

India's capital is marked by different settlement types, defined by diverse degrees of formality, legality, and tenure. As part of a larger project on urban transformation in India, Cities of Delhi seeks to carefully document the degree to which access to basic services varies across these different types of settlement, and to better understand the nature of that variation. Undertaken by a team of researchers at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi, the project aims to examine how the residents of the city interact with their elected representatives, state agencies, and other agents in securing public services.

Through three sets of reports, the project provides a comprehensive picture of how the city is governed, and especially how this impacts the poor. The first, of which this is one, is a set of carefully selected case studies of slums, known as jhuggi jhopri clusters (JJs) in Delhi, unauthorised colonies, and resettlement colonies. The second set of studies explores a range of different processes through which the governing institutions of Delhi engage with residents. The third focuses on selected agencies of governance in Delhi. All reports are made public as they are completed.

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## Competitive Clientelism in Indira Kalyan Vihar JJC

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### Introduction

This report presents the case of a jhuggi jhopri cluster (JJC) in Delhi, a squatter settlement located on public land. The JJC is one of seven government-designated categories of unplanned settlements<sup>1</sup> in Delhi; it is a category estimated to include nearly 420,000 households,<sup>2</sup> about 15 percent of Delhi's population.<sup>3</sup>

Although 'JJC' is used interchangeably with 'slum' in many contexts, the two terms refer to separate types of settlements in the categorical hierarchy set out by the Delhi government. In this official lexicon, slum refers to a 'slum designated area' (SDA), a settlement identified in a piece of 1956 legislation. These 'notified' slums—part of a list that has not been updated since 1994<sup>4</sup>—are granted administrative recognition and assured some level of basic services, as well as due process in case of eviction or demolition. JJs, on the other hand, while officially recognised, are not granted the same legal protections; in the spectrum of Delhi's unplanned settlements JJs remain the most vulnerable. And although there is tremendous variation across Delhi's JJs, much of what occurs in these settlements is a function of a vulnerable community's insecure claim to the space on which it lives, a fact manifest in the repeated evictions and demolitions

in the city's jhuggi jhopri clusters.<sup>5</sup> These are, in general, spaces of compromised citizenship where residents have neither reliable access to public services nor secure land tenure.

Indira Kalyan Vihar (IKV) is a JJC located in Okhla, one of the prime industrial areas of the city. Constructed on land owned by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) over more than three decades, IKV houses a very large population—100,000 by some estimates—in some of the densest conditions of any JJC in the city. Many of the challenges faced by residents in Indira Kalyan Vihar are linked to this density, which makes provision of services difficult. The settlement's deeply fragmented politics further exacerbates this poor servicing: it is a community that has been unable to unify its political voice to demand even the most basic goods from the state.

This paper is the result of extensive field visits to Indira Kalyan Vihar by a team of six researchers over five months in the summer of 2013, with follow up visits in spring and summer 2014. A research protocol was framed in the form of an open-ended questionnaire with specific themes for collecting qualitative primary data from different actors. Respondents were identified using 'snowballing', and included residents, elected representatives, and staff of government agencies. Respondents were balanced across gender, and information provided by individuals was corroborated with other residents. Although there are variations in quantitative answers, qualitative information is substantially coherent across narratives from different respondents.

## The Place

Residents of Indira Kalyan Vihar (IKV) report that the settlement was first established around 1978, but expanded significantly after the 1984 riots that followed the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Located in Phase I of the Okhla Industrial Estate in southeast Delhi, IKV is wedged between two parallel roads lined by factories and industrial units. There are many entrances into the *basti* leading from these two roads.

The *basti* is very densely built, and is divided into five blocks, labelled A through E. The settlement's *jhuggis* are mostly two or three storey *pucca* (permanent) structures. The JJC is cut by narrow, paved lanes about four feet across, although some are as narrow as two feet, requiring passers-by to walk sideways between buildings. Small open drains line these lanes, carrying wastewater to a huge *naala* (open sewer) that divides the settlement into two parts. A constant stench comes from the *naala*, which widens at certain places and becomes narrower at others. Two bridges cross this river of sewage and garbage.

