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DECARBONIZING THE FRANCHISE: EVIDENCE OF ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

"Green Election" began with the purpose of transforming the electoral process by integrating environmental conservation principles. This study aims to document the evolution of electoral practices, indicating the key shift towards eco-friendly electoral process and management. Green Election initiative carried out by employing simple but effective steps such as the distribution of saplings, the establishment of green polling centers, and promotion of zero-plastic policies, implanting a sense of environmental stewardship among the electorate. This study employs a qualitative approach on a rich collection of data sources. The key findings emphasize the role of administrative innovation, community engagement, and institutional honesty in driving the successful implementation of Green Elections. The initiative uses existing public institutions and community networks, to circulate environmental awareness and mobilize voters at minimal cost. This work also glances at behavioural public policy and administrative systems theory by exploring how environmental nudges, when supported by competent policy making, can foster civic behaviour and sustainable electoral practices. The study aims to serve as a guide which can offer leverage and a useful resource to policymakers seeking to integrate environmental conservation into electoral management, highlighting the potential of Green Elections to transform democratic events into significant ecological event.

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Introduction

Elections in India involve mega resource mobilization which translates into huge expenditure on the exchequer. Past election records (Indian General Election 2014) show an average payout of INR 4000/- (90 INR = 1 USD) per election worker and deployment of 10 million persons in 1 million constituencies. An amount of INR 40 billion was spent on worker payout alone in addition to machine, mobilization, real estate rent, housing and lodging for workers, telecommunication, electricity etc. The estimated spend on election workers worked out to be INR 150 Billion, INR 100 Billion was spent towards setting up of 1 million booths, spend on cost of security equalled INR 20 Billion, INR 10 Billion was spent on logistics, and finally INR 10 Billion was spent on communications, administration, training, voter registrations etc. In all it was estimated that a gross expenditure of the order of INR 320 Billion was made on elections and potentially millions more were spent indirectly (right2vote.in, 2025). The workers are deputed outside their place of work and the loss of work in the parent office while still being paid while considering them on-duty has a multiplying effect. A several folds higher expenditure on the election campaigns involve mega vehicular movements, paper and plastic advertisement materials and rise in the decibel levels. This mega resource mobilization and expenditure through implications on the environmental impact, widening economic inequities and social well-being too, which are the prominent pillars of sustainable development as defined by the UN's Brundtland Commission. The idea of 'decarbonized electoral administration' did not just begin as a formal institutional doctrine, but rather as a cultural shift in public consciousness around plastics, climate, and sustainability (The Guardian 2018). This stage is important to recognize, because the epistemic origins of decarbonizing electoral systems were not born inside election bodies; they were born outside in environmental activism and the obligation towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs). In that sense, electoral systems were a late mover.

The first knowledge shock came when society realized that plastic, which was long considered a cheap, convenient, democratic mass-material, was also structurally non-biodegradable, and globally persistent (The Guardian 2018). This background shift slowly forced state structures to look at their own material footprints. Eventually, this externalised social pressure reached the domain of electoral systems. As countries began committing to eliminating single-use plastics, a second realisation emerged: elections are actually very high waste-creating events (Election Commission of India 2019; Ministry of Environment. Forest and Climate Change 2019). In every democracy, elections are periodic, intense, short-duration surges of campaigning, printing, flex banners, flags, decorations, tents, water bottles, event staging, and logistics. This means their waste-burden per square kilometre per day is unusually high. India was no exception. Early national signals were not targeted at elections, but at "plastic-free India" generally (Reuters 2019). However, the material logic naturally led to a question: if daily life must reduce plastics, why should elections be exempt?

Better said than done, the task of decarbonizing appears surreal to implement mainly due to transformation of conventional processes which are sensitives and the very effort

to take them to digitized platforms being marred with scepticism. In India, the first real operational demonstration of what later becomes decarbonized electoral administration came from, few states in India during the 2019 general election cycle, when few districts in India began applying "green protocols" already used in religious festivals into election management (The Better India 2019). This is a very important design origin. It means India's operational know-how first came bottom-up from waste-management innovations in other large public events. In those early, few states in India experiments such as waste sorting, steel tumblers instead of plastic bottles, reuse systems, and organised waste pick-up were introduced. But conceptually, the term "green election" still did not exist as a knowledge category. It was a transfer of practice, not a cognitive frame.

In parallel, a second epistemic frame became mainstream: climate politics, narrative framing, and the new discipline called "political ecology" (Taylor, 2015). Consequently, media began investigating not just pollution but how political messaging, party agendas, and voter mobilisation intersect with environmental risk. This reading widened the conversation but remained more about ideas than operations. However, by 2023, the Election Commission of India, again, returned to the basics: reduce plastics, banners, flex and polymer sheets (Indian Express 2023). This is the first moment when election management bodies in India start structurally repeating that anti-plastic norms are not casual, they are regulatory. Interestingly, 2024 becomes the true inflection point.

One element is the institutionalisation of rulebooks. In early 2024, few states in India issued formal handbooks for polling in 2024 with operational guidance, making the waste and material logic mandatory by order (New Indian Express 2024). At the same time, something completely new happened: the climate crisis directly entered electoral administration because of extreme heat. This happened in real time during the 2024 general elections: multiple press agencies documented voters and poll workers standing in 45°C heat, with clear health risk (Reuters 20 May 2024; Reuters 25 May 2024). This is the exact moment when the "green vs waste" frame expanded into an "environment vs human safety" frame. Evidently, the logic of decarbonized electoral administration is changing. It is not just about waste. It is also about climate resilience and safe working conditions. Studies show that plastics themselves were huge carbon emitters (Guardian 18 April 2024). Therefore, plastics in campaigning were now not only a solid waste problem but also a climate problem, creating new scientific justification for eliminating them.

The Forbes called 2024 a "record year where half the world votes," and explicitly linked democratic cycles and climate urgency (Forbes 30 June 2024). A domestic Indian journalistic platform (India Forum, 3 June 2024) then examined turnout effects due to heat. Meanwhile International IDEA, the premier global electoral governance think tank, published practitioner briefs on reducing environmental impact of elections (IDEA 3 June 2024). However, the analysis (Reuters 6 June 2024) still showed that climate barely featured in campaigns. This is the paradox: climate is everywhere in lived reality but marginal in electoral messaging.

