Making the right moves with

ZOHO Creator

About the All India Chess Federation

The All India Chess Federation is the central governing body of the game of chess in India, and is affiliated with the Fédération Internationale des Échecs (FIDE). Established in 1951, the AICF has been instrumental in grooming the many grandmasters who've come out of India.

An administrative impasse

At AICF, the board was either nominated unanimously or through an election, when multiple parties were vying for the board roles. When the time came to select a board for 2020, the latter was the case.

Retd. Justice K Kannan, who was responsible for running the election, had to also take into account the need for a remote election process because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This called for a solution which could provide the flexibility and transparency needed in digitizing the election process.

The election process

The election pool consisted of 64 members representing the state-level chess associations. There are 15 posts in the administrative body that needed to be elected. Both factions nominated representatives from their sides for the election, with a limit where one individual could be nominated to just one post. The 15 posts that had to be elected were 1 president, 6 vice presidents, 1 secretary, 6 joint secretaries, and a treasurer.

All 64 members would vote for each post, and the nominee with the highest number of votes gets elected.

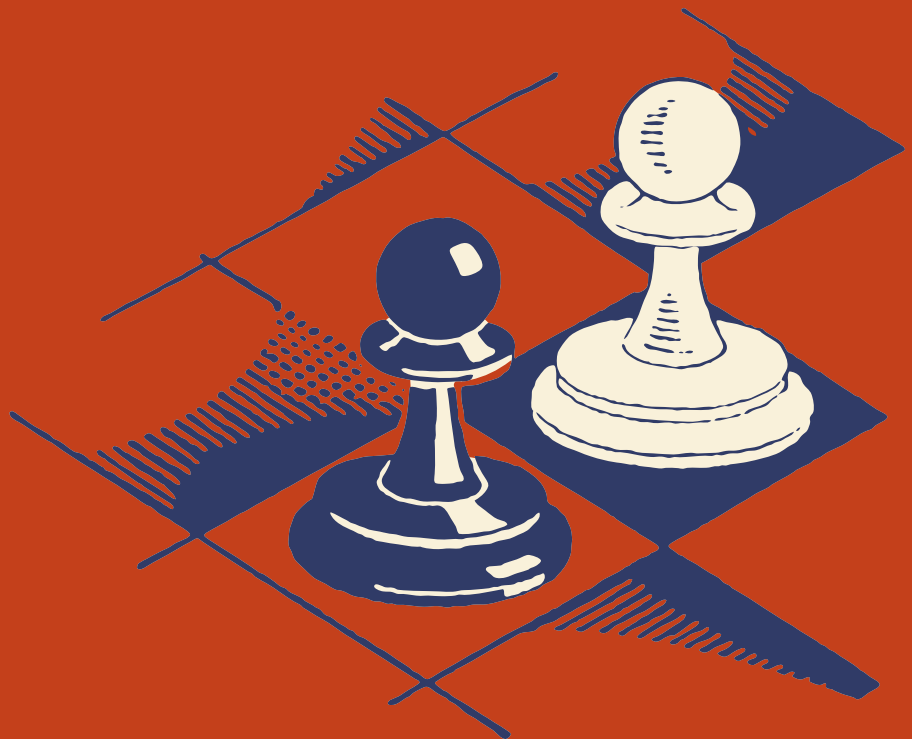
The solution

Transparency was the key requirement that Retd. Justice Kannan, the election officer, wanted to incorporate in the process. Also with the pandemic, the best way forward was to find a solution that could bring together members from different parts of the country to participate in the process.

He approached Zoho with his proposal, and after discussing the process, it was clear that this would need Zoho Creator to build the custom solution, and Zoho Meeting for the video-based verification process.