According to records of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), the settlement contains 5,500 *jhuggis*. Residents claim that the number of *jhuggis* in the *basti* is larger, with estimates ranging from 6,000 to 10,000, and it is widely reported that IKV's total population approaches 100,000.<sup>6</sup> Based on our visits to the settlement, this estimate seems realistic: most *jhuggis* rise two or three stories and house multiple families. It is a statistic that correlates to an astonishing population density of two people per square metre.

We rely on community perceptions to understand the *basti*'s demographic makeup. Residents report that the majority of people in the *basti* are from Bihar, and the rest come from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Nepal, Punjab, and Maharashtra. Community members told us that about half of the residents are Dalit, 20 percent are upper caste Hindu, and 20 percent are Muslim. Amidst the settlement's remarkable density of construction, residents have found space to build both a mosque and a Hindu temple.

Many residents are employed in the Okhla Industrial Area on a contractual basis. These workers explained that they are hired for short durations of about three months and are paid poorly. A few residents also travel as far as Faridabad and Gurgaon for work. Many street vendors live in the *basti* and position their carts on the roads that border the colony.

*Jhuggis* in Indira Kalyan Vihar vary widely in size, from 50 to 100 square feet. One female resident described some

*jhuggis* as so small that putting a bed in the structure would leave no space to cook. Many families have added floors as a solution. The ground floors of the *jhuggis* along the edge of the settlement usually house small shops that sell prepared food, groceries, fruits, vegetables, and small electronics or offer services like auto repair.

While some residents 'own' their *jhuggis*, more than half of the settlement's population rent accommodation at monthly rates between Rs. 800 and Rs. 2,000. Residents claim that in some cases the 'owners' of rented *jhuggis* live outside of the JJC. Many residents of the *basti* have V P Singh tokens. These tokens, issued by the Delhi Administration in 1989 during V P Singh's tenure as Prime Minister as formal proof of residence,<sup>7</sup> suggest that a significant portion of the JJC's population has been there for at least twenty-five years.

There has not been a large-scale eviction at the JJC recently, and residents do not feel a daily threat of demolition. Residents are aware, however, that the settlement is on DDA land and that demolition and eviction is possible. One resident, a party worker who claims to be close to the area's MLA (state representative) said "Yeh nishcit hai ki hamare ghar hataaye jayenge, yeh



 = Area of Detail



Indira Kalyan Vihar JJC is shown outlined in green. The open naala is visible cutting east-west through the center of the settlement. An interactive map of this and other research sites is available at [citiesofdelhi.cprindia.org/map](http://citiesofdelhi.cprindia.org/map).

aaj ya kal hoga, wahi tay karnahai.” (“It is definite that our houses will be removed from here—whether this will happen today or tomorrow has yet to be decided.”) One small eviction did take place in 2008 when *jhuggis* on one side of the *mandir* (temple) were demolished to pave a road. Residents claim that no resettlement was provided for the people living in these homes, a fact that reinforced general feelings of neglect by the state. One woman told us “Koi humaare liye kuch nahin karta, log aatein hain aur survey kartein hain aur phir kuch nahin hota. Hum bahut pareshaan zindagi bitaa rahein hain.” (“Nobody does anything for us, people come and conduct surveys but nothing happens. We are living in great distress.”)

Despite the JJC’s demographic heterogeneity, residents report that community divisions occur largely along political lines. Unlike many JJCs we have studied, IKV does not have a single *pradhan*, or widely recognised informal representative. One woman who lives in the JJC told us that “sab pradhan hain” (“everyone is a pradhan”). Other residents identified at least ten *pradhans* in the *basti*, most of whom they perceive as linked to specific political parties. Another woman summarised: “There is no one *pradhan* of the *basti*. ... It’s pretty much like anyone can say that he or she is *pradhan*.”

Residents report that five NGOs are active in IKV, working on issues of health and education. We were able to identify only four active NGOs—Save the Children, Navjyoti Development Society, Lokraj Sangathan, and Kiran. Respondents also particularly recall the contributions made by CASP (Community Aid and Sponsorship Program) Plan, an organisation that is no longer present in IKV but at one point donated two thousand bricks for residents to construct *jhuggis*.