In the more recent times, the practice has become more applied. Green City Times in July 2024 began producing checklists, a shift from conceptual to prescriptive management

(Green City Times July 2024). By December 2024, International IDEA produced summary evaluations of global elections under a climate lens (IDEA December 2024). Meanwhile, by mid-2025, UNDP moved the field further: beyond waste reduction into the concept of climate-resilient election logistics, which is the core of decarbonized electoral administration (UNDP 2025). In other words: the highest level of global organisations now accepts that decarbonizing elections is not a "green" gesture; it is a risk management imperative.

In 2024, Hindustan Times began writing about this directly (Hindustan Times 2024), and for the first time, the mainstream Indian business press framed decarbonized election management as a governance design challenge, not as an environmental slogan. By late 2025, local governments in few states in India were mandated by order to conduct civic polls with green protocol standards (Times of India 2025). As we stand today, the evolution arc is a place where the idea is becoming legally mandatory. We observe that, across 2018 to 2025, the conversation has moved through four distinct phases (1) plastics consciousness (2018–2019) → (2) political ecology of climate (2021) → (3) extreme heat risk activation (2024) → (4) climate-resilient and decarbonized electoral administration (2025 onwards). Clearly, intellectual gravitation centre has shifted away from symbolic "green" messaging to the real domain of operational redesign of election systems.

Theoretical Frame

Electoral behaviour studies continue to confirm that the "green vote" is not a lifestyle preference but a *response to changing risk and political incentives*. For instance, in the U.S. House, tariff reductions under NAFTA (1990–2000) reduced support for environmental legislation. The mechanism worked through two channels: (i) Republican incumbents adjusting positions in line with affected constituencies, and (ii) partisan turnover in districts with localized trade shocks. As local economic interests are reweighted, environmental positions shift accordingly (Cherniwchan & Najjar, 2025). In short, economic shocks rewire green coalitions even without changing ideology ex ante.

At the campaign side, electoral practice is itself becoming a site of green transition. A pan-India analysis demonstrates that Green Election Campaigns lower campaign cost structures (approximately 45% lower) compared to conventional resource-intensive campaigns. This is not only a sustainability outcome but a political strategy shift, green campaigning is cheaper and cleaner, with measurable efficiency gains (Prajapati, 2025). This directly connects *electioneering* with environmental externalities. Urban political decision-making mirrors similar ideological structuring. European cities controlled by left-wing leaderships display a systematically higher probability of entering the European Green Capital Award cycle. This is a direct link from party ideology → institutional action (Sumeghy & Schmeller, 2025). Likewise, newly developed survey designs in the Italian setting show that when climate risk is personally salient, for example, having children or recent proximity to natural disaster events, the traditional economy-versus-environment trade-off becomes non-operative (Salvarani et al., 2025). Under conditions of personal risk recognition, individuals vote green even when they *believe* green policies may reduce

short-term economic output. Across these papers, "green voting" emerges not as identity politics or a moral add-on, but as a risk–interest equilibrium. Trade shocks, climate shocks, ideology of political leadership, and campaign cost structures all function as material incentive channels. Environmental electoral behaviour is therefore not a value deviation from rational political economy; it *is* political economy.

In the last 5 years, environmental politics scholarship has undergone a clear empirical reorientation: the core question is no longer whether environmental commitment "costs" economically, but under what conditions political, governance, and institutional configurations convert climate concern into measurable behaviour. For example, recent evidence from Italy demonstrates that natural disaster anxiety can neutralize the negative effect of the economy–ecology trade-off on the likelihood of voting for a pro-environment party (Salvarani et al., 2025). In other words, *risk salience is a stronger predictor than cost*. In parallel, a new EU-wide textual analysis of Recovery and Resilience Plans finds that higher prioritization of environmental SDGs is positively associated with higher expected short-term GDP growth, indicating that environmental orientation does not simply "subtract" growth (Limosani et al., 2025). These findings collectively suggest that the classic green vs. growth dichotomy is empirically collapsing.

Further, micro-political behaviour signals the same empirical drift. Female parliamentarians, driven by ecofeminism-linked risk preference, are now demonstrably causal drivers of energy justice outcomes in democratic systems (Njangang et al., 2025). Even local governments exhibit similar ideological imprinting: left-wing controlled European cities showed significantly higher likelihood of entering the European Green Capital Award competition, reflecting the political embeddedness of green city-scale commitments (Sumeghy & Schmeller, 2025). Meanwhile, cities committing to sustainability often do so because individual policy actors hold pro-sustainability values rather than simply seeing reputational benefit (Schwarz & Behnke, 2025). These are not symbolic effects. These findings converge toward a pattern that can be summarized as value-driven institutional rationality. Even the macro-political–economic frontier confirms similar political conditionality. Governance effectiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa is shown to overturn the negative environmental externalities of foreign capital and early-stage financial development (Annor et al., 2025). This means that the green "penalty" attached to capital flows is not structural, it is contingent on institutional capacity.

Taken together, the latest literature signals that sustainability outcomes are significantly dependent on the structure of political incentives and actor values. The research frontier is cutting away from the old paradigm of "green = expensive" and is moving toward green = politically contingent. Across electoral and market arenas, political signals are translating directly into environmental outcomes. In India, a nationwide analysis of 543 winners shows that Green Election Campaign measures are associated with 45% lower incumbent campaign spending versus conventional methods, linking sustainable campaigning with tangible cost compression and cleaner practices (Prajapati, 2025). In US equities, firms with higher "green revenue share" experienced more negative CARs around the 2024 election result, with sharp repricing concentrated around two surprise pre-election events

(the assassination attempt and Harris's entry), and stronger penalties in Democratic states, indicating policy-expectation risk embedded in sustainable business models (Koch & Schiereck, 2025).

At the interface of international competition and regulation, evidence from a two-country model suggests that lobbying pressure can *reduce* harmful tax competition and raise welfare by reshaping governments' objective weights, an inversion of the usual "lobbying is bad" assumption (Bontems et al., 2025). In South Africa, a reading on political-settlements explains why well-intended low-carbon policies stalled: inherited power configurations constrained implementation, implying that sequencing and coalition-building are prerequisites for a just transition (van Doesburgh & Winkler, 2025). Party documents are moving, but unevenly. In Portugal, manifesto content over three election cycles trends positive on SDG-13, with emphasis on targets 13.1–13.2 and consistently broader thematic coverage among left parties versus right, suggesting that ideology still shapes policy breadth (Brás et al., 2025). Within the UK's Green New Deal debate, a programme-level analysis shows unresolved tensions between state reliance, capital relations, and nationalism vs. internationalism, locating the GND's difficulty less in technology and more in political contradictions (Robertson, 2025).

