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## '32% of candidates have criminal cases'

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ADR analyses poll affidavits in Bihar

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**

In Bihar, 89% Assembly constituencies have three or more candidates who have declared criminal cases against themselves in their affidavits for the ongoing elections, an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms found on Monday.

The ADR analysis of election affidavits of 3,722 of the 3,733 candidates found that 32% of them had declared criminal cases. The affidavits of the remaining 11 were not available at the time of compiling the report.

Releasing the report, ADR founder Jagdeep S. Chhokar said the Bihar elections were the first general elections to be held after the Supreme Court directions to parties on February

13 to publish the reasons for choosing a candidate with a criminal background.

He said the number of "red alert constituencies", which have three or more contestants with criminal cases pending, is usually around 50%, but it had increased to 89% in the Bihar polls. He said parties had largely not followed the court's directions.

"The directions of the Supreme Court have had no effect on the political parties in selection of candidates as they have again followed their old practice of giving tickets to around 32% candidates with criminal cases," the ADR report said.

The court had directed the parties to give reasons why a candidate without criminal antecedents could not be chosen.