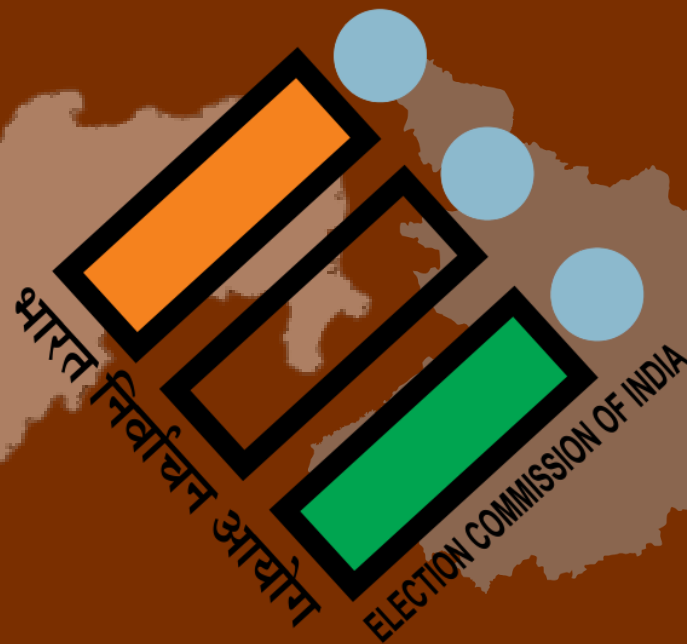


# **'DYSFUNCTIONAL' ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA & WEAPONISATION OF INDIA'S ELECTION SYSTEM**



## **AN ANALYSIS OF**

**SYSTEMIC MANIPULATION & MISCONDUCT OF  
LOKSABHA ELECTIONS-2019 & 2024  
MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS:  
NOVEMBER-2024 [Detailed Case Study]**

**&**

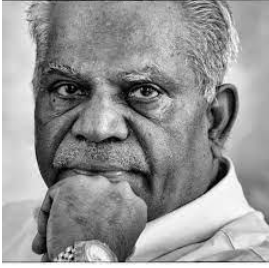
**BIHAR 'SPECIAL INTENSIVE RIVISION' OF ELECTORAL ROLLS -2025**

मताधिकार  
फक्त  
लोकशाहीसाठी

✓OTE  
FOR  
DEMOCRACY

**‘DYSFUNCTIONAL’  
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA  
&  
WEAPONISATION OF INDIA’S ELECTION SYSTEM  
  
AN ANALYSIS OF  
SYSTEMIC MANIPULATION & MISCONDUCT OF  
LOKSABHA ELECTIONS: 2019 & 2024  
MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS: NOVEMBER-2024  
[Detailed Case Study]  
&  
BIHAR ‘SPECIAL INTENSIVE RIVISION’ OF ELECTORAL  
ROLLS -2025**

**Report Authored and Compiled by Vote for Democracy (VFD)<sup>1</sup>, Maharashtra under the guidance of experts MG Devasahayam, Dr Pyara Lal Garg, Madhav Deshpande<sup>2</sup> and Professor Harish Karnick<sup>3</sup>**



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<sup>3</sup> Soldier, author and economist and author of Electoral Democracy? An Inquiry into the Fairness and Integrity of Elections in India, M. G. Devasahayam and (Editor) | January 18, 2022. 16 Former Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Panjab University, Chandigarh

The entire effort behind producing this Vote for Democracy's Report is to ensure public accountability from our institutions, particularly the constitutional/statutory body the Election Commission of India. Hence, dissemination of this information is appreciated. However, any other use of this report outside public dissemination should be explicitly avoided, especially with regard to judicial proceeding(s), except with the prior consent of the Vote for Democracy.