Beyond parliaments, contention on the ground is re-drawing policy boundaries. The 2023–2024 farmer protests across Europe, tractors blocking roads and supermarkets, were triggered by tighter environmental rules, income pressure, and trade competition; rapid rollbacks (e.g., the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation) reveal that transition policies without just-transition design provoke backlash and policy whiplash (Finger et al., 2024). Macro-environmental performance remains tied to institutions. In the United States, long-run co-integration indicates that renewables and political stability reduce ecological footprint, whereas growth raises it, reinforcing a dual imperative of clean energy expansion and stable governance (Haciimamoglu & Sungur, 2024). Globally, economic policy uncertainty raises environmental inefficiency, but institutional quality and political orientation moderate the damage, pointing to governance as a risk-absorber for environmental performance (Barra & Falcone, 2024).

Across governance and finance, recent work shifts attention from *technology choices* to the political-institutional mechanisms that enable or stall sustainability. A policy-analysis of the European Commission's eco-social project argues that the EU's "model" subordinates social-ecological aims to growth and competitiveness, while attempting to export this template globally, an internally contradictory stance that risks depoliticizing sustainability (Laruffa & Nullmeier, 2025). In parallel, degrowth scholarship re-centres *interests and coalitions*, contending that transition feasibility hinges less on blueprints and more on how distributional conflicts are organized and bargained (Davidson & Gavris, 2025).

At sub-national scale, fragmented authority structures shape strategy mix. A multi-city U.S. study finds that higher metropolitan fragmentation correlates with weaker sustainable development strategies, yet growth and social-sustainability initiatives often co-evolve, implying "entropic thresholds" beyond which coordination fails (Deslatte et al., 2025).

Complementing this, Norwegian panel evidence shows municipal investment is driven primarily by expected population growth and fiscal capacity, with modest election-cycle bumps and small incumbency returns, suggesting largely rational capital allocation with limited politicization (Haraldsvik et al., 2024). On environmental justice, a legal analysis highlights that U.S. federal Environmental Justice (EJ) mandates remain largely procedural; meaningful substantive relief is rare. However, *state* agencies possess underused permitting powers that can directly constrain pollution in over-burdened communities, as shown in the case of Flint, Michigan (Handelman-Holmes, 2025). The policy implication is straightforward: EJ progress may be faster via state-level substantive tools than federal box-checking.

Political turnover also reconfigures firm-level green investment. In financial governance, the concept of "epistemic gerrymandering" explains how parts of impact-investing craft idiosyncratic "impact" metrics tailored to portfolios, stabilized through club structures close to private wealth management, tilting sustainability knowledge toward financial return logics and elite access (Golka, 2024). The upshot is that ESG/impact fields are not neutral technocracies; they are contested epistemic arenas with distributional consequences.

In the context of policy, markets, and materials, the literature shifts from "technology-first" narratives to institutional and geopolitical mechanics that make, or break, green transitions. Local transitions to circularity, for instance, are less about technical toolkits and more about mayoral backing, foresight, and coalition capacity. Interviews with 47 French local-authority practitioners show that political endorsement and leadership anchor city-level circular economy (CE) programs, while organizational inertia, finance gaps, and limited CE literacy are the main drag forces; partnerships help close these gaps (Bourdin & Jacquet, 2025). In short, municipal CE works when political ownership and networked implementation move in step.

Discontinuing polluting technologies also proves to be politics-heavy, not switch-like. A longitudinal case on diesel cars in Europe argues that "discontinuation" is a continuous process in which competing *sustainability imaginaries*, local air quality vs. global climate, are mobilized to justify either exit or persistence. The result is cyclical destabilize–restabilize dynamics and frequent "politics of delay," suggesting that exit policies must be treated as innovation policy with long-horizon toolkits rather than crisis-driven clamps (Sardo & Pfotenhauer, 2025).

Whether we look at cities (CE adoption), sectors (diesel exit), legislatures (trade-conditioned votes), or minerals (lithium governance), the same pattern holds environmental outcomes hinge on political endorsement, coalition structure, and strategic control over material inputs, not on technology alone. Finance and trade can accelerate sustainability, but governance quality, political risk, and institutional design set the ceiling. Where industrial policy creates green interests (Meckling, 2018), legal regulation discipline firms toward eco-innovation (Zhiwei et al., 2025), and stability lowers uncertainty (Bakhsh et al., 2024; Cao et al., 2024), and thereby environmental outcomes improve. Where these conditions fray, policy multipliers shrink (Mohammad et al., 2025).

Motivation for the study

In the discussions above, one inference is consistent and empirically not ambiguous: environmental political behaviour is not a moral preference. It is an incentive-sensitive equilibrium choice. When economic conditions, political structures, and risk signals change, voters, parliamentarians, city governments, and even firms change their environmental actions. This means "green" behaviour emerges when the *payoff structure* changes, not when attitudes change first.

In elections, this matters profoundly. Green Elections is not a soft phenomenon or a fringe, expressive signal from idealistic voters. It is a rational re-optimization of political actors. When climate risk is personally salient (e.g., natural disasters), individuals vote green despite believing it may have economic burdens. When trade conditions shift (like NAFTA), legislative support for environmental bills shifts. When ideological orientation is aligned (left city governments), cities make institutional commitments (e.g., European Green Capital Award). When green campaigning is cheaper (empirical in Indian constituency-level study), the campaign production technology itself becomes greener.

This is the core synthesis: environmental electoral outcomes are produced by structural, material, institutional, and incentive vectors, not by attitudes free-floating in ideological air. The literature across contexts (EU, US, South Asia, India) repeatedly supports this: the environment enters the vote, but through channels like economic shocks, ideological coalitions, and cost structures. Therefore, the concept of "Green Elections" is not only a normative aspiration or positional branding. It is a political economy mechanism where (a) risk salience, (b) cost compression, and (c) coalition ideology converge. These drivers modify the strategic calculus of both *voters* and *campaigners*. This creates theoretical legitimacy: Green Elections is not an isolated Indian phenomenon or an activist label. It fits coherently into the global empirical shift where environmental outcomes now reflect conditional rational behaviour. Thus, Green Elections should be framed as a predictable institutional choice in societies where environmental and economic externalities are now visible at the doorstep of the median voter.