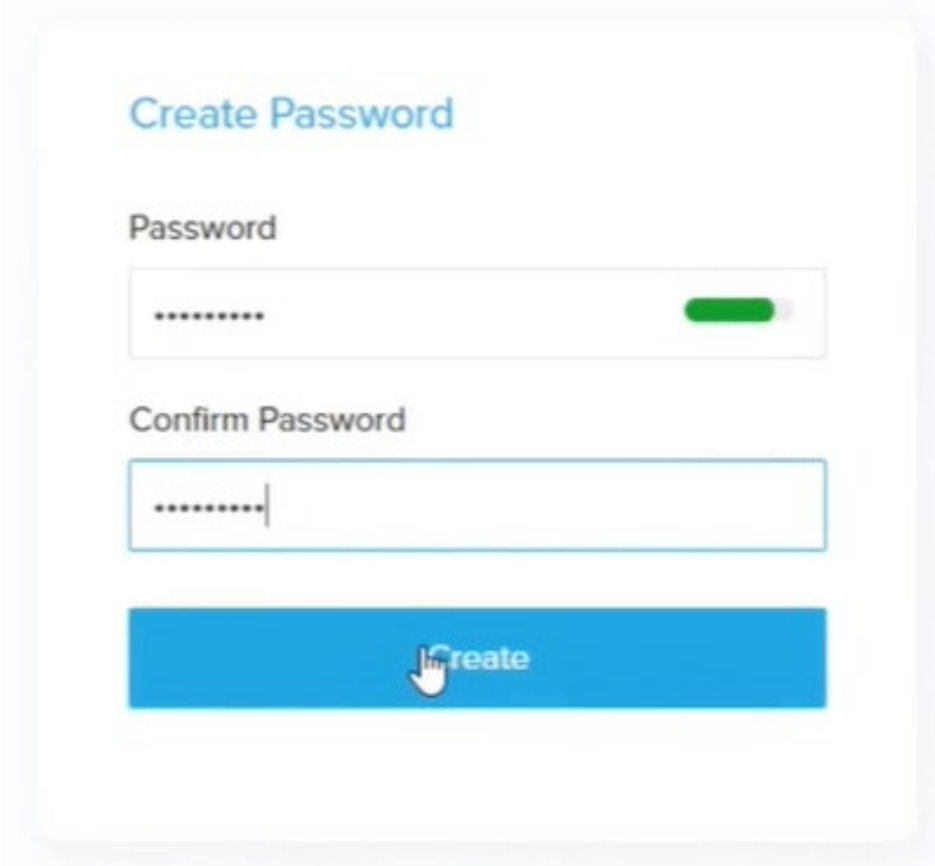
Multiple steps had to be automated using Zoho Creator:

- Registration
- Nomination
- Verification
- Election
- Announcement of results



Registering members

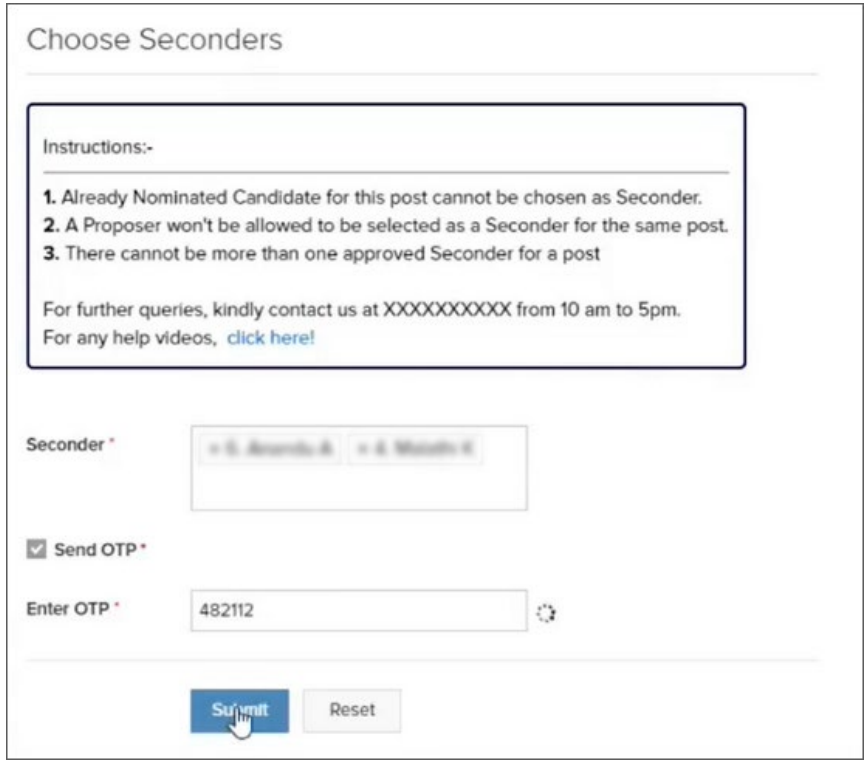
In order to register all the members, the solution required the Portal feature on Zoho Creator. Here, all the members were added to the app's portal, and then they'd be prompted to create a login for themselves for the app. Whenever they needed to participate in the nomination or election process, they'd have to sign up using this login.