## Service Provisioning

### WATER

Water distribution varies across Delhi’s JJCs in terms of source, frequency, cost, quantity, and quality. Residents access water from a variety of sources, including Delhi Jal Board (DJB) water tankers, piped water shared by groups of households, private or public bore wells<sup>8</sup> in the JJC (known as ‘borings’), taps at community toilet complexes, public taps in neighbouring areas, water tankers from private companies, bore wells in neighbouring areas, and households in nearby planned colonies.

Delivery should be overseen by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB),<sup>9</sup> the nodal implementing agency responsible for water supply to areas under the jurisdiction of Delhi’s three Municipal Corporations, including JJCs. Indeed, the DJB has made a commitment that any settlement, regardless of its legality, would be provided with water,<sup>10</sup> but the mechanics of this provisioning are not detailed in any policy. In the absence of any formal structure, the DJB’s local staff have put in place a range of mechanisms to manage water distribution in JJCs across the city.

Until 15 or 16 years ago, IKV residents accessed water through hand pumps. Today, Indira Kalyan Vihar receives water from a range of sources including piped water supply, tube wells, illegal tapping of main water lines, and water tankers. In IKV, as in many parts of Delhi, water collection and storage is primarily the responsibility of women and girls. According to one woman, despite the diversity of water sources in the *basti*, “Ladai-jhagara hota hai pani ke liye” (“There are fights over water”).

The DJB usually satisfies its obligation to provide water to JJCs exclusively through tanker service, but IKV is a rare case in which DJB has provided piped water to part of the JJC. This network spreads through about half of the settlement, on its southern side, opposite D Block of Okhla. Here the water is not piped directly to each household, but rather runs in pipes fitted along the interior walls of the *basti*’s narrow drains. There are no taps, but rather sporadic openings in the pipe

system; when water is flowing, it trickles out of these openings. Residents use a variety of techniques to draw water from these openings while avoiding contact with the filthy drains. These range from very simple—makeshift containers that fit inside the drains—to more technologically advanced—a basic motorised pump that draws water away from the drain through rubber tubing. The proximity of the water supply to the waste system is clearly a health hazard, and one that residents are well aware of. While demonstrating how he collects water, one resident told us, “hum nark mein rehra hein hain” (“we are living in hell”).

The water pipes were laid four or five years ago throughout this section of the *basti* to distribute water from two sources: the DJB booster station on the southeast edge of the *basti* and the DJB’s Sonia Vihar plant. A female resident explained that

originally, 446 water taps were installed, [one each] at the entrances of our houses in the *basti*. I worked with an NGO and we did a survey of the water taps in the *basti*—that’s why I know the number. But the water pressure wasn’t enough ... so many removed the taps and then they started drawing water directly from these points [pointing to pipe openings close to the drain from which people draw water]. Now the number of such points is about 150 and multiple households draw water from each such point.

Today, one access point is generally shared by between five and eight *jhuggis*. There is no charge for the water. The pipes carry two different kinds of water at different times: residents consider one to be drinkable (*meethapani*) and the other, which they refer to as *kharapani* (salty water), fit only for washing and other chores. We were not able to confirm whether these two qualities of water differ in purity and cleanliness or just taste, but the distinction between the two is widely accepted within the settlement. In principle, residents reported, *kharapani* runs for half an hour each day—from 7:30 to 8 a.m. or 8 to 8:30 a.m.—but in practice there is no fixed schedule. During one field visit to IKV this water did not arrive until 9:45 a.m.; during another visit, residents informed us that on that day they had received

water for only five minutes due to some technical fault in the DJB booster. The same pipes are generally expected to carry *meethapani* three to six times per week, usually between 2:30 and 5 in the afternoon. The frequency of this ‘drinkable’ water varies based on location within the *basti*. Residents said that while the *kharapani* is fairly reliable, the *meethapani* supply is not very dependable. They reported that sometimes there is no *meethapani* for eight or ten days, but that the supply always becomes regular before elections.

Households on the north side of the settlement, close to the wide road separating the *basti* from C Block of Okhla Industrial Area, are not serviced by these DJB pipes. These households access water illegally by tapping the trunk water pipelines that supply the factories across the street. The alleys in this part of the settlement are tangled with small-diameter metal pipes carrying this supply, one pipe for each household with a connection. But this is an expensive proposition: it costs about Rs. 30,000 to lay these lines right up to a house. One resident explained how the costs add up: “you have to pay the police as well as pay the contractor and for the pipes.” The expense means that many residents do not bring these illegal supplies all the way to their houses. In such cases, a *thekedar* (private contractor) connects the water to a shared tap.

