Whom are you doing a favor to? Governance Consequences of Political Alignment*

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Abstract

We ask if political alignment (i.e., same party in power) across different levels of government (local and state) is necessarily beneficial for the local area. We depart from the existing literature on political alignment by focusing on (i) the allocation of human resources (i.e., bureaucrats) instead of financial resources and (ii) the effect of alignment on two categories of governance outcomes (infrastructure development and local law and order). We compile a unique panel dataset for the Indian state of Rajasthan, containing the complete career histories of administrative bureaucrats and police officers, information on road construction and crime statistics. We show that while districts that are aligned with the state government get a better allocation of administrative bureaucrats and, consequently, benefit from better road construction, the result is exactly the opposite for law and order. In aligned districts, "worse" police officers are allocated for *longer* duration, "better" ones are transferred out more frequently and, as a consequence, the crime situation is worse in aligned districts. We argue that the incentive of the locally aligned politicians to engage in or support criminal or disruptive activity for maintaining electoral advantages drives this result. This paper, therefore, overturns the received wisdom in political economy that local jurisdictions benefit from political alignment with higher level governments, and emphasizes the need to look at a broader set of measures in determining the consequences of political alignment.

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1 Introduction

Decentralization in nation states has created governments at multiple tiers, from federal to state and further down to local districts and below. As a consequence, upper levels of government, such as federal and state, often need to decide how resources must be allocated to local governments for various developmental and administrative activities. This is particularly the case in developing countries, where local governments lack the capacity to generate their own resources and, therefore, must rely heavily on the decisions and support of governments at higher levels. This creates an opportunity for the higher level governments to discriminate among local jurisdictions for political gains. Several papers, in fact, do find that local governments are allocated more resources if they are politically aligned with the higher level government, i.e., if the same political party controls the governments at both levels (see, for example, Solé-Ollé and Sorribas-Navarro (2008) for evidence from Spain, Arulampalam et al. (2009) and Khemani (2003) for evidence from India, Worthington and Dollery (1998) for evidence from Australia, Grossman (1994) and Levitt and Snyder (1995) for evidence from the US). All the papers in this literature on political alignment, however, share two common features: they focus on discrimination in the allocation of financial resources (e.g., tax revenues) and, in most cases, find that alignment leads to positive discrimination.[1]

In this paper, we look at the effect of political alignment of state and district governments in India. We, however, depart in two important ways from the broad conceptual framework that the existing literature on political alignment relies on: firstly, we argue that, apart from the allocation of financial resources, the allocation of *human resources*, i.e., bureaucrats, across districts is an equally important channel through which higher level governments can affect the welfare of local jurisdictions. This is particularly true in the case of developing countries such as India, where the efficiency of governance is generally considered to be low and, therefore, reallocation of bureaucrats can have first order effects.[2] Furthermore, it is not possible to understand the consequences of financial allocations for the well being of local people without first thinking of the officials who are responsible for controlling, managing, and using these resources to deliver goods and services on the ground. Secondly, we check if the allocation of human resources is heterogeneous across two distinct areas of public service. The reason to suspect that the role of alignment could be heterogeneous, or in fact be negative for some category, is that in developing countries in general, and in India in particular, certain

[1] Arulampalam et al. (2009) makes a distinction between swing vs. non-swing jurisdictions, among the aligned ones, to show that positive discrimination occurs only for the swing jurisdictions. We discuss this point in our context later.

[2] For example, Niehaus and Sukhtankar (2013) calculates the marginal rate of corruption in the largest public program in India to be 100%.

activities that reduce social welfare may also have positive electoral returns for politicians or political parties. For example, Wilkinson (2004) shows that politicians may strategically incite religious violence to increase the probability of a win in an electorally competitive constituency. Also, Vaishnav (2011) suggests that politicians with criminal records may be valuable for a political party as they may have a greater capacity to raise resources during campaigning. In fact, voters facing the risk of expropriation owing to weak property rights protection from the state may prefer a criminal politician who can protect them, as argued by Vaishnav (2016). However, if this results in the election to public office of a greater number of criminals, then criminal activity may increase in general and in ways that have little to do with providing protection to people living in a weak state. Therefore, how bureaucrats are allocated across aligned and misaligned districts may depend on the type of governance outcome in question, and specifically on its relationship to electoral returns.

In the context of Rajasthan, we test our hypotheses by looking at how the political alignment of the state Chief Minster and the chairpersons of district councils relates to bureaucratic allocation across districts. We focus mainly on two types of bureaucrats, district magistrates (DMs) and superintendents of police (SPs). A DM is the administrative head of a district, responsible not only for the overall implementation of development projects but also for day-to-day district administration. An SP is in-charge of the police force of a district and looks after the law and order situation (see Section 2 for more details). Rajasthan as the choice of the state for our study is advantageous for two reasons. Firstly, the political competition in the state is primarily between two major national parties, the Indian National Congress (INC) and the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP), effectively making the political structure a two-party system. This makes the definition of political alignment clear, since we do not have to attend to the potentially time-varying allegiances of smaller regional parties. Secondly, during the period of our study, i.e., 2001-2015, the political control of the state changed in each of the three elections, alternating between the INC and the BJP. Thus, in our data, we have four state government tenures and three "mechanical" switches in alignment, since the ZP and state elections happen in different years. This gives us many switches for the same district, helping us tease out the role of alignment.

For this project, we compile a unique dataset containing local and state election results, complete career histories of administrative bureaucrats and police officers, and measures of road construction and crime across districts, spanning a period of 15 years. We find that the answer to our research question depends crucially on what kind of official and development outcome we look at. In the case of the fairly standard infrastructure development program of road construction and the responsible bureaucrat (DM), we show that political alignment across tiers reduces the frequency of transfers, making local administration more stable and

precluding any adverse effects on public good provision. However, in the case of law and order, we show that the result is exactly the opposite. We find that political alignment results in *increased* reshuffling of police officers across districts; this, in turn, increases the average crime rate in any district in aligned periods. However, we also find that, for a "safe ZP," i.e., one in which the same party has always been in power, the crime rates are no different across aligned and misaligned periods, suggesting that most of the increase in the crime rates occurs in districts that are competitive to some extent.