### What is 'Weaponisation' of India's Election System? (IES)

The EVM-centred voting system has four critical components. Microchips to record the votes as cast by the voter, Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) to audit and verify that the votes are recorded as cast and counted as recorded and Symbol Loading Units (SLUs) that upload the name and symbol of the candidates contesting on a particular seat on EVM/VVPAT. The fact that post 2017, the EVS (electronic voting system) is no more stand-alone but linked to the internet with the SLU having a labile memory has made the system susceptible to manipulation/meddling. The fourth critical component in the IES is Electoral Roll which is the voter's list and because of the methods adopted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) large scale 'disenfranchisement' of voters looms large. Cumulatively these constitute the 'weaponisation' of IES. If allowed to continue it could sound the death-knell of electoral democracy!

### Stakeholders in India's Election System (IES)

1. 'Mandating' stakeholders: The voting citizens whose mandate forms governments
2. 'Beneficiary' stakeholders: Political parties and candidates who contest elections
3. 'Power-wielding' stakeholder: Government that captures power
4. 'Facilitating' stakeholder: Election Commission of India that conducts elections.

This Report is for and on behalf of the citizens of India who are the 'mandating' stakeholders for whom the entire IES exists but have least say on its integrity and fairness! And tragically they are the victims of the 'weaponisation' of IES!

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## PART - I

### WEAPONISATION OF INDIA'S ELECTION SYSTEM

#### Unanswered Questions!

Why Shoot Voting Videos if Not Provided to the voters?

If the ECI ultimately withholds videos of the voting process from public scrutiny, what is the purpose of expending resources on their production? This raises doubts about accountability and oversight.

Why Use VVPATs if Slips Aren't Counted?

The existence of VVPAT printers, designed for voter verification, becomes a wasteful exercise if the slips are not counted and statistically viable numbers of VVPATs are not subject to voter verification per constituency. This practice undermines the very intent of enhancing transparency and trust.

Why Have Electoral Rolls if Not Machine-Readable?

Denying machine-readable electoral rolls (digital format, not PDF) impedes comprehensive analysis and verification by individual voters, citizens. Critics argue that without accessible digital rolls, their utility for transparency and verification, diminishes, potentially allowing for manipulation and questioning the need for their existence at all.

Why Hold Elections if Outcomes are Predetermined?

A profound concern is whether elections serve their true democratic purpose if the ECI is perceived to facilitate the victory of a particular party in every contest. This leads to the fundamental question: why maintain the "sham" of elections if their outcome is believed to be pre-decided?

Why a SIR in Bihar and then the rest of India?

Why is an ill-conceived Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's Electoral Rolls (June 24, 2025) being conducted just months before the state Vidhan Sabha Elections when electoral rolls had been finalised as recently as January 2025?

What lies behind the hasty decision when as late as May 29, 2025, the ECI announced initiatives "to improve voter access and streamline poll management" and there was *no mention of this mammoth exercise, nor was there any discussion with stakeholders like various national parties in meetings held through May-June 2025?*

What is the motive behind asking for inaccessible and citizenship related documents, scantily available for large sections of the Indian voting population?

## Introduction

This report touches upon the unfair conduct of the 2019 Lok Sabha Election and deals briefly with the possible “stealing of the mandate” during the 2024 Lok Sabha election to bring out the fact that Election Commission of India (ECI) has been dysfunctional for the past several years. This has led to the “weaponisation” of India’s Election System” (IES).

“The systemic subversion of India’s Electoral System through both the spurious injection of votes and suspect mass deletions of legitimate voters –coupled with the ONOE proposal – could well achieve for the autocratic RSS its dream aim in its centennial year: a strong unitary government that excludes certain denominations from the right to universal franchise.” This issue has been dealt with in detail in this Paper: [<https://sabrangindia.in/indias-election-system-is-being-weaponised-will-the-opposition-act/>]

The Report then makes a detailed case study of the Maharashtra State Assembly Elections 2024, presenting a factual and statistical analysis that unearths deeply troubling anomalies and raises grave concerns about the integrity of the electoral process and, by extension, the impartiality and accountability of the Election Commission of India (ECI). The Report also flags the irregularities in the recently announced ill- conceived ‘Special Intensive Revision’ of the electoral rolls announced for Bihar (state assembly polls due in a few months) and also intended for the rest of India.

