# SAFEST

South Asian Fund for Education, Scholarship & Training

**Public Hearing, 12/6/2016**
**Department of Youth & Community**
**Development/DYCD, 2 Lafayette Street,**
**14 Floor (NY 10007)**
**Education, Voting & empowerment"**
By: Minhazul Islam

I am a high school student, currently studying at Brooklyn Latin School and I am Youth Volunteer from South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST), and we have indulged ourselves in hundreds to address and face the ordeals, and the lapses that underlies in the path of the South Asian community, Our works in five boroughs to address the challenges facing the South Asian American community. We did over 400 Voter registration and collect 612 Vote Better NY Petition.

From this experience giving me opportunity to learn collaboration, society , civic engagements which is so important to educate them to understand their civil rights, Still there are so gap of our women to engage voter registration & cast their ballots. Only education is giving them to understand be a independent and their rights to lead themselves.

Which is our SAFEST is leading in organizing, educating, training, registering new voters, helping them to understand the importance of voting, understanding candidates' position on important issues, agendas and how they relate to them to their community.

From AALDEF & SAFEST , This 2016 presidential election were numerous problems at the polling place at Thomas Edison  High schools (Queens) & PS 131 in New York City on Tuesday morning, though long lines were the biggest complaint. Each polling booth had 2 or 3 lines.

As a first time volunteer at the local polling centers this Presidential Election Day, The training was sufficiently clear on my purpose for the day.

When Voter walked in the polling centers they didn't know exactly where to go or where to stand. Voter has to know where they have to go first.

One of the polling booths left for whole day never to show up again and another at polling booth, an elderly lady over 90 years old was shaking and smelled was so bad that her co-workers complained to me because they could not stay there to continue to work.

The Thomas Edison schools at the information table one white male over 60 years old, he gave most of the voter's wrong polling booth information or gave wrong directions for polling centers. Some people had to go to three different locations before they could vote.

Some of the voters complained they voted before their name was no longer there. Some said they changed their addresses and did not get any letter from Board of elections. Some voters had trouble finding their polling place. Many people complained of poll workers being misinformed, asking for ID front 2nd time voters, who are not required to show identification to vote in NYC. Some voters who had registered at Department of Motor Vehicle offices weren't on the rolls. Some of the voters complain to me there were no civil rights in these two centers. Pushing each other or keep shoving past voters inside after they voted. Some are talking picture inside of polling center after they cast their ballot.

Even poll worker also complained against Board of election because they were wrong to charge poll workers with bias towards one candidate or another. Some of Poll worker told me when they saw some voters do more than one waiver so they corrected. Some of our South Asian voter did more than one waiver. Some polling booths had more than 70 waivers. Even some of voters did not know that their polling center changed. Some said they are not going to vote because they came from work or too far to walk to their site.

A couple of voters said they voted in the primaries but now their name was not there. Then I told poll workers to fill out affidavit of Ballot. Poll workers complained that people run way their materials, like pen & Ballots. Some workers said to me water should be provided to them or back up /standing workers should be there at the presidential elections.

SAFEST will continue to create stronger bonds and ties with all other community based progressive entities throughout the city and beyond.