We then go on to make a distinction between SPs and DMs native to Rajasthan and those who are natives of other states but are assigned to serve in Rajasthan. The two types of officers differ is two important ways. Firstly, those who are natives of Rajasthan likely have more and better knowledge of local politics, culture, language, social relations and so on. Secondly, as discussed in Section 2.3, higher-ranked bureaucrats are much more likely to be assigned to their home states. Therefore, a native of Rajasthan serving in Rajasthan is likely a "better quality" bureaucrat, both in terms of knowledge of local conditions and in terms of performance in the exams taken to qualify for the bureaucracy, than a native of, say, Karnataka or West Bengal serving in Rajasthan. With this terminology of quality defined, we find that better quality SPs have shorter tenures in aligned districts while the poorer quality SPs have longer tenures in aligned districts (the result is the opposite for DMs). Related to this, we estimate, albeit imprecisely, that crime rates under a given native SP tend to be higher when he happens to be serving in an aligned district and road construction outcomes under a given native DM tend to be better in such districts.

In addition to making a contribution to the literature on political alignment discussed above, we also position our work in the emerging literature on the functions of bureaucrats and the interaction of bureaucrats and politicians. Iyer and Mani (2012) show that changes in the state chief minister lead to transfers of bureaucrats across posts. Nath (2015) shows that district bureaucrats approve of development projects recommended by a politician faster when the politician is likely to be in office at the time the bureaucrat comes up for promotion. Gulzar and Pasquale (2015) show that the implementation of local public works is better when the responsible bureaucrat answers to a single politician. Khan et al. (2016) and Rasul and Rogger (2016) discuss the role of bureaucratic autonomy and other incentives (e.g., transfers) in motivating performance. While all these papers discuss how politicians might try to control bureaucrats, they do not, as we do, make distinctions among different types of bureaucrats or argue that the nature of control varies by the type of bureaucrat in question.

2 Background

2.1 The Political Structures

The setting for our study is the Indian state of Rajasthan. Each state in India is comprised of administrative units called districts. There are thirty-three such districts in Rajasthan. Each district, in turn, consists of smaller administrative units called blocks or *tehsils*. We now discuss the political institutions or entities we will focus on and how they relate to these administrative units.

1. **The *Zilla Parishad* (ZP) or District Council.** The key structure of governance in rural India is the three-tiered *Panchayati Raj* system, consisting of councils at the village, block (intermediate), and district levels in each state. This system of rural governance, in its current form, was established by the 73$^{\text{rd}}$ Amendment to the Constitution of India in 1992. The ZP is the highest tier of this three-tiered structure. Members of the ZP are elected directly by the people and then elect a Chairperson from amongst themselves. In the case of Rajasthan, most members of a ZP belong to one of the two major national political parties in India, the Indian National Congress (INC) or the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP). Therefore, in almost all districts and all years in the data set, the Chairperson of a ZP is from either the INC or the BJP. In some cases, the Chairperson may be listed as "independent," or having no formal political affiliation. However, even in such cases, the Chairperson likely holds office as a consequence of the political support of either the Congress or the BJP.

   The 73$^{\text{rd}}$ Amendment leaves it to the states to decide what powers and functions the ZP shall have. The Third Schedule of the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Act of 1994 specifies the powers and functions of a ZP in Rajasthan. One of the public works programs that we study in this paper is rural road construction under the *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna* (Prime Minister's Rural Roads Plan or PMGSY). As per the Third Schedule, the ZP is responsible for the construction and maintenance of rural roads. It is therefore responsible for delineating the socioeconomic and development variables that must be considered when deciding where to build roads and for approving the final road construction plans that are then forwarded to the state government (Government of India, 2004). Furthermore, the Chairperson of the ZP is also the *ex-officio* Chairperson of the District Planning Committee, an organization responsible for drafting broad plans for developing infrastructure in the district as a whole.

2. **The State Government.** The state legislature or assembly in Rajasthan has two hundred members. Each member, called a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA),

is elected from an electoral constituency, a precisely defined geographical region. The party or coalition with a majority of seats in the legislature forms the government, headed by a Chief Minister.

In all the Rajasthan assembly elections in our data set, there is no case of a coalition government, with either the BJP or the Congress either winning a clear majority or, when a few seats short, forming the government with the outside support of a few MLAs.

There are two hundred MLA constituencies but, as mentioned previously, thirty-three districts. Therefore, an administrative district often has several MLAs. Note that each MLA constituency is entirely contained within a particular administrative district.

Given the above political structure, we define political alignment to be a function of the party affiliation at a given point in time of the entities discussed above. For instance, if the ZP Chairperson in a district is from the BJP and the party in power in the state is also the BJP, then the ZP and state are aligned. If the majority of MLAs in a district are from the Congress while the ZP is headed by the BJP, then the ZP is not aligned with the majority of MLAs in that district.

2.2 Elections

Elections for the state assembly and all the ZPs in the state happen every five years, though the five-year cycles are frequently different in most states. In the period that our election data on Rajasthan covers, state assembly elections in Rajasthan take place in 2003, 2008 and 2013. The state assembly elections happen in December of these years, so we have coded the *next* years (i.e., 2004, 2009 and 2014) to be the years of the assembly elections, since the new Chief Minister and government only effectively take charge in January. *Panchayati Raj* elections, i.e., elections for all ZPs in the state, take place in 2000, 2005 and 2010 at the beginning of the year. See Figure 1.

The electorate for a ZP election comprises all the residents of all the village councils, the lowest tier of the three-tiered structure discussed above, of that district. The electorate for the assembly elections comprises all those with a voter ID card registered in the state of Rajasthan.

2.3 District Bureaucrats

We study the following key officials at the district level.

1. **District Collector or District Magistrate (DM).** The DM is the highest-ranked bureaucrat in a district. Almost all DMs are officers of the Indian Administrative Services (IAS). Some may belong to the State Civil Services (SCS). Officers of the SCS may be promoted to the IAS in case of good performance over a long period of time. Officers of the IAS and SCS are recruited through extremely competitive examinations and interviews and are not permitted to be members of any political party. On joining the IAS, an officer is assigned a cadre, the state in which the officer will serve. Most officers express a preference for their home states but higher ranked candidates are more likely to be assigned to their home states. Officers serve in the state till they rise to a fairly high rank in the IAS, after about twenty years of service, at which time they may be posted outside the state, e.g., to a ministry in the central government (see Iyer and Mani (2012)). Officers of the SCS serve in their states throughout, unless promoted to the IAS.