Nominating the candidates

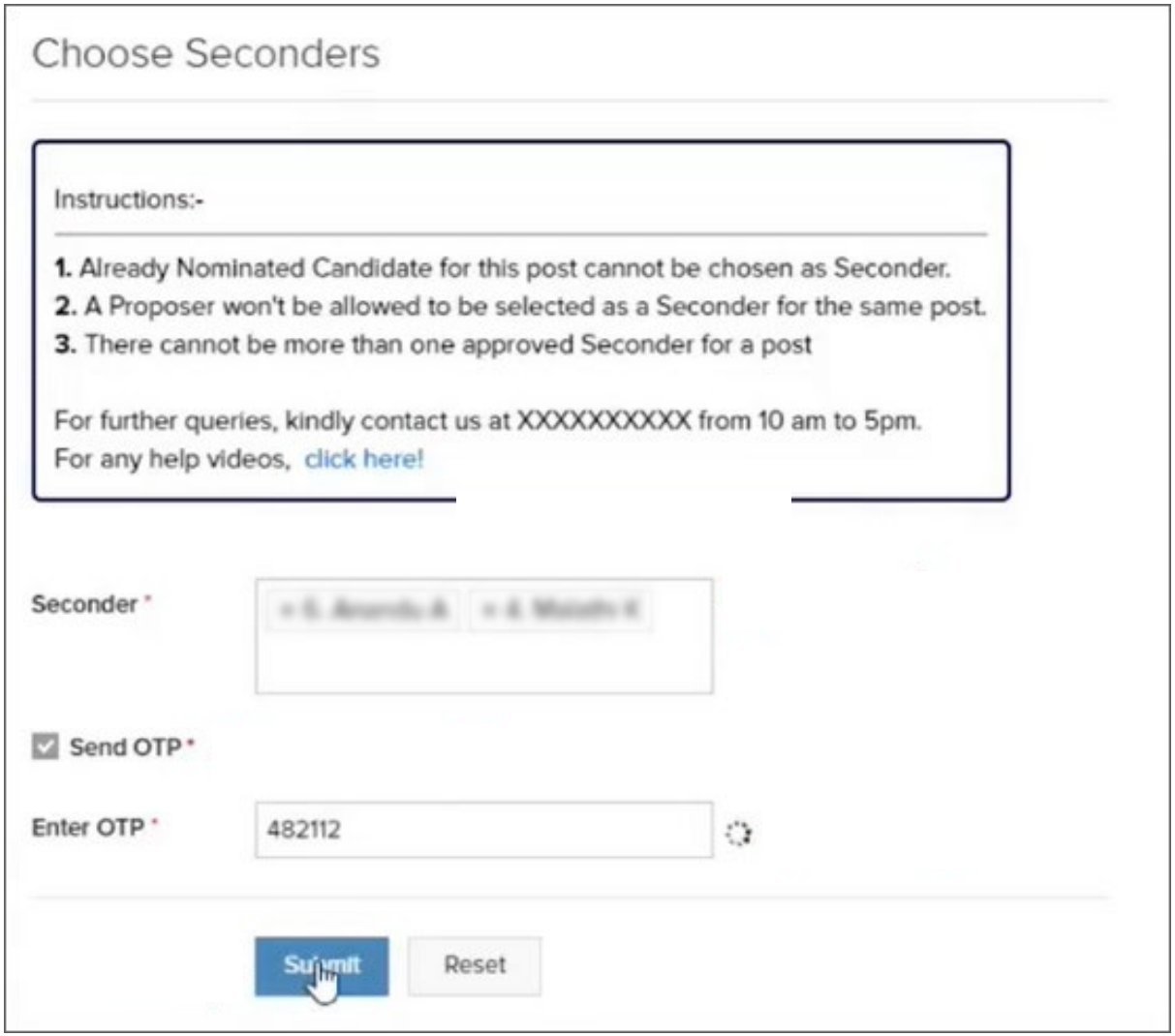
The most complicated part of the whole process was nominating candidates.

