

# NGOs take up visually impaired man's right to contest

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**JAIPUR:** Ramesh Kumar Meghwal, a visually challenged man belonging to the scheduled caste, was allegedly denied by the authorities to contest in the recent panchayat elections. Meghwal, who wanted to fight for the position of ward panch, has now taken up the case as a

social advocacy campaign through civil organisations.

Participator Research in Asia (PRIA), an NGO, along with Seemant Kisaan Sahayog Sansthan Jaisalmer, Samarth Nishaktajan Vikas Sangathan Jaisalmer and SURE, a network of civil society organisations in Jaisalmer were supporting Meghwal's fight for justice.

PRIA official Krishan Tyagi

said petitions have been forwarded to the state election commission, Rajasthan; deputy commissioner, Jaisalmer and Rajasthan State Handicap Board to look into the matter. Besides, a request has also been forwarded to the National Human Rights Commission.

It is to be recalled here that Meghwal was prevented to contest the election for ward

panch's post in Banshdra gram panchayat of Pokhran tehsil in Jaisalmer district. He was denied to file his nomination by the electoral officer, who reportedly stated that a blind person can not contest the election for PRIs. On this, Meghwal immediately approached the state election commissioner AK Pandey, who approved Meghwal's claim. Pandey also

advised Meghwal to report the matter to the district electoral officer cum deputy commissioner. Deputy commissioner Ram Niwas Meena reportedly did not respond in time, thus depriving Meghwal of his right to contest. SURE Jaisalmer president Satyanarayan pointed out that so far no positive response was received from the authorities.