   According to articles 310 and 311 of the Indian Constitution, these officers serve at the pleasure of the President of India and can only be removed or reduced in rank after a thorough inquiry. In particular, they cannot be dismissed by state-level elected representatives or politicians. Wages of the officers are set by independent pay commissions and are a function of rank. In practice, officers are rarely ever dismissed or demoted.[3]

   However, as discussed in Iyer and Mani (2012), the Chief Minister of a state or, more generally, the state government can transfer bureaucrats across posts, mostly as a means of political control over administration. Nath (2015), too, discusses how Members of Parliament (MPs), who must work with DMs to get development projects approved, may influence job assignments at the time that bureaucrats are up for promotion.

   The DM is responsible for a host of matters in a district, such as the overall law and order situation, development works, collection of land and other taxes, and so on. DMs also often hold open office hours during the day, with people from all across the district coming with complaints and suggestions. Broadly, the DM is the administrative chief of a district, keeping track of and coordinating various activities related to development and governance.

   For an officer serving as a DM, the relevant promotion screenings are those that take place in the 13^{th} and 16^{th} years of service. The promotion committees, in both

[3]Prosecuting IAS officers is a tedious process. For instance, a law enforcement agency cannot press charges against an IAS officer under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 without the prior prosecution sanction of the Central Government, as per Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

cases, comprise the Chief Secretary, who is the highest ranked bureaucrat in the state government, and two other senior bureaucrats of the state government. The Chief Secretary of a state reports directly to the Chief Minister of the state and the promotion screening is effectively the state government's evaluation of the bureaucrat. The ZP and local MPs that the DM works with may indeed have an opinion to offer on the DM and whether or not such opinion matters to the committee's evaluation must then be a function of whether the state government is politically aligned with the ZP or MPs.

2. **Superintendent of Police (SP).** The SP is the head of the police force of a district. SPs are officers of the Indian Police Service (IPS). Both the IAS and IPS are All India Services, officers for which are recruited and assigned cadres through the same process. Candidates for the IPS take the same written examinations as those for the IAS. The service a candidate qualifies for is both a function of preference and rank in the examinations. The rank needed to qualify for the IAS is usually higher than that needed to qualify for the IPS and, as in the case of the IAS, the cadre preferences of higher ranked candidates are more likely to be honored. Since most officers express a preference to be assigned to their home states, officers of a state who are also assigned that state cadre are higher-ranked in the examinations.

   Just like IAS officers, IPS officers cannot be dismissed or demoted by the state government but can be transferred across posts. As per the promotion guidelines of the IPS, an officer usually holds the posts of Deputy and Additional Superintendent of Police prior to taking charge as an SP.

3. **Chief Executive Officer of the *Zilla Parishad* (ZP CEO).** The ZP CEO is a high-ranking bureaucrat of the district, responsible for carrying out the decisions and directions of the ZP and managing its daily affairs. Importantly, as per the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Act of 1994, the ZP CEO has the authority to inspect the office premises, records and accounts of any block or village council in the district.

   The ZP CEO may be either an IAS or SCS officer. In some states, the ZP CEO is considered to have the same rank in the hierarchy as the DM, though in Rajasthan, the DM is the unique, highest ranked bureaucrat of a district. The ZP CEO is answerable to and works under the administrative supervision of the Chairperson of the ZP.

As the preceding discussion highlights, all three officers play an important role in governing and administering a district. Thus, it seems entirely plausible that these officers interact closely with elected representatives at different tiers of governance. For instance, if the ZP wishes to push through a development project in a district, it may not only have to request

the state government for funds but also discuss the technical feasibility of the project with the DM.

3 Data

3.1 Sources

The data for this paper come from various publicly available sources. The data on ZP elections come from the website of the State Election Commission of Rajasthan. We use the ZP election results for the years 2000, 2005 and 2010. The data contain information on the party, social group (e.g. scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, other backward class or general) and sex of the elected chairperson, the reservation status (e.g., whether reserved for any social group or open to all) of the post of the chairperson and the number of ZP members elected from each political party and social group.

The data on the state assembly elections come from the website of the Election Commission of India. We use the assembly election results for 1998, 2003, 2008 and 2013. We have information on the number of MLA constituencies in each administrative district, the political party of the candidate elected from each such MLA constituency, the number of MLA constituencies in each district reserved for different social groups or left unreserved in a given election year, and so on. Note that each MLA constituency is entirely contained within a particular administrative district.

The data on the officials discussed in Section 2.3 is sourced from the civil list of the Department of Personnel of the Government of Rajasthan. We have the complete career histories (title and duration of each posting) of all bureaucrats who ever served as DM or ZP CEO in any district of Rajasthan over the period 2005-2015. We also know whether each DM or ZP CEO was an officer of the IAS or the State Civil Service (SCS). We also have the complete career histories of all IPS officers who served as SPs in any district of Rajasthan over the period 2001-2013.

The road construction program we study is called the *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna* (Prime Minister's Rural Roads Plan or PMGSY). The program was launched in December 2000 to provide all-weather roads to unconnected rural habitations or, in some cases, to upgrade the quality of existing roads. The objective of the program was to provide rural areas with new or improved connectivity to local markets, schools, medical facilities and so on. The program was funded by the central government but implemented by state governments. The PMGSY is considered a large, critical infrastructure development program. "By 2015, over 400,000 km of roads had been constructed, benefiting 185,000 villages – 107,000 previously

lacking an all-weather road – at a cost of more than $37 billion" (Asher and Novosad, 2016).

The data for the PMGSY is web scraped off the official website for the program, titled *Online Management, Monitoring and Accounting System*. The data contain information on costs, road lengths, sanctioned dates, progress of construction work and so on.

Lastly, we use crime rates to study how transfers and political alignment are related to the local law and order situation in a district. We use data for the period 2001-2013, taken from the National Crime Records Bureau of India. For each year in the data and each district, we have the number of crimes recorded by the police under various heads, such as robbery, burglary, grievous hurt and so on. To compute crime rates, we use district population totals from the 2001 and 2011 Census of India, calculating the figures for non-census years by linear interpolation.