In this process, each member is given the option to nominate a candidate for a post, while no candidate could be nominated for multiple posts. After a nomination is submitted, the nominating member is prompted to select another member who'd second the nomination. Each time a member initiates a nomination, this is verified pre-nomination using an OTP process to verify the authenticity of the entry.



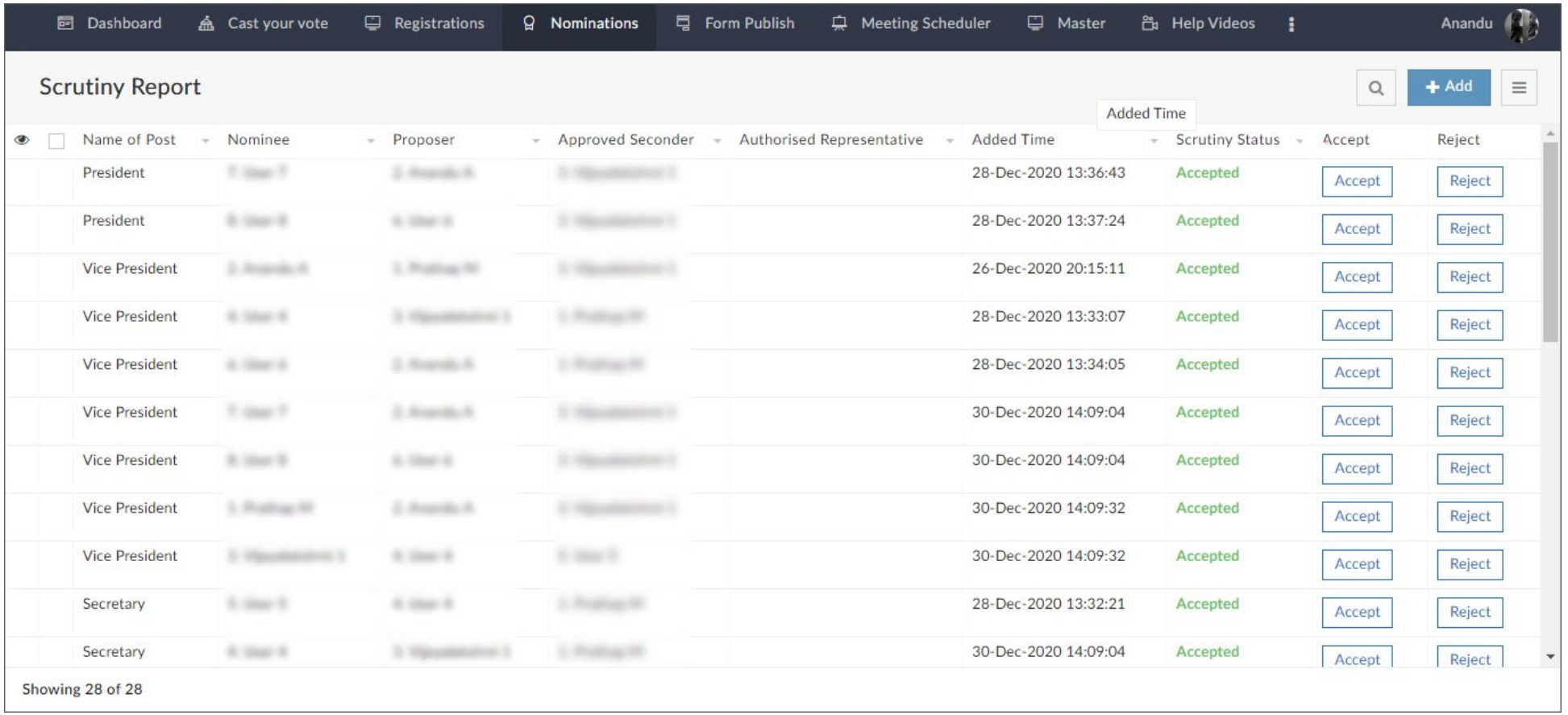
The seconder then gets an email alert and needs to verify via OTP to either accept or reject the nomination.
If accepted, then the nominated candidate gets an email notification regarding the news. After OTP verification, they too have the option to accept or reject the nomination.

Once this process is completed for all posts in the stipulated time frame, the next step is verification.