As a constitutional body, the ECI is mandated by Articles 324-326 to ensure free, fair, and impartial elections, answerable solely to the Indian people and not the government in power. However, the events surrounding the Maharashtra polls paint a starkly different picture, suggesting a profound abdication of its constitutional duties and a disturbing shift in the burden of proof from the ECI to the very citizens and candidates alleging malpractice. Despite the ECI's own declaration of commitment to "conduct free, fair, participative, accessible, inclusive and safe election," as expressed in its press note ECI/PN/149/2024 dated October 15, 2024, the reality on the ground, particularly highlighted by the Congress delegation's futile attempts to meet with the Election Commission over allegations of misconduct and vote rigging, starkly contradicts this pledge.

## A. Lok Sabha Election-2019

That India's elections are turning unfair prompted 64 former senior civil servants belonging to the Constitutional Conduct Group (CCG) and 83 armed forces veterans, academics and journalists to write a strongly-worded letter to the ECI on July 2, 2019. The letter read:

*“The 2019 General Elections appear to have been one of the least free and fair elections that the country has had in the past three decades or so. In the past, despite the efforts of criminal elements, musclemen, and unscrupulous politicians, the persons who graced the ECI did their best to ensure that elections were conducted as freely and fairly as possible. In these General Elections, however, an impression has gathered ground that our democratic process is being subverted and undermined by the very constitutional authority empowered to safeguard its sanctity. It was rare in the past for any serious doubts to be raised about the impartiality, integrity and competence of the [ECI]. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the present ECI and the way it has conducted the General Elections of 2019. So blatant have been the acts of omission and commission by the ECI that even former Elections Commissioners and CECs have been compelled, albeit reluctantly, to question the decisions of their successors in office.”*

It is worthwhile to note that most of the civil servants who signed this letter had, during their service, conducted, supervised, monitored and observed elections to Parliament and state legislatures. Pointing out that viewed in totality, the mandate of 2019 has been thrown into serious doubt, the letter ends with a poignant and disturbing note:

*“Our Election Commission used to be the envy of the entire world, including developed countries, for its ability to conduct free and fair elections despite the huge logistical challenges and the hundreds of millions of voters. It is indeed, saddening to witness the process of the demise of that. If it continues, it is bound to strike at the very heart of that founding document the people of India proudly gave themselves – the Constitution of India – and the democratic ethos that is the very basis of the Indian Republic...”*

[<https://constitutionalconduct.wordpress.com/2019/10/04/letter-to-the-election-commission-of-india-serious-irregularities-in-the-conduct-of-general-elections-2019/>]

ECI did not even acknowledge this letter, let alone respond to the critical issues raised. However, CCG followed it up by constituting a Citizen's Commission on Elections (CCE) headed by a former Judge of the Supreme Court. CCE consulted top national and international experts on Computer Science, Statistics, Cyber Security and Election Management and came out with two Reports in 2021.

<https://constitutionalconduct.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/citizens-commission-on-elections-vol.-i.pdf> [Released in January-2021]

<https://constitutionalconduct.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/citizens-commission-on-elections-vol.ii.pdf> [Released in March-2021]

These are the essence of the findings on two critical themes:

“1. Integrity and Inclusiveness of the Electoral Rolls: Significant exclusion has been noticed of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups: circular migrants; urban homeless persons; trans people; women (especially single, widowed and divorced women); sex workers; highly stigmatised caste groups (manual scavengers); Adivasis, including PVTGs (particularly vulnerable tribal groups) and DNTs (denotified tribes); Muslims (even Christians in some constituencies); persons with disabilities; persons with mental illnesses; and old people without care. The ECI’s proposal to link a citizen’s voter ID with the Aadhaar system is a ‘very dangerous proposition.’ It could lead to massive data leaks, fraud and theft that can severely endanger India’s democracy.