3.2 Descriptive Statistics

In Table 1, we report means and standard deviations of several variables of interest. In particular, we find that "DM Change," an indicator for whether a DM was changed in a given district-year, has a mean in the data set of 0.55. This means that there is a 0.55 probability that the DM in a given district in a given year is transferred. The corresponding variable for SPs, "SP Change," has a much higher mean of 0.81. The average age at which an officer serving as a DM joins the IAS is 27 years, while this average for SPs is 31 years. For the period under study, the average number of postings of an SP is 3.2 while that of a DM is 2.7. Related to this, the average tenure of a DM is 16.3 months while that of an SP is 13.5 months. These summary statistics for frequency of transfers, tenure length and number of postings are thus consistent, and broadly paint the picture that DMs are shuffled across posts less often than SPs.

4 Empirical Methodology

We first look at governance related to a development activity (i.e., road construction) and then focus on law and order. In both cases, we first look at the relation of political alignment to bureaucrat transfers and then check if political alignment also has a corresponding relation to the outcome in question. Let B_{dt} denote whether a bureaucrat (District Magistrate, CEO of *Zilla Parishad* or Superintendent of Police) is changed in district d in year t. Then, our main specification is,

$$B_{dt} = \delta_1 ZPCMalignment_{dt} + \delta_2 ZPMLAalignment_{dt} + \beta X_{dt} + \phi_d + \psi_t + \epsilon_{dt} \qquad (1)$$

where $ZPCMalignment_{dt}$ is a dummy indicating whether the ruling party in the *Zilla Parishad* (ZP) is aligned with the Chief Minister's party, i.e., whether the district and state governments are ruled by the same political party, $ZPMLAalignment_{dt}$ is a dummy indicating whether the majority of the MLAs in district d in year t are of the same party as the ruling party in the ZP, X_{dt} is a vector of time varying district characteristics, ϕ_d and ψ_t are district and time fixed effects to control for time invariant district characteristics and state specific yearly shocks that may affect outcomes in all districts. Likewise, when we look at outcomes, we check if alignment is related to road building and per capita crime in a way that is consistent with how it is related to bureaucratic transfers. In the case of crime, we also check if different categories of crime are heterogeneously related to political alignment.

To test if the relationship of alignment to our outcome variables is uniform across all the years in which the districts are aligned, we run the following specifications:

$$B_{dt} = \delta_1 alignment_{dt} + \gamma_1 alignment_{dt} \times State\_election\_year_t + \beta X_{dt} + \phi_d + \psi_t + \epsilon_{dt} \quad (2)$$

$$B_{dt} = \delta_1 alignment_{dt} + \gamma_2 alignment_{dt} \times ZP\_election\_year_t + \beta X_{dt} + \phi_d + \psi_t + \epsilon_{dt} \quad (3)$$

where $alignment_{dt}$ may be either of the two alignment variables defined previously and $State\_election\_year_t$ and $ZP\_election\_year_t$ are indicators for whether there was a state or ZP election in year t. In Rajasthan, during the period of study, each state election led to a change in the party in power in the state. Since ZP and state elections happen in different years, this means that, each time there was a state election, the alignment of the state government and each of the ZPs changed. Then, at the time of the ZP elections, these alignments either changed further or remained the same, depending on whether the political party in power in the ZP was voted out.

If the political party in a ZP is the same as that ruling the state, the two tiers of government may be able to recommend, discuss and coordinate district-level bureaucratic appointments easily. As such, the relationship of political alignment to transfers should be different in election years, in which alignments or leadership either change or are reaffirmed, and non-election years.

We also check if the relationship of alignment to SP transfers and crime varies with the political competitiveness of a district. There are districts in the data in which the political party of the ZP chairperson does not change for the entire period of study. We mark such ZPs as politically "safe" and then test if the alignment relations are different across "safe" and "non-safe" ZPs by running the following regression specification:

$$B_{dt} = \delta_1 alignment_{dt} + \gamma_1 alignment_{dt} \times Safe\_ZP_d + \beta X_{dt} + \phi_d + \psi_t + \epsilon_{dt} \quad (4)$$

Since the presence of an experienced and able SP in a district may constrain the activities

of local politicians, we hypothesize that the degree of political competition will have some bearing on the relationship between alignment and SP transfers and, thus, crime - politicians may prefer to have more flexibility in maneuvering the situation on the ground when electoral competition is high. In Section 5.3, we discuss how the observable characteristics of SPs and DMs may be related to their quality as officials, and then check whether patterns in their tenures in aligned versus misaligned districts are in line with the qualitative reasoning underlying the results equation (4) provides.

One concern with our specification is that, right after coming to power at the state, a political party may reallocate bureaucrats before the ZP elections in order to influence the upcoming potential alignment switches. Moreover, the nature of such reallocation may differ by existing alignment patterns, since currently aligned districts may vote differently in the ZP elections than misaligned districts. However, there is only a year between the time the Chief Minster assumes office and the time that the subsequent ZP elections take place. Hence, the alignment status of each ZP is given for most of the tenure of the CM. Thus, the concern that transfers prior to ZP elections are driving alignment switches, and thus the relations we find in the data, may not be important.[4]

5 Results

5.1 Development Activity

The results for specification (1) for DMs and ZP CEOs are reported in Table 2. We find that, in a given district, DMs are transferred less often in periods in which the district ZP is aligned to the state government. We find no such relationship for ZP CEOs. We also do not find any relationship between bureaucrat transfers and the alignment of the ZP with the majority of MLAs in the district. The probability that a DM is changed in any district-year is 0.55 in the sample and, therefore, alignment between the ZP and the CM reduces DM transfers by about 24% relative to the sample average. Next, in Table 3, we see if the relationship of alignment to the outcome variables is different in election and non-election years. Table 3 shows that alignment is in fact related to an *increase* in the shuffling of bureaucrats across districts right after state elections, when all alignments switch, as discussed in Section 4. The relevant coefficient is positive but insignificant for the DM. However, the first coefficient in column (1) is now larger, suggesting that the relationship of transfers to alignment is mostly driven by what happens in non-state-election years. The coefficient of the interaction

[4]The point estimate for specification (1) remains essentially the same if we remove the first years of all CM tenures.

term in column (3) is positive and significant, suggesting a similar relationship of alignment to the transfers of ZP CEOs. This is consistent with the idea that the information available to the state government on district bureaucrats changes when political alignments change. Therefore, a new alignment following an assembly election results in higher transfers of bureaucrats in a given district.

