

Another RWA-backed candidate bites dust, loses deposit

Sumi Sukanya | TNN

Gurgaon: The new-found propensity of the urban elite to participate directly in the political process received a jolt with the candidate backed by a group of RWAs losing his security deposit in Gurgaon.

R S Rath (44), who was propped up by Mission Gurgaon Development (MGD), a motley group of RWAs, could manage only 5,951 votes, 115 more than the votes polled by

another RWA-backed candidate, Col Rattan Singh, in the last assembly elections.

After the defeat, a resolute Rath, who is the DLF Qutub Enclave RWA president, said: "Our aim was to make a point which we did. It is not easy to take on political parties. I will continue working for the betterment of residents."

Citing reasons for the washout, a political observer said that the indifferent attitude of New Gurgaon residents towards democratic exercise leads to such dismal results. "This part of the city

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tion saw an abysmally low turnout in New Gurgaon," said an RWA member.

Nodded MGD member Bhawani Shankar Tripathy: "It is the rural and unseen Gurgaon that decides who wins. People from high-rises don't even step down to cast their votes despite awareness campaigns by both the administration and the MGD."

He added that routine administrative confusion — read missing names in electoral rolls — led to many voters turning away without casting their ballot. "Also, in some cases people didn't know

their constituencies — New Gurgaon was split between Gurgaon and Badshahpur assembly seats," he said.

RWA members said that the campaign didn't reach its crescendo due to a short interval between election notification and polls. Another member said that people didn't vote for Rath as he was seen as an outsider.

Observers, however, expressed hope that with RWAs getting more involved with local governance there would be scope for a RWA representative getting elected.

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Not time yet for 'power to residents'

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NEW DELHI: The second attempt by residents' welfare associations to field their own candidate in Gurgaon has also miscarried.

RS Rathee (44) the candidate fielded by the RWAs managed only the fourth position in the Gurgaon assembly constituency.

Rathee could bag a mere 5951 votes — less than five per cent of the total votes polled.

In 2005 also, the RWAs had got together to form Gurgaon Residents Party (GRP). They

had fielded Col Rattan Singh (80) in the assembly elections, but he could not garner more than 5896 votes.

In both cases, low voter turnout in the urban and posh pockets led to the candidates' defeat. If the polling percentage on October 13 ranged between 20 and 40, it was as low as 12 per cent in 2005.

However, the low polling percentage in posh localities this time did not affect the Congress candidate Rao Dharampal in Badshahpur constituency, as most voters cast their votes in favour of national parties, such as Congress and BJP.