2. Electronic Voting (EVM / VVPATs) and its Compliance with Democracy Principles: EVM voting does not comply with the essential requirements of ‘Democracy Principles’ i.e., each voter having the direct knowledge and capacity to verify that his/her vote is cast-as-intended; recorded-as-cast, and counted-as-recorded. It also does not provide provable guarantees against hacking, tampering and spurious vote injections. Thus, elections must be conducted assuming that EVMs can possibly be tampered with. Though a VVPAT is installed in every EVM, not even a paper slip is counted and matched to verify/audit the votes polled and votes counted before making the results public. This has exposed elections to the possibility of serious fraud. The VVPAT system does not allow a voter to verify the slip before he/she casts the ballot. Due to the absence of end-to-end (E2E) verifiability, the present EVM system is not verifiable, and therefore is unfit for democratic elections.”

Based on these Reports and other inputs CCG got a Book published under the title “Electoral Democracy-An Inquiry into the Fairness and Integrity of Elections in India.” (PARANJOY-2022; Editor: M G Devasahayam)

The Reports and the Book dealt with the serious flaws that have crept into India’s Election System and contained valuable suggestions to make India’s elections free and fair. But the ECI and political parties with whom these were shared totally ignored them!

More specifically the report titled “Is the Indian EVM and VVPAT System Fit for Democratic Elections?” had said that EVM system does not provide provable guarantees against hacking, tampering and spurious vote injections and the VVPAT system as practiced does not allow the voter to verify the slip before the vote is cast and the absence of E2E verification would lead to voting and counting manipulation and had suggested remedial measures. ECI did not bother to respond.

Therefore, in August-September 2023 civil society submitted a memorandum to ECI signed by about 10,000 voters making a specific demand: *“The VVPAT system should be re-calibrated to be fully voter-verifiable. A voter should be able to get the VVPAT slip in her hand and cast it in a chip-free ballot box for the vote to be valid. These VVPAT slips should be fully counted first for all constituencies before the results are declared.”*

ECI did not even acknowledge this Memorandum.

## B. Lok Sabha Election-2024

The entire process of Lok Sabha Elections 2024 was completed in 7 phases from the period of April 19, 2024 to June 1, 2024. The results of the Lok Sabha election 2024 were declared on June 4, 2024. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 240 seats, falling short of the 272-mark that signifies a majority in the Lok Sabha, which has 543 seats in all. The opposition I.N.D.I.A (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance) alliance, led by the Indian National Congress (INC), won 232 seats.

Through the poll process, serious questions have been raised about the discrepancies between the total votes polled and votes counted, as well as, the substantial unexplained hike in the turnout percentages by the Election Commission of India (ECI). While we do not doubt the credibility of the ECI, its conduct during this Lok Sabha election has made us, as citizens and voters, seriously concerned about the fair outcome of the electoral process. The Commission's dogged silence on several instances of alleged malpractices including in the PCs of Mumbai North West Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh and Karimganj, Assam does not inspire confidence in the minds of ordinary voters and citizens alike. The ECI's failure to act decisively against divisive hate speech is one more count for the growing mistrust of the citizen in the constitutional body. Together, this begs the question, has the 2024 Lok Sabha Election been Free and Fair?

### Unexplained Vote Increase

Most significantly, the numerical analysis of the election results and voter turnout percentage conducted by us reveals that the subsequent hike in voter turnout has arguably, disproportionately benefited the ruling regime. Notably, for all the 7 phases considered together, the cumulative hike in votes from initial turnout figures to figure turnout figures is close to 5 crore votes, or 4,65,46,885 to be precise! (Tabular data available in the report available on the website <https://votefordemocracy.org.in/>) This figure has been arrived at after a careful Phase-wise Extrapolation in Numbers of Votes. This percentage increase is of 3.2 % to a 6.32 % average across a seven-phase poll. [Though, further aggregated within the Phases and State of the Union on the basis of ECI's own data this difference in Vote percentage is a staggering 12.54 % in Andhra Pradesh and 12.48 % in Odisha]. Since, historically, in previous elections voting percentage figures have changed by a minute approximate 1 per cent only, this unexplained hike across all and in some states/phases is unacceptable. Especially since the ECI has, so far, not been forthcoming with any credible reasons for the hike. This then leads to one more question, has the 2024 Lok Sabha Mandate been Stolen from the People of India?

