

## Techies log on to EVMs for a change

Hundreds of techies in India's silicon hub took a break from writing codes and logged on to electronic voting machines (EVMs) Saturday to cast their votes in the first phase of the Karnataka assembly election.

Though many of them did not show any hurry to vote, they turned up in good numbers in the afternoon to exercise their franchise. Clad in T-shirts and jeans or Bermudas, they queued up at the designated polling stations and waited patiently for their turn to press the green button on the EVMs, making a calculated choice of the candidate.

With the majority of about 1,500 IT firms located here closed for the weekend, the techies did not get an extra holiday but were glad they got an opportunity to have a say in the making of the next state government.

'Many of us decided to vote this time. Prior to the D-day, there has been a lot of discussion, online chats and exchange of views through e-mails on who to vote for and why. Our peers also advised us to go and vote if we want to have a government that delivers and tackles the infrastructure problems of this tech city,' Murali Krishna, a 27-year-old software engineer with a multinational firm, told IANS emerging out of a polling booth in upscale suburb Koramangala.

A few techies were, however, upset to find their names missing from the electoral list though some of them had electoral photo identity cards.

'I registered my name with the [Bangalore](#) Bruhat Municipal Corporation (BBMP) ward in February and got an acknowledgement slip that I have been registered as a voter in the BTM assembly segment. Though I could not get a photo ID card in time, I came to vote with my PAN (permanent account number for income tax) card only to find my name missing in the electoral list,' lamented Mohan Kumar, a chip design engineer with a semicon firm.

Admitting they were not serious about elections in the past as they were too pre-occupied with their career pursuits, many techies said they were determined to vote this time so that their votes could help in forming a stable government or at least prevent a repeat of the fractured verdict in the 2004 election.

'Who did I vote for? It is confidential. I have voted for one of them (candidates). I made a conscious decision to vote for a party that I hope will do something to clear the mess Bangalore has become due to instability, poor governance and inordinate delays in executing infrastructure projects,' Samir Khan, 28, said.

Sonali Kiran, 22, who is voting for the first time in the state assembly election after moving from Pune to join an IT firm in the city, said she voted for '(S.M.) Krishna's' party, that is the Congress, because she learnt that the former IT savvy chief minister did a lot for the tech industry and the city during his tenure five years ago.

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