Another reliable source of water is a tube well located near a peepul tree on one of the roads that border the settlement, from which water can be drawn by a portable hand pump. The water from this well is brackish and dirty, but people still drink it. During periods of water shortage, residents of the *basti* request water from neighbouring factory owners. One company in particular has shown willingness to give water to residents.

It is difficult to determine how many residents of the *basti* access water from DJB water tankers. What is clear from our interactions with residents is that DJB tankers are not perceived by most as a reliable or primary source of water. Some residents report that DJB tankers come to the *basti* only rarely and that when they do chaos ensues. Other residents claim that no DJB tanker visits the JJC, although we did see a tanker on one occasion.

## SANITATION: TOILETS, DRAINS, AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Sanitation in Delhi's JJs is managed by three government agencies: construction and maintenance of sewer lines across Delhi is the responsibility of the DJB; construction and maintenance of toilets for residents of JJs is managed by the DUSIB; drains are constructed by the DUSIB and maintained by the municipal corporations; and solid waste management is the mandate of the respective Municipal Corporation of Delhi (North, South, or East).

IKV has no provision for sewerage despite the open *naala* that bisects the *basti*. Access to toilets is a pressing concern for residents, who until recently depended on a single community toilet complex (CTC), located near the traffic signal at the northwest corner of the settlement. This was constructed ten or twelve years ago, and has only a few functional latrines. A private contractor manages this complex, collecting fees for using the toilet, bathing, and accessing water.<sup>11</sup> Some residents suggest that the settlement's municipal councillor receives a cut of the proceeds. Two other community toilet complexes, one built in 1988 and another in 2002, were identified by residents as being so poorly maintained that very few people use them.

Recently, DUSIB and NGOs began to construct new toilet complexes in the *basti*. During an April 2013 field visit, we noticed a foundation stone laid for a community-managed toilet complex. Organisations mentioned on the foundation stone—dated 15 February 2013— included DUSIB, Navjyoti Development Society, and Save the Children. This CTC opened in August 2014, with 10 latrines and 3 bathing rooms each for men and women.

In October 2013, we saw that construction of two additional CTCs had started at two corners of the *basti*. Residents informed us that the MLA and MCD officials had laid the foundation stone for these complexes on 18 September 2013, and construction began the day after, although they did not open until May 2014. One CTC has

12 latrine seats each for men and women, and the other has 11 latrine seats for men and 9 for women; both CTCs have four bathing rooms each for men and women. The fees at both the CTCs are Re. 1 for using the toilet and Rs. 2 for bathing.

While residents acknowledge the efforts to construct more toilets in the JJC, many told us that the prospect of accessing CTCs was even more expensive than building and using makeshift toilets. They explained that a family of six would have to pay a minimum of six rupees every day, a monthly cost that quickly approaches unaffordable.

A few of the *jhuggis* built along the huge *naala* flowing through the settlement have private interior toilets, outlets of which can be seen opening over the *naala*. None of the *jhuggis* on the inner side of the settlement has an interior toilet, but a few residents of these *jhuggis* have come together to build some 15 shared outhouses. These toilets are framed by bamboo or wood, with tarpaulin walls, and release waste into a smaller *naala* that runs south from the large *naala* along one side of the JJC.

According to many residents, the poor toilet infrastructure and high cost means that people defecate outside in forested and open spaces in and around the *basti*. One resident indicated that many people defecate or urinate into a polythene bag and throw it into the *naala*.

In addition to this large central *naala*, a narrow storm water drainage system runs along the lanes in many parts of the *basti*. (These are the drains in which water pipes run in the southern half the settlement.) Residents report that these drains were constructed in the mid 1990s. However, it is a rare sight to find these drains unclogged and with running wastewater. During our field visits, we observed some residents had covered the drains outside their *jhuggis*, but where the drains were open they were mostly clogged with solid waste.

Residents provided different estimates of the number of *safai karamcharis* (cleanliness workers) who are assigned to the *basti*, and those who actually come to clean the

JJC. One resident claimed that there are 38 MCD workers assigned to IKV, but only 8 actually come to the area to carry out their duties. Another resident claimed that there are 2 *safai karamcharis* who regularly come to clean the drains. He explained that they even come on holidays if the drains are extremely dirty. According to a municipal employee, on the other hand, out of 55 sweepers who have been assigned to this area, only 1 or 2 actually work.