The preceding literature converges on a central mechanism: environmental political behaviour emerges not from ideology alone, but when material production structures, economic cost functions, and institutional incentives align. Elections are not merely communicative events; they are full production systems involving vendors, logistics, materials, and supply chains. Therefore, green campaigning is not just a normative aspiration, it is a redesign of the *production technology* of democracy. This directly motivates the study of a sustainable franchise model as a structured organizational mechanism for greening election production. If campaigns can be operationalized through a replicable, rule-governed, quality-controlled franchise model, then the political economy conditions identified in the global literature (risk salience, cost compression, ideological alignment, economic incentive signalling) can become *repeatable* design principles. Thus, a sustainable franchise becomes not a peripheral illustration, but an empirically grounded institutional response consistent with the global evidence on green elections.

Method & Material

This paper documents multi–state evidence of election and franchise behaviour in India. The focus is not on a single constituency or a single election event, but on the mechanisms of systems of election campaigns across diverse state contexts. The objective is to understand how "green campaigning" practices emerge, travel, and stabilize as repeatable patterns, and whether these patterns resemble a franchise-like organizational technology. Four states are examined as empirical material: A) Bihar – This is the most recent and visible cluster where green campaigning methods were operationalized in rural and semi-urban environments. Bihar forms the origin context where low-cost, recycled-material, minimal-waste campaign practices were first demonstrated at scale and where operational innovation was the strongest. B) Punjab – Punjab offers a contrast case where political competition is high, campaigns are celebrity–coded, and voter mobilization is resource-intensive. Applying green production in Punjab allows testing whether sustainable methods can penetrate a cash-heavy and high–visibility election culture. C) Maharashtra – Maharashtra provides an urbanized and media-dense setting where content production, influencer amplification, and symbol management are high. Sustainable campaigning here is studied to see if the model can achieve cost compression in a commercialized campaign economy. D) Gujarat – Gujarat features closely fought constituency margins, heavy district-level network politics, and local level mediation structures. This state is used to understand whether sustainable campaign methods can work inside dense and relational power networks, where campaign behaviour is shaped by informal intermediaries. E) Jharkhand – Jharkhand is an institutional laboratory for this study. Here, green campaigning was not just piloted but scaled. Multiple constituencies and districts used standardized templates, low-waste material cycles, controlled inventorying, and modular messaging. These attributes make Jharkhand the most direct testing ground for whether a replicable "sustainable franchise" logic actually exists. Across these states, the materials for analysis include direct field notes, photographic documentation, campaign artefact inventories (pre– and post–use) and digital trace data from social media distribution. This paper treats sustainable campaigning as an empirical production model, not a narrative claim. The cross-state comparison is therefore a method to test whether "Green Elections" can stabilize into a systematic and franchise-like institutional mechanism.

Data Types and Sources

This study uses four distinct empirical data types. Each type offers a different window into the production technologies, behaviours, and visual materiality of election campaigns. Collectively, they allow triangulation of both *narrative* and *material* dimensions of green campaigning. *1) Mainstream Newspapers*- National and state-level newspapers provide documentary evidence of campaign practices, public reactions, candidate actions, and issue salience across electoral cycles. Mainstream print media is also the earliest record of how sustainable methods were presented to the general public, how journalists interpreted these methods, and how conventional campaign actors responded. These sources allow tracing the *discursive emergence* of green campaigning. *2) Official / Observer / SVEEP Social Media*

Posts (ECI Handles)- Official Election Commission of India (ECI) digital communication, especially SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation), provides the normative and institutional frames through which sustainable and ethical campaigning is encouraged. Observer notes verified ECI Twitter or Facebook posts, and SVEEP campaigns anchor what the regulator views as legitimate voter engagement behaviour. This is crucial for identifying institutional endorsement vectors. *3) Video / YouTube (Public Domain*- Open-access video material on YouTube or similar platforms contains "live visualization" of election production. Rallies, roadshows, distribution of campaign materials, and public mobilizing activities are visible temporally, not just textually. These clips allow the researcher to see what was actually done, not only what was reported. Video sources help decode *operational mechanics*, such as whether plastic banners were used, whether flex hoardings were replaced by cloth/organic materials, etc. *4) Field Photographs*- Primary photographic evidence from Bihar, Punjab, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Jharkhand forms the core physical documentation of the sustainable franchise logic. These images show the physical artefacts, materials, processes, inventories, and workflows implemented in real election contexts. Because visual evidence is collected across states, it becomes possible to identify repeatable design patterns, the strongest indicator that green campaigning can stabilize into a franchise-like institutional model.

Analysis and Discussion

Multi-State Case Narratives

The transition of elections mandate from ensuring "free and fair" to a broader "free, fair, and eco-friendly" framework by the ECI shows a reimagining of the elections from interacting with the citizen only for a political subject to interacting with them for an ecological steward. It has been observed that traditional electoral process generates significant amount of waste: polyvinyl chloride (PVC) banners, disposable cutlery at rallies, non-biodegradable campaign materials, and the carbon emissions from the transport of security forces and polling staffs, collectively creating a negative environmental impact. To deal with the environmental consequences of electoral activities ECI has expanded its mandate from "free and fair" to "free, fair, and eco-friendly" elections and started promoting "Green Elections." To assess the effectiveness of the initiatives, this section examines evidence from multiple states.

An initiative in line with the ECI directive on eco-friendly elections has been launched in rural, semi-urban, and urban environments to link voting with environmental conservation (See Figure 1). Environmental practices like recycled-material, minimal-waste campaign are being scaled, intended to strengthen democracy by motivating voters to engage in environmental conservation and awareness activities on polling day *saplings* were given to the voters, encouraging them to plant trees and contribute to a greener environment (See Figure 2). As part of the *Green Election* initiative, in Anandpur Sahib constituency, Punjab, an innovative approach of green booths intent to ensure democratic duties go hand in hand with environmentally sustainable elections. These booths are designed to

minimize the use of plastics during training, dispatch, and collection of EVMs by polling teams and at counting centers and promote environmentally friendly materials, thereby reducing elections' impact on environment. In total, 47,266 saplings were handed out across 2,068 polling booths, symbolizing a commitment to nurturing both democracy and the environment.