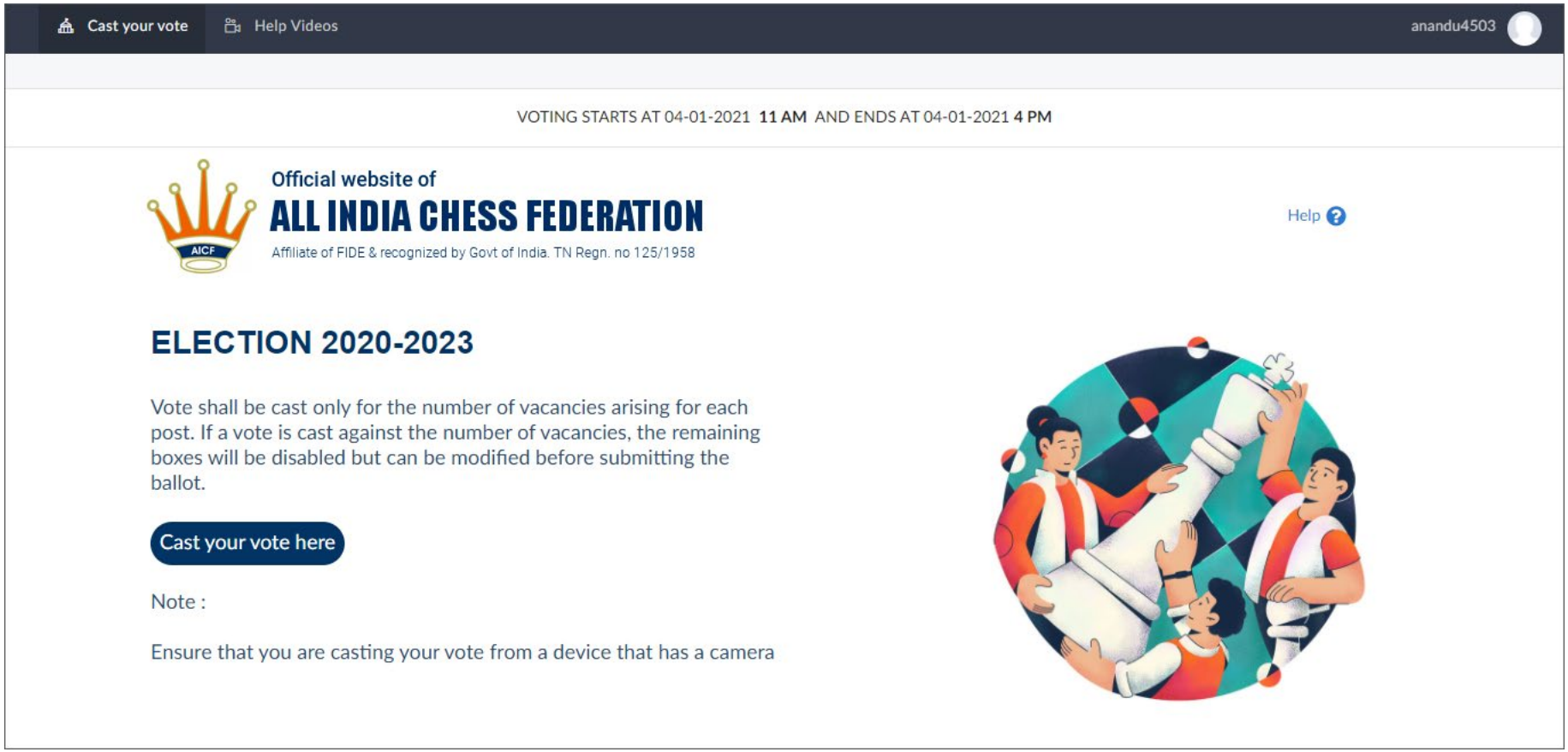
Verifying the candidates

The election officer's duty is to verify the validity of each nomination, and he wanted to have this done over video calls. Zoho Meeting was used to handle this step, at which point the nominations were made official.