5.2 Law and Order

Table 5 shows the results for specification (1) for the SPs in the districts. In contrast to the findings for the DMs, column (1) shows that alignment between the ZP and the CM is related to increased transfers of SPs. One reason why this may be so is that local politicians may support or engage in unlawful activities to maintain some sway over the affairs of a district. As such, they may not like the SP of the district to be an experienced, knowledgeable, upright professional whom they can't work around. And local politicians can weigh in on the appointments of SPs to a larger extent if they happen to be politically aligned with the state government. Consequently, as we show in Table 6, column (1), the crime rate in a district is higher in aligned periods than in misaligned periods. The results in Panel A of Table 7 show that this uptick in crime rates is spread across various crime categories, from property crime, such as robbery, burglary and theft, to violent crime, such as grievous hurt. In the periods in which a given district is aligned with the CM, we find that transfer rates for SPs are higher in the years that are not ZP election years. This could be because local politicians newly aligned to the state party may take some time to figure out the prevailing nuances of the local bureaucratic setup. This pattern is systematically reflected in the crime rates too, at least in certain crime categories, as Panel C of Table 7 shows.

Looking now at different types of districts and bureaucrats, we now show that the mechanism underlying the relationship of alignment to crime rates is the increase in transfers of certain types of bureaucrats, mostly in districts in which politicians have the greatest incentives to push for such transfers.

5.3 Mechanism

In order to test if our proposed mechanism is valid, we first check the following: if reelection incentives drive local politicians to engage in or support criminal activities, then political alignment would affect the transfer of SPs and, consequently, the crime rate, differently in districts that are electorally competitive. We label ZPs as "safe" if, during the entire period of 2001-2013, which spans three separate ZP tenures, there was no change in the political party that the *Zilla Parishad* chairperson belonged to. Table 8 reports the relevant results

for SP transfers and crime rates. For SP transfers, comparing columns (1) and (2), we see that the relation of alignment to SP transfers is significantly strong and positive in ZPs that are not safe. Though the coefficient for the safe ZPs is negative, it is noisy. However, the large magnitude of the interaction term is consistent with our hypothesis. Looking at crime rates helps buttress this result. Comparing columns (3) and (4) in Table 8, we find that the relationship of alignment and crime is mostly driven by "unsafe" ZPs. In terms of magnitude, an "unsafe" district experiences 6% more crime per capita on average in any aligned year than in any misaligned year; on the other hand, for the safe ZPs there is no difference in crime rates across the aligned and misaligned years.

We then look at bureaucrat characteristics to test if career paths are differentially related to political alignment in ways that would be consistent with our story. Firstly, note that IPS officers serving in Rajasthan who are also natives of Rajasthan are better ranked in the civil services exams than those who come to Rajasthan from other states. This is mostly due to the way in which officers are assigned state cadres, as discussed in Section 2. Also, officers for whom Rajasthan is a home state likely have a better understanding of the local law and order situation than officers of other states. In order to test if the transfers of different types of police officers are differentially related to political alignment, we estimate the following specification:

$$tenure_{idt} = \gamma_1 alignment_{dt} + \gamma_2 alignment_{dt} \times Homestate_i + \beta X_{dt} + \psi_i + \phi_t + \epsilon_{idt} \quad (5)$$

where $tenure_{idt}$ is the number of months that police officer i served as SP in district d during a period that intersects the year t (i.e., the tenure variable has the same value for all the years in which the officer was present in that district), $Homestate_i$ is a dummy indicating whether Rajasthan is the officer's home state, and ψ_i and ϕ_t are officer and time fixed effects, respectively. X_{dt} is a vector of time varying district characteristics, such as population and economic activity (as captured by per capita luminosity). Therefore, we follow the same officer through various SP appointments across districts in Rajasthan and test if the political alignment of those districts with the state government bears any relation to the length of the officer's tenure.

Table 10, column (2) reports the results of this specification. Consistent with our hypothesis, we find that it is the tenure of the home-state SPs that is getting shortened in aligned district. In fact, we find that SPs who are not from Rajasthan stay longer in aligned districts than in misaligned ones. The magnitudes of the coefficients are also quite large; an appointment in an aligned district reduces the tenure of an SP from Rajasthan by about 25% but increases the tenure of an SP from another state by about 16%. Figure 5 too corroborates this. The left panel of the figure shows that officers with more experience have shorter

tenures in their first appointment as SPs. The right panel, however, makes it clear that this relationship is true only for the officers who are from Rajasthan; there is no such relationship for the officers from other states. This is consistent with the idea that officers from outside Rajasthan are less knowledgeable about local conditions and, therefore, are not transferred out of aligned districts, in which local politicians are better positioned to coordinate with the state to arrange for a more pliable police leadership, even if they have more experience when they take charge as SPs. Interestingly, we find very similar patterns for crime rates as well. Using specification (5), we test if the relationship of crime and alignment under a *given* SP varies by the SPs home state. The results are reported in Table 12. Though the magnitudes are large, and all the signs are in exactly the same direction as in Table 10, all the coefficients have noisy estimates.

We follow through with the above reasoning and analysis for DMs and find patterns exactly the opposite of those we find for SPs. Specifically, as seen in Table 9, DMs who are native to Rajasthan tend to serve longer periods in aligned as opposed to misaligned districts. On the other hand, DMs native to other states tend to have shorter tenures in aligned districts. Moreover, as shown in Table 11, the corresponding road outcomes under a given native DM are better (though imprecisely estimated) in aligned districts, for it is in these districts that the native DM serves longer and thus has more time to acquire operational expertise in large-scale local development projects. The corresponding result for non-native DMs is the opposite - road outcomes under such DMs in aligned districts tend to be worse, with shorter sanctioned road lengths, fewer sanctioned roads and higher average per kilometer cost.

The preceding is consistent with our hypothesis that alignment tends to be beneficial for infrastructure development, as a consequence of better and more stable bureaucratic allocations, but bad for local law and order outcomes, owing to frequent transfers of "better quality" SPs (this notion of quality was also discussed in Section 1).