Residents also indicated that regardless of the number of sweepers working, they do not have any vehicles to pick up the garbage. People throw garbage ranging from plastic bags to vegetable waste in the drains outside their houses, which creates additional problems. Residents report that the sweepers remove the garbage from the drains and pile it up next to the drains to dry but often forget to remove it after it dries, at which point it falls back into the drains.

Residents often dump their garbage at a close-by MCD dumping point (*dhalao*), which is located at one corner of the settlement. From this point, an MCD vehicle comes to collect the garbage.

## ELECTRICITY

In 2002, private participation was brought into electricity distribution in Delhi, and the government's distribution agency, the Delhi Vidyut Board (DVB), was divided into three companies. Fifty percent control of each of these was auctioned to private players, resulting in three joint venture distribution companies (often referred to as 'discoms'): Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL), BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL), and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL).<sup>12</sup> The remaining fifty percent of each is still owned by the GNCTD.

Residents report that IKV first received electricity thanks to the efforts of Prime Minister V P Singh in the late 1980s. Each *jhuggi* was given power for one bulb and one fan. In 2001, private contractors made additional electricity available at Re. 1 per unit. Since 2007, residents informed us, BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) has

installed proper electricity meters in the *basti*; usage is charged at Rs. 3.70 per unit for the first 200 units, and Rs. 4.80 per unit thereafter. Meter installation costs Rs. 3,700, of which Rs. 400 is collected when the meter is fixed, and the remainder paid by monthly instalment. Monthly electricity bills were reported to range from Rs. 600 to Rs. 1,100 per household. Although there are very few power cuts, residents complain that bills are unreasonable and that meters run too fast.

## IDENTITY CARDS

An array of identity cards are an essential tool for anyone living in India, necessary for daily processes from getting a gas connection or mobile phone to accessing government benefits. Cards are needed to satisfy both proof of identity and proof of address requirements. In settlements with uncertain tenure, such as JJCs, it is this latter proof that is most difficult and important to obtain, a challenge that directly impedes access to basic services.

Three main forms of identity are accepted as proof of residence:

### *Voter ID Card*

Any resident or non-resident Indian Citizen above 18 years of age is eligible to vote and receive a voter ID card.

### *Aadhaar Cards*

In 2007 the Indian government began issuing multi-purpose national identity cards with a unique 16-digit identification number (UID). In theory, an Aadhar card can be used to establish a bearer's identity and to provide him or her secure access to benefits and services. A 2013 Supreme Court ruling, however, held that the UID card could not be a mandatory requirement for any service.

### *Ration Cards*

These are cards for accessing food grains and other essential commodities from the Public Distribution System through a network of Fair Price Shops at subsidised prices. Different ration cards are distributed to people according to income.

Reports vary about how many IKV residents have Aadhaar cards, but there seems to be a general perception that more than half of the population has these UIDs. Residents explained that most adult residents of the *basti* have voter ID cards and it is “easy” to acquire these. One woman resident explained that it is also not difficult for renters to get a new voter ID cards with addresses in the *basti*: “The renter has to only submit the electricity bill of the *jhuggi* owner with the application for a voter ID card.” While ‘owners’ in other unplanned settlements are often hesitant to share identity and residence proofs with renters, no such hesitation was reported here.

Ration cards are a more complicated story. Some *basti* residents told us that the government stopped issuing ration cards to residents of JJs across the city between 2008 and 2013. A woman respondent explained, “When we would go to the ration office and ask them why our cards are not working and if we could apply for a new ration card they would simply tell us that ration cards held by *jhuggi* residents have stopped working and new ones are not being made ... they would not give us any reasons.” Another woman concurred, “bas kehete the ki *jhuggiyon* ka ration card band pada hua hai aur naya nahin ban raha” (“they would just say that rations cards of *jhuggi* people are not working and new ones will not be made”).<sup>13</sup> We were unable to substantiate this account, but it was widely reported by residents.