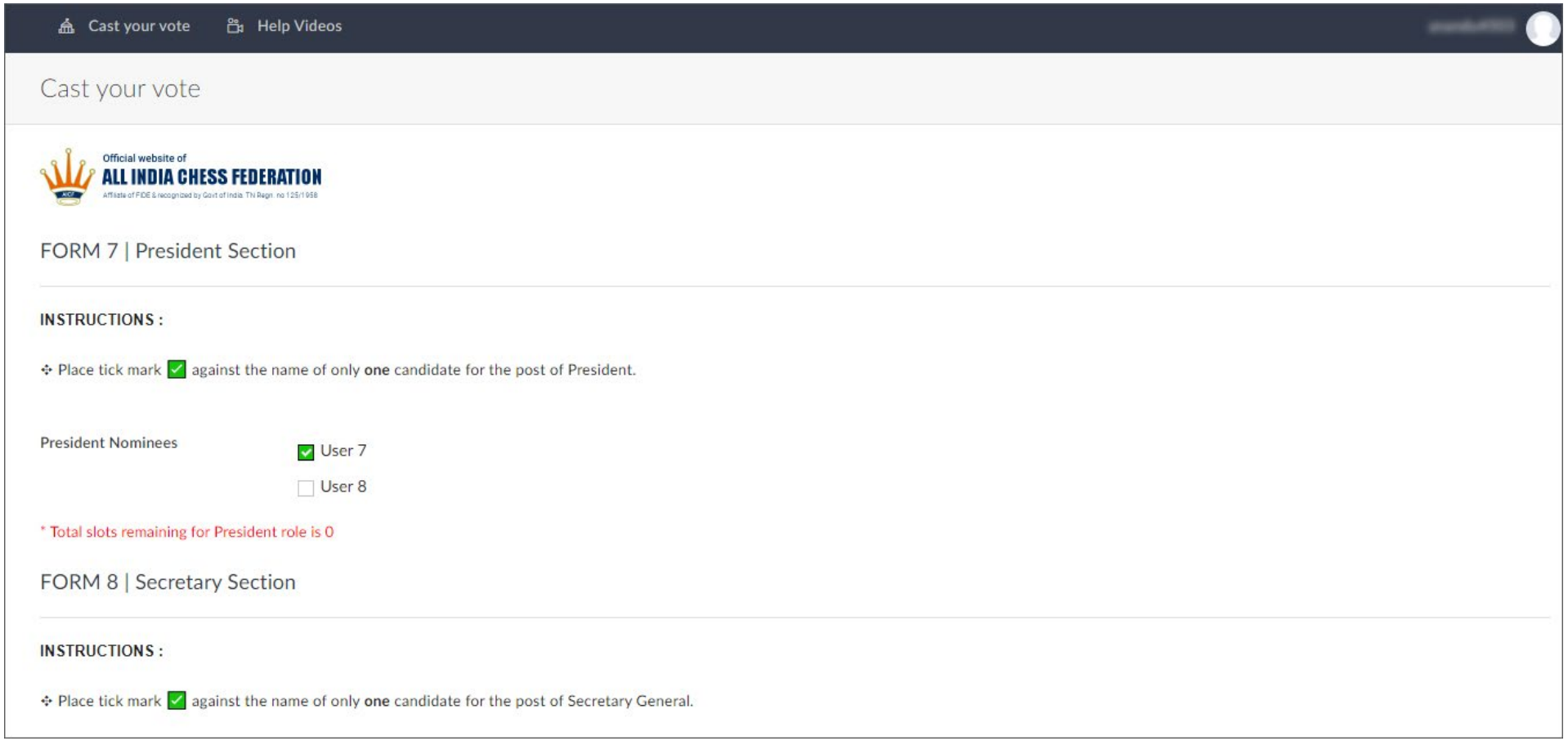


Electing the new board

Once the nomination and verification processes were done, it was time for the final elections. The 64 members were notified about casting their votes for the nominees. And to make sure that there was no cause for conflict, each member was prompted to provide a live photograph of themselves right before casting a vote, and then verify via OTP right after voting.