6 Conclusion

We look at the relationship of political alignment and appointments of two types of officials - District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police. We then see if this relationship has any bearing on road construction outcomes and law and order. We find that while DM allocations and road construction outcomes are better in aligned as opposed to misaligned districts, SP allocations and crime situations are worse. We argue that local politicians in developing countries such as India often need to engage in or support criminal or other disruptive activities in order to maintain political control of a local area and, as such, may

feel constrained by "better quality" SPs. Since the ability of a local politician to influence the tenure of an SP is higher in an aligned as opposed to misaligned setting, we should expect "worse" SPs having longer tenures in aligned districts, and that is exactly what we find in the data. Therefore, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first paper that, in emphasizing the need to look at a broader set of governance outcomes to determine the consequences of time-varying political alignments, finds a negative result on alignment, thus providing evidence that political alignment may not always be good for governance.

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Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Election Timeline

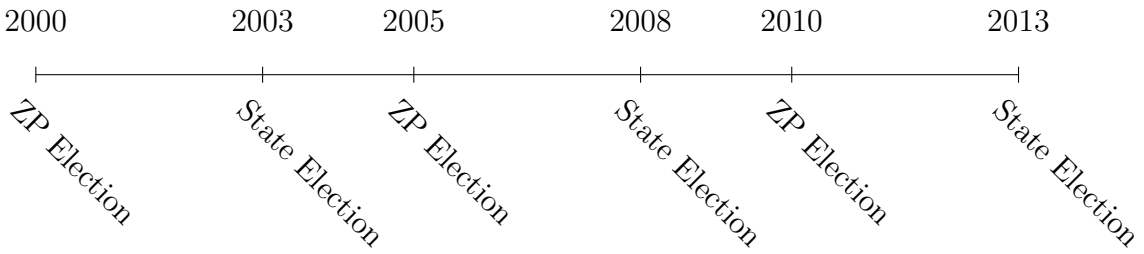
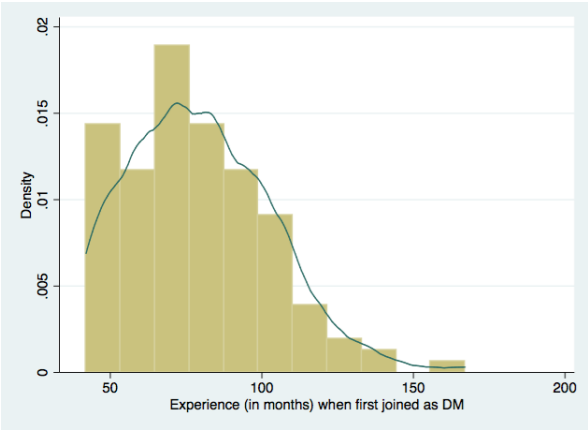
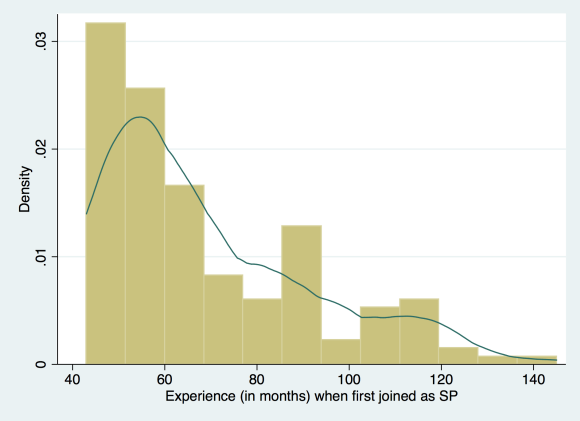