### Extrapolated Vote Increase translates into 79 seats countrywide!

This unprecedented vote percentage increase translated into actual votes has meant that the thus "manipulated" figures of Votes Recovered and Counted ensured that 18 more seats were arguably won by the ruling NDA (BJP) in Odisha, eleven in Maharashtra, 10 in West Bengal, 7 in Andhra Pradesh, 6 in Karnataka, 5 each in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, three each in Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana, 2 in Assam and 1 each in Arunachal Pradesh Gujarat and Kerala.

This means that a possible, minimum of as many as 79 seats in 15 states could have been won by the NDA/BJP through this hike of Votes!

## Notice to the ECI

These discrepancies and also several other violations have resulted in a Notice to the Election Commission of India (ECI) by the civil society served on Friday, July 19, 2024. This notice has been served on the ECI on grounds of alleged gross illegalities/irregularities, vote manipulation and misconduct, spurious injection of votes as well as violations of Model Code of Conduct and Supreme Court judgements during voting and counting in the 18th Lok Sabha Election 2024 conducted under the Superintendence, direction and control of the ECI as Commission holder of repository power under Article 324 of the Indian Constitution.

Full Report is available on <https://votefordemocracy.org.in>

[<https://sabrangindia.in/vote-for-democracy-vfd-releases-report-on-the-conduct-of-general-election-2024/>]

ECI and political parties with whom these were shared did not even bother to respond!

## C. Memorandum to ECI: April 11, 2025

A memorandum, dated April 11, 2025, from a group of over 80 Citizens including experts had submitted to the Election Commission of India (ECI) regarding persistent concerns about election transparency and accountability. It highlights a significant loss of public confidence in the ECI, with surveys showing only 28% trust. The memorandum alleges multifaceted manipulation, including non-release of crucial voter data (past/present lists, Forms 17C/17-A), video recordings, and manipulation of voter lists and the Electronic Voting System (EVS) via Symbol Loading Units (SLU) and microprocessors, rendering VVPATs unreliable.

The document questions ECI's EVM claims, citing mismatched votes despite assurances of "error-free" counting, and labels the current 10.5 lakh EVM system "clumsy." It formally enquires about microcontrollers/microprocessors used in EVMs and details four systemic problems.

Five key demands are made in this memorandum that may be read here:

- (i) Searchable public voter lists, searchable Form 17C data, public disclosure of voter revision forms (9, 10, 11, 11A, 11B);
- (ii) Open-source EVM code, and
- (iii) Third-party SLU inspection.

- (iv) Echoing expert recommendations, it proposes strengthening VVPAT by allowing voters to physically deposit slips into a separate ballot box after verification, Followed by 100% counting of these slips over EVM counts.
- (v) The memorandum urges immediate open dialogue to restore faith in India's electoral process.

## D. Computer Science experts' question ECI's rebuttal of Tulsi Gabard on Indian EVMs: April 16, 2025

On April 16, 2025, Computer Science experts from CCE and VFD, including Madhav Deshpande and Prof. Harish Karnick, challenged the ECI's swift dismissal of US DNI Tulsi Gabbard's EVM vulnerability claims. They criticised ECI's responsiveness to foreign officials over Indian citizens. The experts highlighted the VVPAT's Symbol Loading Unit (SLU) as a critical weak point, stating that "Trojan" software could be uploaded via USB during candidate data transfer, potentially manipulating election results. They also noted older EVMs were less vulnerable without VVPAT/SLU.

These experts also strongly criticised the ECI's lack of transparency, citing its refusal to allow public demonstrations or independent testing of EVMs (Control Unit, Ballot Unit, VVPAT) to verify isolation or data integrity. They demanded non-invasive public testing of 2024 Lok Sabha EVMs and full disclosure of data integrity protocols for the entire system. Concerns were also raised about a "vote-stealing Trojan" potentially introduced via the ECI website during SLU connection, capable of altering votes and self-destructing. They argue that the ECI's assurances without detailed information or scrutiny are mere propaganda, further demanding public scrutiny of randomly selected SLUs from each constituency.