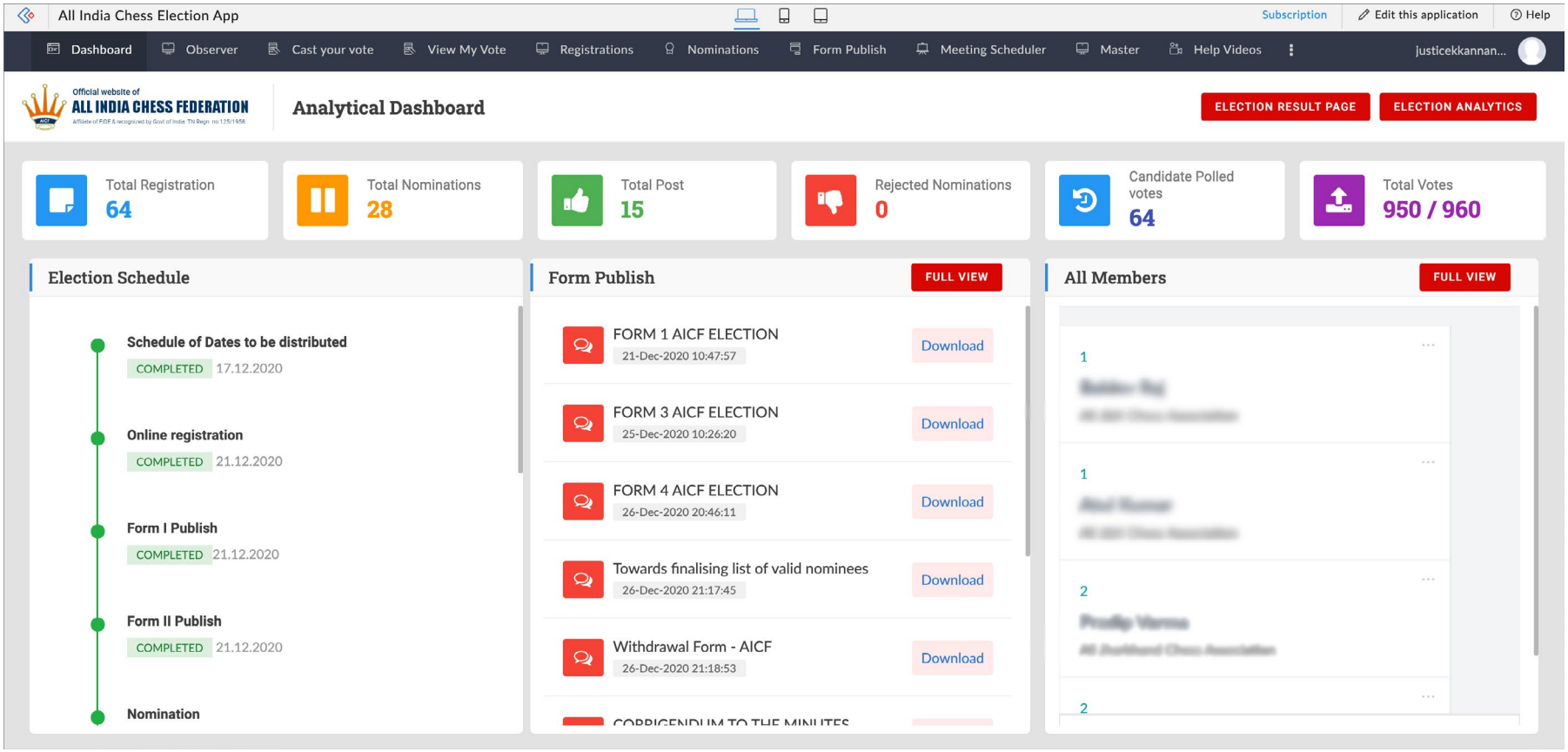


After the vote-casting process, the election results were published in the app itself, with the final counts and in case there were any queries. The app also provided a clear record of all votes to Retd. Justice Kannan for his reference.



I must particularly commend Zoho's effort to constantly tweak the system as per my directions, to cope with incessant demands from the electoral college for modifications.

- Retd Justice K Kannan, Election Officer



Standout benefits

Short app delivery time:

The whole app was built in just 15 days thanks to the Zoho Creator platform.

Zero error or conflict:

Multilevel verifications built into the app made sure that there was no scope for error or conflicts from members.

Swift and complete results:

The registration process was completed in just 6 hours and 100% polling was recorded.

Privacy-first elections:

All member and voting data was only visible to the election officer, thanks to the strict role-based access framework of the Creator platform.

The ultimate outcome of the election assured everyone that the secrecy and integrity of the election process was fully maintained.

- Retd Justice K Kannan, Election Officer

About Zoho Creator

Running a business is no mean feat, and we believe we can help. Zoho Creator is a leading low-code application development platform that empowers business users across industries to create multi-platform applications that cater to their unique requirements. You don't have to be a pro-developer nor do you need a large capital outlay to get started with Zoho Creator. Just sign up and start building the apps you need and scale as your business grows.

ZOHO Creator

www.zoho.com/creator/

We'd love to talk! Reach out to us:

hello@zohocreator.com