Figure 2: Distribution of months of experience before becoming SP or DM

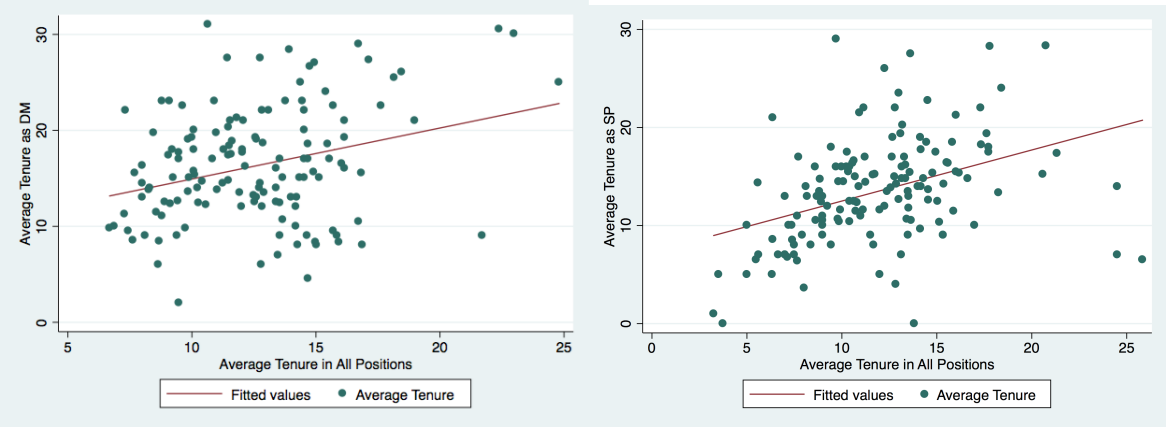


(a) For DMs



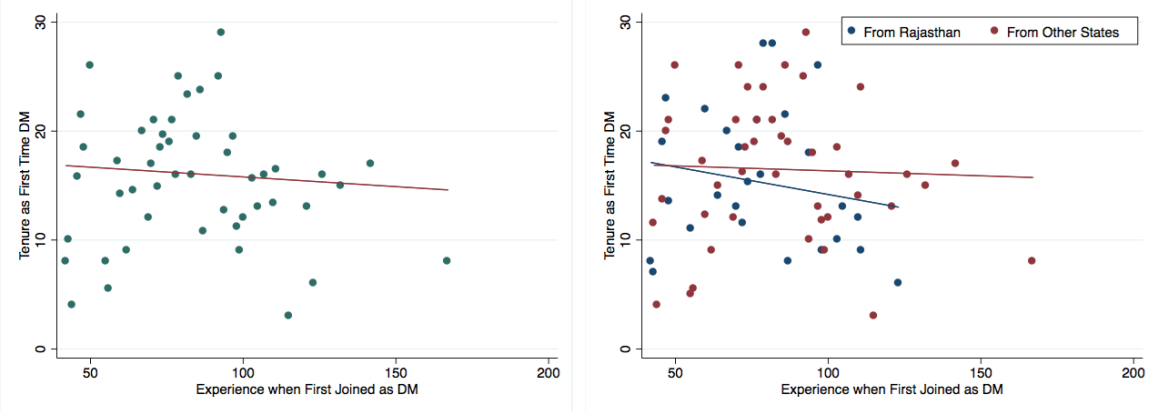
(b) For SPs

Figure 3: Average Tenure in All Positions Partially Predicts Tenure as DM or SP



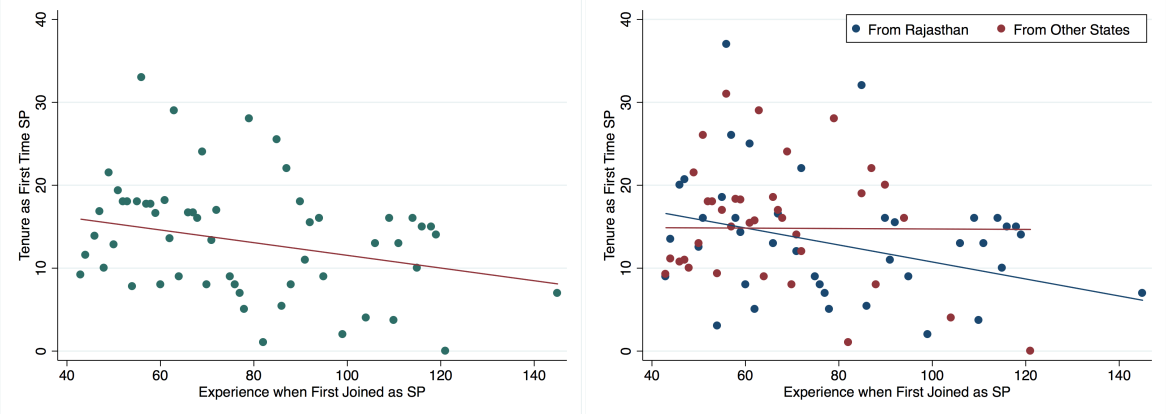
(a) For DMs **(b)** For SPs

Figure 4: Experience before Joining as DM predicts Tenure as First DM



(a) For all DMs **(b)** Rajasthan vs. Other State DMs

Figure 5: Experience before Joining as SP predicts Tenure as First SP



(a) For all SPs **(b)** Rajasthan vs. Other State SPs

Table 1: Summary Statistics

	Mean	SD
Aligned district	0.55	0.5
Safe ZP	0.39	0.5
DM change	0.55	0.5
Average DM tenure (months)	16.3	5.92
DM from Rajasthan	0.39	0.49
Experience before first DM posting (months)	79.26	23.9
Total number of DM postings	2.71	1.62
Average age when joined administration (DM)	26.69	5.01
CEO change	0.59	0.49
SP change	0.81	0.39
Average SP tenure (months)	13.48	5.43
SP from Rajasthan	0.48	0.5
Experience before first SP posting (months)	68.63	22.82
Total number of SP postings	3.17	1.86
Average age when joined administration (SP)	31.57	9.71
Total number of crime per 100,000 population	242.16	74.12
Road length (km)	203.32	220.67
Number of roads	49.77	57.22

Table 2: Relationship of alignment and bureaucrat transfers

	DM Changed		CEO Changed	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM Party	-0.131**		0.0710	
	(0.0600)		(0.0789)	
ZP chairperson Aligned with Majority of AC		0.0598		0.0768
		(0.0824)		(0.0791)
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
District FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	254	254	207	207
R-squared	0.189	0.179	0.136	0.137

Notes: The alignment variables are dummies which take value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State (in the first case) or as that with the majority of the assembly constituencies (i.e., MLAs) in that district (in the second case). DM (CEO) Changed is a dummy that takes value one if the district experienced a change in the identity of the DM (CEO) in that year. The data covers the period 2005-2014. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 3: Differential relation of alignment to bureaucrat transfer in election and non-election years

	DM Changed		CEO Changed	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ZP chairperson aligned with CM	-0.162*	-0.0780	-0.0709	0.152
	(0.0798)	(0.0691)	(0.103)	(0.0998)
Assembly Election Year * ZP chairperson aligned with CM	0.0990		0.427*	
	(0.161)		(0.233)	
ZP Election Year * ZP chairperson aligned with CM		-0.321*		-0.505*
		(0.174)		(0.294)
District FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
Observations	254	254	207	207
R-squared	0.190	0.203	0.152	0.165

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. DM (CEO) Changed is a dummy that takes value one if the district experienced a change in the identity of the DM (CEO) in that year. The data covers the period 2005-2014. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 4: Differential relation of alignment to road construction in election and non-election years

	Road Length (1)	No. of Roads (2)	Avg. Cost per Km (3)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	-8.781	8.615	0.0451
	(45.81)	(10.83)	(2.406)
Assembly Election Year * ZP chairperson aligned with CM	-127.5*	-43.43**	1.477
	(66.13)	(17.04)	(4.528)
ZP Election Year * ZP chairperson aligned with CM	61.09*	9.141	0.162
	(35.58)	(8.340)	(2.336)
District FE	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES
Observations	218	219	217
R-squared	0.566	0.593	0.767

Notes: Road variables refer to the data from PMGSY road construction. The data covers the period 2005-2013. The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 5: Relationship of political alignment of government tiers and police transfers

	SP Changed		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	0.0768*	0.0746	0.0918**
	(0.0450)	(0.0554)	(0.0440)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * Assembly Election Year		0.00969	
		(0.0689)	
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * ZP Election Year			-0.102
			(0.114)
Mean (sd) of Dep. Var.	0.81	0.81	0.81
	(0.39)	(0.39)	(0.39)
Observations	293	293	293
R-squared	0.227	0.227	0.229
District FE	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. SP Changed is a dummy which takes value one whenever the SP of a district is changed in a year, and zero otherwise. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 6: Relationship of political alignment of government tiers and crime