There is a third, newer category of ration card—Antyodaya Ann Yojana (AAY)—which is intended to provide for the very poorest. Residents estimated that about ten percent of households in the settlement have AAY cards. Respondents report that these cards, unlike BPL and APL cards, do effectively ensure access to food rations. A few residents, however, alleged that these cards are given to those who are close to the MLA, often wealthier residents who do not need the cards.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

There is no community centre in the settlement. Open spaces outside what was for years a non-functional toilet complex and the *mandir* are used as informal community centres for celebrations and gatherings.

Residents reported that the lack of a government hospital or dispensary is a key problem, although mobile health camps are occasionally organised in the *basti*.

## Negotiated Citizenship

Indira Kalyan Vihar is marked by exceptionally bad living conditions, in which all the challenges of an informal settlement are compounded by an extraordinary population density clustered around a large open sewer. It is also a community divided by political forces. These political divisions impede improvement at two levels, blocking internal community organisation and forestalling action by elected officials. While this competitive clientelism might result in better public services for all, in IKV there has been little material improvement.

Evidence of political divisions among IKV residents abound. In many of our discussions with residents there was open and often bitter disagreement about local politicians. One incident stands out: during a conversation with respondents who are close to the municipal councillor (a member of the Bahujan Samaj Party, or BSP), a policeman arrived and asked what was happening. When a white Scorpio SUV pulled up a few minutes later, the two respondents and policeman excused themselves, saying that they had to go to a meeting. A crowd had gathered, and when the SUV pulled away, a woman approached us to say that people with whom we had been speaking do not work for the good of the entire community but were very powerful thanks to their connection to the councillor. She warned that if our research captured only their perspective we would not understand the majority of the community. She called these individuals *dalle* (slang for *dalaals* or brokers). During elections, she told us, politicians



'contract' them as brokers for a certain number of voters from the *basti*. The *dalle* receive funds from politicians, which they use to distribute money and alcohol in exchange for votes, "pocketing the rest". Those who remained in their favour get benefits from a range of public welfare schemes (see section on ration cards). She claimed that because of these political transactions, public benefits flow to the MLA's supporters, not to those "who really need them".

In the course of a later field visit, during a discussion with residents who were supporters of the MLA, the same woman interrupted and angrily told us not to listen, that their accounts were inaccurate. Later, as we were interviewing this woman, a male resident warned us that her vocal critiques of the MLA were "khatarnak" ("dangerous"), suggesting that he and his supporters could create problems for her. He went on to explain "the politics here is so bad that blood has been lost over it".

During the December 2013 Delhi elections we discovered that this woman was a Congress party worker. Her complaint, however, resonated with what we heard from other residents, who felt discouraged by years of neglect from government. Residents believe they deserve better government services in exchange for electoral participation. One respondent said, "hum log 10-15 saal se vote de rahe hai sarkar hamare liye kya kaam kar rahi hai?" ("we have been casting our vote for 10 or 15 years, but what is the government doing for us?"). Another told us, "If someone has spent 30 years living somewhere, they should get these basic things [toilets, water, etc.]".

Inadequate toilet facilities have been a decades-long problem in the JJC, referenced in nearly every conversation we had in the settlement. It is a clear example of political conflict trumping effective service delivery. For more than thirty years, elected representatives have failed to successfully implement a plan for community toilets and other sanitation facilities. Officials at different levels of government and individual residents share a range of explanations for these failures, and petty disputes abound. The municipal councillor, who is a member of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP),

under whose jurisdiction sanitation falls, blames the area's state representative (MLA), who belongs to the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP). The councillor told us that he had been proactive in building toilets, but the MLA has not been "keen on getting the work done" and that "politics comes in the way". The councillor further claimed that he had gotten the *basti's naala* cleaned in the previous year but it could not be done "again and again" because that would require them to demolish the bridges built across the *naala*. Residents living on one side of the *basti* report that the municipal councillor visits relatively often, and recall him publically scolding a sanitation worker. They have not, however, seen him implement any real infrastructural improvements. In interviews, his supporters echo his own excuse, claiming that the MLA obstructs real development in the settlement.

Residents of the *basti* share a range of attitudes towards the MLA. Many attribute improved services to his efforts, explaining the JJC's relatively secure water supply as the result of his work. Other residents disagree, accusing him of obstruction and corruption: "Jab se MLA bana hai kaam nahin hua hai ... ye sab khaliye hain" ("Work has not been started since MLA has been elected...he has eaten up everything [referring to money]").

