basic details and their uploading, the panel the assigns an auto-generated account credentials to the candidate for his personal use. This account has a part of details already filled by the authority and the remaining information has to be filled by the candidate. The candidate thus maintains his profiles and interacts with the electorate.

Public can raise their question, view the policies and comment on and rate the work done by the candidates. They can also compare different profiles and raise their issues. Meanwhile, the authority can keep an eye on the web ensuring everything is going all right. Statistical information in form of graphs and pie charts would depict ratio on every details of all the contesting candidates, region wise and then nation wise, ensuring the ease of comparison. Anyone can view the details and analyse accordingly so as to cast the vote by their own volition. A tight and secure system is maintained along with specific logs whenever any account's details get modified.
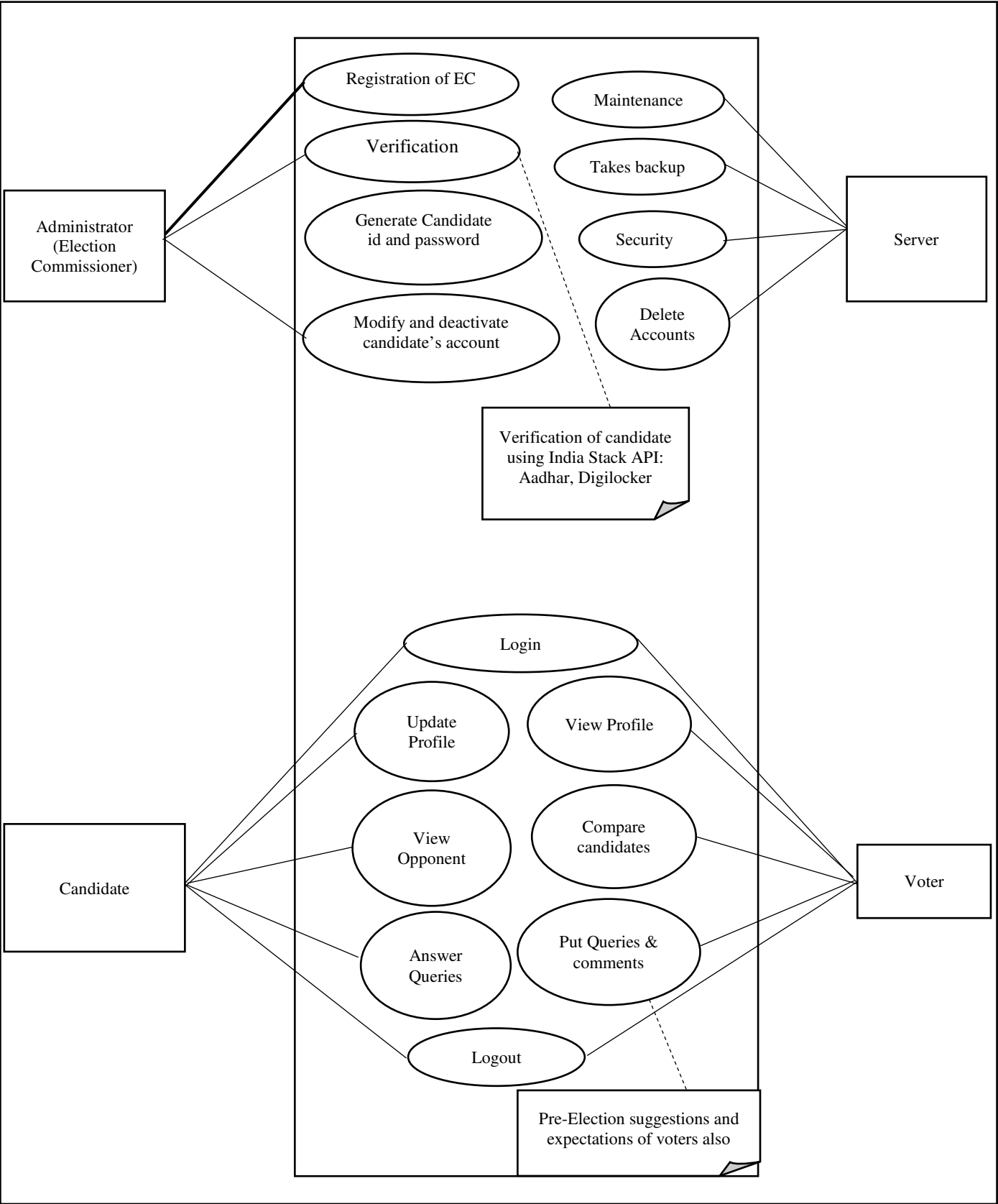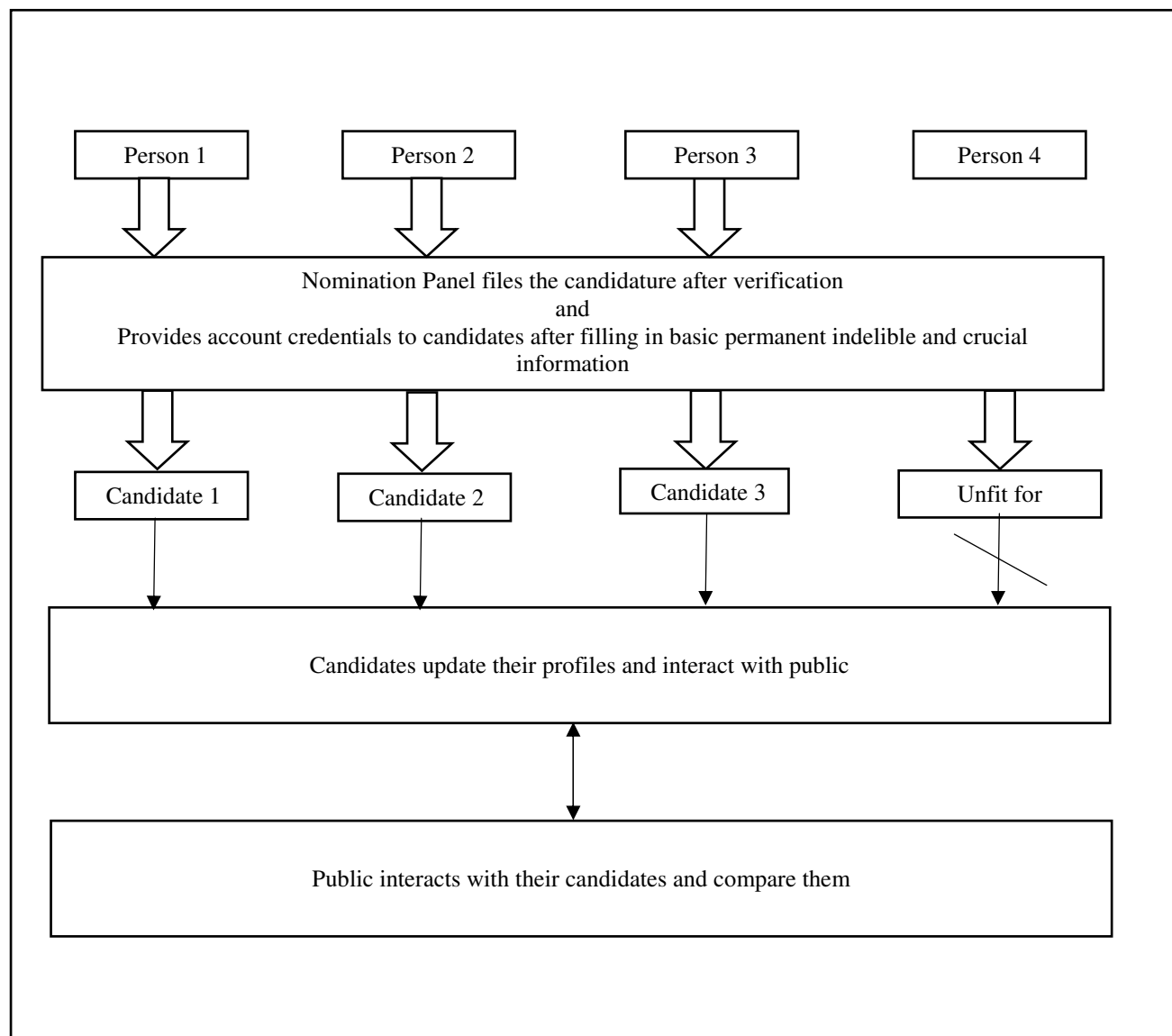
Figure-3: Proposed Election Structure.

Figure-4: Proposed Structure.

Gathering Information

Details of the Nomination panel or the authorized person is verified and uploaded by the government.

These people then upload the information and proofs of the candidate after verifying them. This information constitutes the basic crucial information which makes the person eligible to contest for the election, and so this information cannot be modified by the candidate anytime. Only authorised person are allowed to do so in case of any emergency.

Next, after validating the candidature, a web account credentials are handed down to the candidate. Candidate now builds his profile and showcases it as per the post for which he is contesting the election. Adhaar details, KYC, Digi Locker, e-name, e-signature and Biometrics etc. are to be used for further delineation[8].

Conclusion

We intend to bring in transparency in the election system by devising a web portal which would enable every voter of a nation to cast their precious votes by their own well versed choice by allowing them to know their candidate and interact with them and also keep a check on them. Such a system will help in good governance.

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