	Crime per 100,000 population		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	8.715**	12.11*	8.108*
	(4.161)	(6.391)	(4.271)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * Assembly Election Year		-15.88	
		(12.67)	
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * ZP Election Year			4.476
			(5.659)
Mean (sd) of Dep. Var.	242.16	242.16	242.16
	(74.11)	(74.11)	(74.11)
Observations	422	422	422
R-squared	0.882	0.884	0.882
District FE	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. The crime data includes all IPC crimes reported in the police stations located in a district in a year. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 7: Relationship of political alignment of government tiers and types of crime

	Crime per 100,000 population				
	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Auto Theft	Grievous Hurt
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Panel A:					
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	0.173**	0.854**	3.010**	2.381**	3.595**
	(0.0735)	(0.359)	(1.422)	(1.041)	(1.642)
Panel B:					
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	0.260**	0.996**	4.758**	4.082**	4.576*
	(0.122)	(0.463)	(2.226)	(1.678)	(2.398)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * Assembly Election Year	-0.408	-0.665	-8.187*	-7.966**	-4.591
	(0.291)	(0.757)	(4.123)	(3.285)	(4.994)
Panel C:					
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	0.205**	0.815**	2.984**	2.531**	3.515**
	(0.0831)	(0.363)	(1.455)	(1.068)	(1.656)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * ZP Election Year	-0.237*	0.288	0.190	-1.108	0.588
	(0.140)	(0.520)	(1.380)	(1.020)	(2.761)
Observations	422	422	422	422	422
District FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. The crime data includes all IPC crimes reported in the police stations located in a district in a year. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 8: Relationship of alignment to police appointments and crime: by political competition

	SP Changed		Crime Rate	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	0.0768*	0.105**	8.715**	15.07**
	(0.0450)	(0.0504)	(4.161)	(6.206)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * Safe ZP		-0.0654		-15.28*
		(0.0866)		(8.169)
Mean (sd) of Dep. Var.	0.81	0.81	242.16	242.16
	(0.39)	(0.39)	(74.11)	(74.11)
Observations	293	293	422	422
R-squared	0.227	0.229	0.882	0.884
District FE	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. The variable 'Safe ZP' is a dummy which takes value one if a district never experienced a change in the political party identity of the chairperson of the Zila Parishad during the period of study, and zero otherwise. The crime data includes all IPC crimes reported in the police stations located in a district in a year. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at district level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 9: Relationship of political alignment and tenure of DMs: by home state and experience of officers

	Tenure		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
ZP President Aligned with CM	-2.719	-4.749**	-9.743
	(2.009)	(2.287)	(6.769)
ZP President Aligned with CM * DM From Home State		7.307**	
		(3.066)	
ZP President Aligned with CM * Experience before First DM Posting			0.108
			(0.103)
Mean (sd) of Dep. Var.	20.51	20.51	20.51
	(7.60)	(7.60)	(7.60)
Observations	179	179	179
R-squared	0.695	0.715	0.700
Officer FE	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the President of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. Tenure is the number of months a particular officer spends as a SP in a district. It takes the same value for all the years in which he or she was a SP in that district. "SP From Home State" is a dummy that takes value one if the officer's hometown is in Rajasthan. "Experience before First SP Posting" measures the number of months the officer spent in junior positions before getting his or her first SP posting. The regression controls for population and economic activities, proxied by luminosity per capita, for each district-year observation. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. Luminosity data comes from the Night Lights dataset of NOAA. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at officer level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 10: Relationship of political alignment and tenure of SPs: by home state and experience of officers

	Tenure		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	0.279	3.625**	11.23**
	(1.842)	(1.814)	(4.541)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * SP From Home State		-7.895**	
		(3.299)	
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * Experience before First SP Posting			-0.169***
			(0.0588)
Mean (sd) of Dep. Var.	17.12	17.12	17.12
	(7.21)	(7.21)	(7.21)
Observations	233	233	233
R-squared	0.628	0.665	0.644
Officer FE	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. Tenure is the number of months a particular officer spends as a SP in a district. It takes the same value for all the years in which he or she was a SP in that district. "SP From Home State" is a dummy that takes value one if the officer's hometown is in Rajasthan. "Experience before First SP Posting" measures the number of months the officer spent in junior positions before getting his or her first SP posting. The regression controls for population and economic activities, proxied by luminosity per capita, for each district-year observation. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. Luminosity data comes from the Night Lights dataset of NOAA. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at officer level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 11: Relationship of political alignment and road construction by DM's Home State

	PMGSY Road Construction					
	Road Length		No. of Roads		Avg. Cost/Km.	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
ZP President Aligned with CM	-47.62	-77.17	3.504	-1.375	6.701	8.979
	(52.68)	(62.41)	(13.88)	(16.77)	(4.495)	(6.251)
ZP President Aligned with CM * DM From Home State		117.6		21.27		-9.075
		(106.5)		(22.19)		(8.946)
Observations	152	152	153	153	151	151
R-squared	0.671	0.674	0.714	0.716	0.662	0.672
Officer FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the President of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. The road construction data corresponds to the PMGSY roads. The district controls include population and per capita luminosity. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. Luminosity data comes from the Night Lights dataset of NOAA. The data covers the time period 2005-2013. Standard errors are clustered at officer level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 12: Relationship of political alignment and crime by SP's Home State

	Crime per 100,000 population					
	Total		Robbery		Grievous Hurt	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM	-2.738	-9.890	0.141	0.0486	1.074	-7.986
	(16.59)	(17.30)	(0.156)	(0.178)	(7.472)	(10.10)
ZP chairperson Aligned with CM * SP From Home State		16.87		0.218		21.38
		(34.79)		(0.312)		(15.17)
Observations	233	233	233	233	233	233
R-squared	0.565	0.567	0.561	0.563	0.567	0.578
Officer FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Notes: The alignment variable is a dummy which takes value one if the chairperson of the ZP belongs to the same political party as the Chief Minister of the State. The crime data includes all IPC crimes reported in the police stations located in a district in a year. Population data comes from the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and interpolated for the rest of the years with the assumption of equal increment in each year. The data covers the time period 2001-2013. Standard errors are clustered at officer level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.