Moving beyond the tokenism of single model eco-friendly booths, the Visavadar election, Gujarat demonstrated a cluster-based approach to eco-friendly election management. 29 polling booths across 15 villages within the Visavadar, Bhesan, and Junagadh talukas were designated as green polling booths. These booths were constructed and decorated using entirely biodegradable and locally sourced materials. Instead of metal barricades or synthetic tents, polling stations utilize locally abundant bamboo. In these polling booths election officers distributed saplings to voters, effectively turning the polling station into a distribution point for afforestation efforts. This turned the ink-marked finger into a ticket for environmental stewardship.

In the Koderma Lok Sabha constituency, Jharkhand, the idea of green booths has been expanded and transformed into green polling centers. *Green polling centres* are centres with *Zero Waste* and *Plastic-Free policy*. These green polling centers were established to promote environmental best practices (waste management, energy efficiency, landscaping, rainwater harvesting where possible). These centers are designed to celebrate Jharkhand's identity, making the voting experience a celebration of its ecological and cultural heritage. Green Polling centers were located at a senior citizen facility in Jhumri Telaiya within the Koderma Lok Sabha constituency ("Green Booths in Jharkhand - हरित आईएएस"). The booths were decorated with bamboo and paddy straws and for sheds and shamianas "Kullu" grass or "Sikki grass" have been used instead plastic tarpaulins. PVC flex banners were replaced with hand-painted cloth or paper banners.

In Bihar, saplings were used as a means to encourage and connect with voters. Voters are encouraged to plant a sapling before casting their vote and the first five voters along with the 50th voter were given a plant as encouragement in Bihar. For this purpose, four polling stations in Kudhni, Bihar, have been designated as "Green Special Booths." Each of these booths will distribute 50 saplings on polling day, and nearly 1,875 plants will be distributed across the Kurhani (Bihar) constituency on election day. In the urban centre of Patna, the strategy shifted from mass plantation to creating model "Green Polling Stations," and 13 green polling stations were setup, focused on voter experience and aesthetics. The stations featured "selfie zones" with green backdrops, rangolis depicting environmental messages, and banners promoting water conservation. This was designed to appeal to the urban youth and to encourage social media sharing, thereby amplifying the "Green Election" message digitally and aiming to inspire people to vote.

Urban elections differ significantly from rural counterparts in terms of mindset, profession, and voter behaviour. So, in urban area like Anushakti Nagar (172) and Chembur (173) constituencies, Mumbai, Maharashtra, "Green Election" initiative is taken to reduce the environmental impact with *Zero Carbon Footprint* election. Aligning with Mumbai's need for better air quality, urban heat island mitigation, and enhanced biodiversity. Mainly,

the urban strategy heavily relied on digital substitution, and strict material regulation. Use of biodegradable materials in all polling materials, from banners to cutlery used by polling staff and eliminating the plastic usage during campaigns. Distribution of saplings among some voters and certificates to the first-time voters as token of appreciation for being "good" and "responsible citizens." In Mumbai to reduce paper waste, the administration pushed for digital campaigning and digital documentation including the use of digital vouchers and online monitoring systems to minimize the physical paper trail typically associated with election management. *Holiday and Holy Day narrative*, in urban area election day were celebrated as holiday where people used the free time for leisure rather than political engagement. As a result, the urban election holiday revealed a troubling paradox, so to tackle this problem election day is framed as a *Holy Day* of democracy that required active participation. *Officials concluded that while the green initiative was "partially successful" in raising awareness and creating a pleasant voting environment, environmental incentives alone were insufficient to drastically alter the entrenched voting behaviours of Mumbai's electorate (https://drheeralalias.in/article/green-election-initiative-in-mumbai-s-anushakti-nagar-and-chembur-partially-successful-in-raising-voter-turnout-1732267183). However, the initiative succeeded in its secondary goal creating a blueprint for plastic-free urban elections (https://www.eci.gov.in/ge-2024/13).* Green booths are positioned as a matter of civic pride, encouraging voters to participate in the "festival of democracy" responsibly. This communication strategy was vital in Jhumri Telaiya, a dense urban centre where waste generation is typically high.

Figure 1. Meeting with Senior Superintendent of Police and Deputy Commissioners for Green Elections.

Figure 2. Sapling distribution, encouraging voters to plant trees and contribute to a greener environment.

Environmental awareness modules have been included in training programs for election officials, encouraging them to act as ambassadors for green elections, officials are asked to participate in maximum tree plantation effort and ensure minimum use of plastic. To motivate and inspire the electoral officer's plantation drives towards environment conservation awareness was launched. Continuous awareness drives were being conducted in both rural and urban areas to spread election awareness (see Figure 3). These campaigns are not only inspiring people to vote but also promoting environmental awareness. Meetings were held with Self Help Groups (SHGs) to promote the "Green Elections" initiative (see Figure 4) and in each district a team consisting of DFO, DRPO, Pollution Control head, and Nodal SVEEP are formed. Women from self-help groups in rural areas are actively motivating people to cast their votes by promoting SVEEP (see Figure 5). SHG members conducted door-to-door visits to distribute voter slips and educated households about the voting process. Their access to domestic spaces allowed them to specifically target women voters, who might otherwise be disengaged from the political process. The team formed undertakes the task of preparing posters and leaflet to launch the "Green Elections" initiative.

In Punjab the team conducted an "Awareness Run for Green Election" (see Figure 6), the District Election Officer (DEO) collaborated with the State Forest Department to procure thousands of saplings and decided to launch the poster and banner at the DC office in Mohali (SAS Nagar), rather than Rupnagar. The agenda for this launch event was to spread awareness of "Green Elections" to other electoral constituencies. Further, to promote and discuss academic engagement towards "Green Election" initiative officials met student (see Figure 7). In Lamrin Tech Skill University (Punjab) and Punjab Agriculture University, SVEEP activities and plantation drive in the Khatkatkala village of Shaheed Bhagat Singh (see Figure 8) had been carried-out and thereafter at Sikh National College, SBS Nagar, Punjab, and met Prof. Sidharth Sekher Singh at ISB Mohali.