When development work is successfully completed, the councillor and MLA compete for credit. During a visit to IKV, we noticed that the MLA had put up several boards claiming responsibility for projects such as building and paving inner lanes in the *basti*. One of these boards stated the following: "Indira Kalyan Vihar Side ... ki galiyon mein cement concrete tatha naaliyon ka karya mannaniya vidhaayak ... ke athak prayason se karaaya ja raha hai" ("The works of cement concretizing of the lanes and drains of Indira Kalyan Vihar ... is being done by the tireless efforts of the honourable MLA ..."). The municipal councillor told us that "the truth is that even if he [the MLA] funds the laying of four bricks in an area, he will put up a board mentioning he has funded the work". The councillor defended himself: "I just do the work that is required to be done. I don't put up boards at various locations where I have gotten work done".

This constant conflict means that IKV residents do not feel represented by elected leaders. At the same time, while they know their settlement is illegal, IKV residents do not feel the constant threat of demolition that prevails in other JJs. One respondent told us, “Kabhi kabhi Police humein kehete hai ki jhuggiyon ko tod denge par kuch nahin hota.” (“Sometimes the police tell us that the *jhuggis* will be demolished but then nothing happens.”) Some ascribe this to a different kind of protection, not electoral, but derived from a labour relationship. During a public meeting organised by a local NGO, one resident of the *basti* asserted, “Industrialists are against resettlement of this *basti* because if we are not here, they don’t know where they will get such cheap labour to work in their factories”.

## Elections

The run-up to the Delhi Assembly elections in 2013 provided us with an opportunity to document the strategies of various political parties and candidates and residents’ reactions to them. The following reporting is based on six field visits to Indira Kalyan Vihar by seven researchers between 24 October and 24 December 2013, as well as meetings with party workers at party offices of AAP, BJP, Congress, and BSP in the Tughlaqabad Assembly Constituency.

The large population and strong political loyalties in IKV make for dynamic election seasons, and buying of votes at an individual and community level is widespread. Respondents reported that money and alcohol is distributed widely prior to elections. One young man told us that he had received Rs. 500 during the last election from one party; other residents confirmed this statement, telling us that all parties come one or two days before elections and distribute money and alcohol in the *basti*. The ‘price’ an individual commands is determined by his or her standing in the community and how many votes he or she controls.

These individual gifts are mirrored at the settlement level: the lead up to the 2013 elections saw a break in the apathy and inaction with regard to toilets and sanitation

in the JJ. In October and November, after years of stasis, community toilet complexes (CTCs) were suddenly under construction in two separate parts of the settlement. Residents reported that their MLA, a member of the BJP, and MCD officials had laid the foundation stone for the CTCs on 18 September and that construction had begun the next day.

Some voters in IKV accepted these gifts and improved services as a direct transaction for votes. In the words of one resident, voters are “sold prior to elections and they vote on the basis of money”. Another said, “Jisne pilaayee whisky, vote hai uski” (“Votes go to he who offers whiskey”). On the other hand, some residents told us that these payments do not have a material effect: voters take money from multiple parties in exchange for promised support. One young man said, “Why should we refuse money and other things ... we accept whatever is distributed ... but we vote for the one we think will be good for us”. One small group of respondents painted a picture that contrasts with the otherwise fractured politics of the *basti*. They described sitting together to discuss which party or candidate is most likely to work for them, reaching a group decision so that their votes aren’t “wasted”. This is just one case, but it reflects a calculated and strategic approach to elections: while residents accept ‘pre-election goodies’ from any party offering them, they decide their vote independently, based on perceived joint interest.

Although the 2013 election marked the Aam Aadmi Party’s (AAP) political debut, their promises of better service provisioning and accountability were expected to be popular in IKV and other JJs. Residents in IKV told us that while many voters supported AAP, they were scared of other candidates and kept their support quiet. One AAP volunteer in the *basti* told us “their heart is with us and they will vote for us”. Some AAP workers claimed that the incumbent MLA threatened residents who were looking to support other political parties.