Visavadar's geography, overlapping with the Gir Forest (home to the Asiatic Lion), necessitated the Forest Department's active involvement. The department acted as the primary supplier for the sapling distribution initiative, integrating its afforestation targets

with the electoral process. NGOs play a background role in stakeholder consultations for plastic bans, which set the regulatory stage for the plastic-free booths in Visavadar. Also, in Visavadar green booths were decorated with Asopalav and mango leaves materials sourced and arranged by local communities, likely involving local SHG networks that manage nurseries and watershed projects. SHGs women trained at Vaans Kaushalya Vardhan Kendras (Bamboo Skill Centers) produce bamboo furniture, barricading materials, and decorations for the booths. Student volunteers from the National Service Scheme (NSS) and National Cadet Corps (NCC) acted as "Green Ambassadors," managing queues, assisting persons with disabilities (PwD), and facilitating the "seed ball" and sapling distribution drives that transformed voting into an act of ecological restoration. In urban cities high-profile institutional partnerships such as NGOs and mahila bachat gats, which are enlisted to create awareness among women so that they can motivate their family members to go out and vote. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the Indian Navy, and the National Cadet Corps (NCC) in Mumbai were roped in to provide saplings and manpower. A team of election officials has started a series of initiatives including meetings in schools/colleges, interacting with residents at housing societies, street plays, and speaking to people at malls and railway stations spreading the environmental awareness. Additionally, to cultivate profound insight among the students about environmental protection and climate change, debates are being organized in educational institutions.

Figure 3. Awareness drives to motivate electoral officers and voters.

Figure 4. Meetings with Self Help Groups to promote the Green Elections initiative.

Figure 5. Awareness Run for Green Election in Punjab.

Figure 6. Meeting and awareness runs to promote Green Election.

Figure 7. SVEEP activities and plantation.

Figure 8. SVEEP activities.

Directives issued to political parties and state election machinery have mandated a reduction in noise pollution, a ban on certain plastics, and the promotion of eco-friendly materials. Candidates of all political parties were urged to plant a sapling every day before the beginning of their campaigning. Political parties and candidates were urged to embrace digital platforms for their campaigns. By using e-vehicles, digital newsletters, and social media. To increase the voting percentage five booths with the highest voter turnout at Panchayat level, Vidhan Sabha level and Lok Sabha level in the previously held elections has to be identified by the Assistant Returning Officer and take details from the concerned booth level officer about the factors used to increase their voter percentage and implement them to the rest of the polling booths. Political parties' workers were explicitly directed to use jute bags, and some parties are committed to environmentally friendly campaign materials.

Cross-Case Analysis

The main goal in the multi-state's narrative is to focus on incentives for environmental conservation while boosting voter participation. This section of the study examines the "Green Election" phenomenon across multiple states to identify structural patterns, divergent strategies, and the "infrastructure of influence" employed by electoral bodies. The several common patterns that had been observed over the multiple states include green measures that is distribution of saplings, establishment of green and eco-friendly polling stations, the organization of pro-environment drives, SVEEP camping, and involvement of SHGs or NGOs. In all states no money, gifts, or individual inducement is involved, maintaining Model Code of Conduct. There is neither any extra nor any dedicated budget that had been sanctioned for green election. All the initiatives for the promotion of Green Election were conducted on public space and public institutions (polling booths, schools, Panchayat premises, community grounds, SHG meeting places) to ensure legitimacy and transparency. Implementing Green Elections successfully in every state relies heavily on the backing of local administration (District Magistrate (DM) office, SVEEP teams, booth-level officers, school heads, and DFO).

There are also differences among the states, mainly stemming from in geographical factors, administrative approaches, partnership dynamics, and strategic cue choices. The choice of cues for a state is based on administrative culture, rural/urban, local public responds, feasibility, and logistics. In Bihar & Maharashtra sapling distribution and green election awareness campaigns are used as the primary environmental cue, Punjab's green booths and observer-led structural designs function as institutional cues, Gujarat's cluster-based green polling centers, and Jharkhand green polling centers serve as infrastructural cues promoting environmentally responsible voting. Bihar focuses on scale of the initiatives such as green polling stations, sapling distribution, and digitalization. Punjab's focus is on minimizing the use of plastics, digital campaigns, and appeal from political parties to plant a sapling before going for campaigning. Gujarat had expended from single model eco-friendly booths to a cluster-based approach. Whereas in Jharkhand the use of biodegradable materials weather in architecture (bamboo, straw) or banners were promoted with the promotion of plastic-free society.

Further, differences in the execution of Green Election initiatives are clearly visible between rural and metropolitan areas in the analysis. Urban areas are characterized by less physical space, greater NGO involvement, a stronger social media presence, and distribution of container saplings instead of ground planting are predominant initiatives. Whereas in Rural open land for planting, stronger SHGs and school networks, less online presence, and more local press visibility are the main differences. Additionally, the key differences in urban and ruler areas are their strength of partnerships, different states leverage different partners, and each partnership type affects speed, scale, and credibility. Maharashtra and Punjab are the states which heavily relies on individual bureaucratic leadership, Bihar depends on SHGs and Panchayats, whereas Jharkhand on Anganwadi system.

Saplings is the most attractive cue among all the other cues, followed by booth décor, and then slogans. This pattern is accurate and aligns with behavioural science. Saplings have strong tangibility people can hold saplings, unlike slogans or decorations. This gives emotional meaning. Trees symbolize care, growth, investment in future, and community contribution. They also act as social signal like "I voted," "I am a responsible citizen," and "I am part of this movement." Additionally, Newspapers and social media prefer images of people holding saplings. Booth Décor / Green Booths have immersive visual experience, the booth itself looks special, different, festive. People see that "this booth is important enough to decorate," increasing civic pride. Before voting day, the decorated booths can be photographed by press, which helps in publicize the idea of green election and environmental conservation. Whereas slogans, while useful, rank lowest. They often produce message fatigue, as voters encounter slogans constantly and nothing stands out. Their emotional impact is limited by words alone rarely trigger the same resonance as symbolic objects. Slogans also tend to sound similar across campaigns, making it harder to differentiate. Further, some voters may view them as "official messaging" and disregard them, giving them lower legitimacy.

Enabling Capabilities are the core of these initiatives which allows the cues to work. They are required to implement the policies at ground level and help spread awareness. The enabling capabilities are: Educational institutes (Schools/Colleges), Women Groups (SHGs / Mahila Mandal), Anganwadi Network, and DM Office / District Administration. Schools provide universal coverage, trusted teachers, reliable reporting, students as message carriers, and public grounds for events. Organizing debates, school rallies, art competitions, and planting events are the ways to spread awareness among students which in turn influenced the parents and attract media coverage. Women can influence family voting behaviour so SHGs which have dense internal bonds, trusted leadership, operate non-politically, and can be quickly mobilized are very helpful to spread voting awareness among the families which in turn increase the voter turnout with sustainable environmental goals. In the states like Jharkhand and Bihar there is at least one centre of Anganwadi in almost every habitation. Anganwadi workers know every household hence having strong networks among women. These Anganwadi were used to record data and manage basic supplies provided by the central government. So, with a greater understanding of their particular areas and household within the areas the Anganwadi can serve as a great asset to

promote environmental cues with voting awareness. Without the support from DM-level the initiatives lack permissions, resources, media coverage, and official endorsement.DM ensures that the activities follow all the legal compliance. They are helpful in coordination across departments, provides access to schools, and SHGs can call local media for the coverage, monitor the activity to ensure safety and security, and solve problems rapidly.

Policy Design Model

For promoting and publicizing green election among voters, this study adopts a policy design approach that blends behavioural cues, institutional legitimacy, and community-based diffusion. The proposed seven-component model is suitable for policy design in district administration, SVEEP initiatives, local bodies, or any civic engagement program. These seven components consist of selection of cue, legitimacy of the action/activity, involvement of local women groups, organizing debates in public institutions like schools, giving interviews to a local press, visualization, and quick measurement of the activity/action.

Cue is one of the most important components, without a cue public/voters rarely initiate any action on its own. Cues attract attention like giving saplings to the first five voters in Kundan Assembly constituency Bihar motivates public to be in the first five voters, and the establishment of green polling centers in Jharkhand attracts people. Cues provide a sense of honour in voters, affirming their identity as responsible citizens. Cues are not like posters, and they are all social proof of any action. The selection of any cue is based on different factors like they must be simple and easily understood by the voters, must be visible to the voters, cue should not align with any political parties, affordable, emotionally positive, and must follow ECI guidelines.

Legitimacy of an activity can be maintained if it is transparent, neutral, and for the benefit of public. If legitimacy is not maintained then they can face media backlash, allegations of inducement, and can have a risk of political misuse. Legitimacy determines whether DM approves the plan, officials feel safe implementing, local press supports coverage, and the public trusts the campaign. To safeguard the legitimate interests there should be no involvement of money, no conditional benefits, and use of state institutions.

Woman's groups such as SHGs, Mahila Mandals, and Anganwadi have strong presence in their local communities and can act as a strong multiplier. These groups can significantly increase the voting percentage and also helpful in spreading green election environmentally sustainable goals, as women within a family often persuade other family members to vote and also can motivative them to participate in the activity. Moreover, these groups provide women with a collective identity; when a group participates, members feel a social expectation to join in, creating a ripple effect that strengthens voter mobilization. These groups can shape community perception and also encourage new voters to vote. The most important thing about these groups is their non-political nature, which helps ensure that the initiatives remain non-aligned with any political actors.

Public schools act as neutral institutions and have high value addition in these initiatives. Schools can act as centers to educate community and reduce communication gaps by

providing student, parent community diffusion. Teachers have moral legitimacy and can serve as environmental ambassadors. School grounds can be used as a public platform to deliver messages, and events such as arts competitions, poster making competitions, tree planting on school grounds, rallies, and debates are photogenic events and can attract media coverage. Also, green booth volunteers from schools and using student pledge cards stating "I reminded my parents to vote" can further strengthen community engagement and voter mobilization.

Local press such as local newspapers, vernacular media, and district reporters focused more on the local news, events, and issues than the international or national news. The local press covers local events like local politics, schools, businesses, crime, culture in more detail as compared to national press. Inviting local press to green booth inauguration, sapling distribution, or events organized in schools highlights the local events which motivate public and can enhance community participation, also provides archival evidence for the administration.

Visualization activities such as newspaper photos, short videos, interviews, posters of community participation, and rallies activate emotion, memory, and community belongingness. Decoration of booth under green polling centre initiatives, distribution of saplings, public pledge like green pledge, school, and officials rallies, and zero plastic polling booths are some significant visual events and social proof. Interviews, short videos, and social media engagement are visual activities that help spread awareness, which in turn attracts public attention.

Rapid, simple measurement checks whether the intervention is working and guides mid-course corrections. Quick measurements like number of saplings distributed, number of schools participating, number of SHGs engaged, number of booths with green décor, local press mentions, and voter turnout difference (vs last election) provides evidence, accountability, momentum, legitimacy, press content, and decision-making inputs. Without the quick measurement/feedback administration loses interest, press loses stories, officials cannot defend the intervention, and scaling becomes impossible.

Discussion

The transformation of conventional election process to a new eco-friendly "Green Election" represents a fundamental shift in the political economy of election management. Green elections are not only focused on increasing voter turnout but also making elections environmentally friendly by reducing the impact of electoral processes on environment. In this study the initiatives in multiple states were analysed and on the basis of this analysis three distinct contributions to governance theory and behaviour were identified.

Academic Contribution

Theoretically, elections are often viewed as process of selecting leaders. However, the analysis on "Green Election" model validates that this study contributes to the academic understanding of elections by reframing them not purely as aggregations of individual

preferences, but as public goods signalling systems. The design of visible and non-partisan interventions by the state such as green booths, sapling distribution, establishing plastic free zones, or school-led awareness activities signals that voting is a socially valued, widely endorsed, and collectively beneficial act. In developing economic like India, the state's ability to deliver public goods (clean air, waste management, pleasant infrastructure) is often scrutinized. The ECI signals state competence by implementing green cues such as the use of indigenous bamboo and straw structures in Jharkhand's Koderma and "Green Polling Stations" in Bihar, where they served as visual proof. Similarly in Gujarat, the expansion of single model eco-friendly booths to a cluster-based approach helped spread awareness and create a sense of responsibility among young people.