The AAP was the first party to begin campaigning openly in the area, more than a month before the election. They undertook door-to-door campaigning to discuss the

political party's approach and main promises. Aside from this, campaign activity was conducted in the evening and at night. A few residents even referred to some of these activities as "secret". It was only in the two weeks preceding the elections that campaigning happened during the day as well, when the Congress, BSP, and BJP began campaigning publicly, mainly in the form of *padyatras* (foot journeys during which campaigning is undertaken by way of sloganeering and distribution of pamphlets). BSP was the only political party that had a *jan sabha* (public meeting) with the residents of Indira Kalyan Vihar.

The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) won the Tughlaqabad Assembly constituency, of which Indira Kalyan Vihar JJC is a part, with nearly 39 percent of the vote. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was second, with a little over 32 percent of the vote, while the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) received only 14.29 percent of the vote. An analysis of the election data for polling booths where the residents Indira Kalyan Vihar voted suggests that nearly 28 percent of residents who voted opted for BJP, substantially lower than the constituency average of 39 percent. A little over 45 percent voted for the BSP and a little over 16 percent voted for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP); only 7.25 percent voted from the Indian National Congress.

## Conclusion

Indira Kalyan Vihar represents one of the largest, oldest, and densest JJC populations in Delhi, yet its access to government services is as poor as many smaller, newer settlements. Over the course of our fieldwork, we found a community that is remarkably disempowered, internally disorganised and politically fragmented. Without the kind of unified voice that many JJC find in a *pradhan*, IKV lacks a clear conduit for expressing concerns and requests. Actors from across the political spectrum employ brokers and party workers to marshal votes without delivering on electoral promises, perpetuating both political division and poor living conditions. And while elected representatives compete to take credit for any marginal improvements in services, the settlement as a whole has seen little change in levels of service provision.

Residents in Indira Kalyan Vihar do not live in daily fear of demolition, and do not have to negotiate their presence in their homes in the way that some JJC residents do. Yet their story exemplifies the kind of entrenched distance from the state and its services that defines life in Delhi's informal settlements.

## NOTES

1. Categories of settlements in Delhi presented in Economic Survey of Delhi, 2008-2009, page 169, citing Delhi Urban Environment and Infrastructure Improvement Project (DUEIIP)-2021.
2. DUSIB's 2011 List of 685 JJs in Delhi
3. Calculated based on an average household size of five and the population of Delhi's Urban Agglomeration from the 2011 census data.
4. Gautam Bhan, 'Planned Illegalities: Housing and the 'Failure' of Planning in Delhi: 1947-2010', *Economic and Political Weekly*, (15 June 2013).
5. See 'Kathputli Colony: Delhi's First In-Situ Slum Rehabilitation', and 'Negotiating Citizenship in F Block: A Jhuggi Jhopri Cluster in Delhi', reports of the Cities of Delhi project.
6. As of 2013, electoral rolls showed 11,000 voters across 12 polling booths.
7. These tokens were issued to JJC residents across Delhi during V P Singh's tenure as prime minister as formal proof of residence. The tokens were the result of a four-month long survey by Delhi Administration—the governing body that preceded the GNCTD in Delhi—that aimed to enumerate every slum household in the city. (Source: D. Asher Ghertner, 'Calculating without numbers: aesthetic governmentality in Delhi's slums', *Economy and Society*, 39/2 (2010).)
8. Same as tube wells.
9. For details refer to The Delhi Water Board Act 1988: Chapter III 'Functions of the Corporation'
10. Interview with top DJB official, 5 July 2013.
11. The charges are: Re. 1 for toilet, Rs. 2 for bathing, and Rs. 5 for filling a water can up to 35 litres.
12. The private partner in Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL) is the Tata Group, and the private partner in both BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) is the Reliance Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (ADAG).
13. Those who do hold ration cards face issues in getting the provisions to which they are entitled, encountering excuses from ration shop employees like "the server is jammed" or "the record of the card is not showing on the computer". When cardholders get access to rations, they often receive less than their allotment. One resident complained about the allocation of BPL (Below Poverty Line) and APL (Above Poverty Line) cards—the most common types of ration card—saying that the distinction is often inaccurate: "PDS ke maamle mein manmani kaam hota hai...maal wale ke pass BPL hai or inamaal wale ke pass APL hai." ("There is discretion in the matter of PDS [public distribution system]. ... People who are wealthy have BPL cards and poor people have APL cards.")