Behavioural Contribution

In the study voting related to the civic behaviours are shaped by public cues that communicate the expected norms of participation. Implementation of green cues in the electoral process offers a solution through the lens of moral utility. The research suggests that environmental framing activates psychological processes of care, responsibility, and identity ("I am the kind of person who cares for my community"), which in turn increase the likelihood of voting. From a behavioural standpoint, Standard rational choice theory suggest that only voting may overshadow the individual benefit and the "Warm Glow" theory suggests that the individuals derive utility not just from material payoffs but from acting according to moral norms (Jerit et al. 2024), so leveraging from these studies an inclusion of environmental symbols generate moral utility a sense of personal virtue derived from acting in ways that benefit society or nature. Saplings distribution, green décor, and eco-friendly activities function as moral cues messaging voter about the civic duty aligned with ethical and environmental values. The high recall rate of SVEEP campaigns in Sirsa, where saplings were distributed, suggests that environmental cues create deeper cognitive engagement than standard political messaging.

Policy Contribution

As analysed in the study that there is no additional bugged allotted to conduct green elections, so initiatives totally rely on existing public institutions like schools, SHGs, ICDS centers, district administration, public interventions which drastically lowers marginal costs. The direct involvement of public and public institutions makes the policy legitimate in an era of skepticism, also legitimacy enables scalability. The use of existing supply chains (Forest Dept nurseries, MNREGA labor), election bodies achieve green goals with near-zero additional spending. Administrators in Bihar and Punjab utilized existing funds from the Forest Department, MGNREGA, and Jal-Jeevan-Hariyali missions. "Low Cost/No Cost" model in Punjab and Mumbai proves that legitimacy can be derived from innovation rather than expenditure. By using student volunteers (NSS/NCC) and women's SHGs (Jeevika) instead of paid contractors, the election machinery achieves "Green" goals at a fraction of the market cost.

Contributions

This study provides a set of concrete, actionable insights for administrators, election officials, and public-sector practitioners seeking to strengthen civic participation using low-cost, high-legitimacy strategies. The analysis offers a practical framework without the requirement of new budgets or specialized infrastructure. Green polling centers and plastic free societies in Jharkhand offers a template for rural constituencies, zero carbon footprint with sapling distribution serves urban centers like Maharashtra, successful scaling of green polling centers to a cluster-based model in Gujarat, and categorization and non-biodegradable waste in Punjab while reducing the single use plastics, creating a financial deterrent against plastic use. This practical framework includes cue selection, legitimacy (no money), women's group multipliers, school, local press, visualization, and quick measurement. It transforms scattered field innovations into a structured model that can be reused across states and adapted to different contexts. Integration of women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Anganwadi workers with the election management bodies (DM offices) into the logistics chain for last-mile delivery of eco-initiatives. Transparency of the initiatives is a legitimacy safe method which relies on symbolic environmental cues instead of monetary incentives, the framework simultaneously maximizes public engagement and minimizes regulatory risk. Methods for rapid data collection checklists, photo logs, simple turnout comparisons that allow administrators to measure impact without heavy surveys.

Beyond its practical relevance, this study has some theoretical contribution in understanding behavioural science, public administration, and the emerging domain of eco-electoral governance. It integrates insights from environmental psychology, public goods theory, and administrative studies to reinterpret how civic behaviour emerges and diffuses within democratic systems. This research reframes elections as public signalling environments in which visible cues such as green booths, saplings, students, and community norms around collective actions. These cues function like public goods: they are non-excludable, socially visible, and jointly consumed. The study also proposes shifting the theoretical understanding of the voter from a passive participant to an active contributor in environmental conservation. This study also typically analysed democratic events for their political outcomes. Establishing democratic events as a significant ecological event with measurable carbon footprints, necessitating a theoretical framework that accounts for "Democracy's Carbon Cost."

The study extends behavioural theory by demonstrating that environmental interventions function as moral utility generators. Environmental symbols saplings, eco-friendly booths, plastic-free zones enhance participation not through material incentives but by activating moral emotions associated with care, responsibility, and future stewardship. This creates a form of "moral reward" that strengthens intrinsic motivation. This study demonstrates the theory of "Administrative Entrepreneurship," where individual bureaucrats rather than legislative mandates drive systemic innovation. The findings highlight how dense community networks women's Self-Help Groups, schools, Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS) centers serve as multipliers of behavioural cues, enabling micro-level triggers to diffuse into community-level norms. This triad creates a hybrid model in

which behavioural nudges become powerful only when embedded within administrative capacity and community structure. It bridges two literatures behavioural public policy and administrative systems theory demonstrating that nudges do not function in a vacuum; they require an enabling institutional ecology.

Limitations and Future Research directions

While this study aims to document the evolution of electoral practices and provides valuable insights into the policy design, it is not without limitations. The study uses a limited number of methods, primarily relying on a case study methodology. Although this approach allows for a detailed understanding of administrative complexities and partnership dynamics but intrinsically restricts the statistical generalizability of the findings. Without further validation the insights derived here are context-specific and may not fully predict outcomes in different administrative settings.

The study presented a qualitative and exploratory approach, hence there is significant scope for further empirical work to validate the results. Future scholars are encouraged to adopt quantitative techniques to statistically assess how institutional legitimacy and behavioural cues affect voter behaviour, such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or large-scale survey analytics.

This study's geographical scope is limited primarily focusing on rural and urban areas, whereas the specific dynamics of semi-urban settings have not been sufficiently explored. The findings of the study are limited to data form a single country therefore, their wider applicability requires further testing and examination. To build a universally applicable framework for sustainable electoral management, data from diverse political systems ranging from established Western democracies to emerging economies has to be collected, and the initiatives performed under Green Election has to be re-evaluated.

Conclusion

The integration of environmental conservation principles into India's electoral process marks an evolution in the nation's democratic journey. The implementation of green cues under the banner of "Green Election" across Bihar, Jharkhand, Punjab, Maharashtra, and Gujarat represents a profound shift in India's democratic experience. The introduction of "Green elections" without the need of any additional budget and no money involvement in the era of public skepticism, enhances the credibility and legitimacy of the initiative. The effort under this initiative is reflected across the states and are being documented, starting from bamboo based green polling centers in Jharkhand to the sapling endowments in Bihar serving as a powerful "climate-positive cues." Green elections reframe the voters as an environmental steward, implicitly suggesting that the health of the democracy is inextricable from the health of the environment. This initiative signals a paradigm shift in the way elections used to be conducted, reframing them as civic-ecological event. The electoral machinery successfully closed the loop between democratic participation and climate resilience by blending the act of voting with the act of planting.

As India moves forward, the standardization of these practices could transform the world's largest electoral exercise into its most significant periodic ecological intervention, ensuring that the "ink on the finger" leaves a lasting "green on the ground."

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