Principles of secret ballot, free will compromised, electronic surveillance a possibility with Voting APP introduced by the ECI: Expert

On July 2, 2025, computer science expert Madhav Deshpande critically analysed the Bihar State Election Commission's new mobile-based e-voting app, following its June 29 launch by the ECI. This criticism was made public by the Vote for Democracy. While the ECI touted convenience for specific demographics, Deshpande, with his extensive experience including US government consultancy, raised serious concerns. He questioned the APP's handling of personally identifiable information (PII), arguing that voter identity isn't tokenised or expunged, and directly violating the secret ballot principle. Furthermore, he highlighted the potential for electronic surveillance by linking app data to other device activity. Deshpande also challenged the app's ability to ensure free will and secrecy during voting, noting the app's own disclaimer regarding data transmission security. He emphasised the risk of data manipulation by network operators and potential compromise of Indian sovereignty if data blocks or block chain technology reside on foreign servers. Deshpande concluded that the app endangers fundamental rights to privacy, free will, and the secret ballot, demanding its immediate withdrawal.



## E. EC's response and transparency concerns

The Election Commission (EC) has faced severe criticism for its response to these anomalies, which it vaguely attributed to a "welcome trend in participation of youth," despite the inexplicable concentration of this "trend" in only 12,000 specific booths. The EC has met all opposition queries with silence or aggression, notably dismissing requests for photo voter rolls for both the 2024 Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections. Adding to the controversy, just one month after the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha elections, and following Punjab and Haryana High Court order to share videography and CCTV footage from a polling station, the central government, in consultation with the EC, controversially amended Section 93(2)(a) of the 1961 Conduct of Election Rules. This amendment (December 2024) restricts access to CCTV footage and electronic records, a move widely seen as an attempt to conceal evidence of potential malpractices.

The timing of this amendment, immediately after the elections and a judicial directive, has been widely interpreted as a "giveaway." The recent discovery of identical/duplicate EPIC numbers further exacerbates concerns about bogus voters, which many believe is merely the tip of a larger iceberg. Opposition parties and concerned citizens are gravely worried that this systematic "election rigging playbook," potentially involving fraudulent practices like targeted voter deletion and booth displacement, may have been in play for years.

The inability of the public and opposition to access crucial records like voter rolls and CCTV footage, which are vital for ensuring democratic integrity and transparency, significantly undermines trust in the electoral process and raises urgent calls for accountability from the Election Commission.

## F. ECI cuts storage time for election CCTV footage to 45 days

On May 30, 2025, the Election Commission of India (ECI) significantly reduced the retention period for election video and photographic records to a mere 45 days post-results. This too was done unilaterally without consultation or reasoning. This allows for data destruction if no election petition is filed, a stark departure from previous norms requiring retention for 3 months to a year. The ECI justified this by citing "recent misuse" and labelling footage an "internal management tool," despite a 2005 Supreme Court suggestion in *Janak Singh vs Ram Das Rai & others* to use videography for transparency.

This move follows a December 2024 amendment to Rule 93(2)(a) of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, which restricted public access to electronic election documents. This amendment was enacted swiftly after a High Court directive to release election papers, leading to accusations that the ECI is deliberately limiting scrutiny.



Paradoxically, on June 16, 2025<sup>4</sup>, the ECI announced an expansion to 100% webcasting of polling stations for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections. However, this increased internal surveillance is undermined by simultaneous restrictions on public access to this data. Critics question the purpose of recording videos or using VVPATs if access is denied or slips aren't counted, and why machine-readable electoral rolls remain unavailable. These actions, perceived as a strategic move to control the narrative rather than enhance transparency, risk eroding public trust and undermining the democratic process.

## G. Election conduct rules amended just in 2 days bypassing Law officer's suggestions: Rule 93 Amendments

On December 20, 2024, the Election Commission amended Rule 93 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, within two days of proposing it. This rapid legislative change drastically curtailed public access to election documents and electronic recordings, including CCTV footage and Form 17C. This timing is critical, occurring just over a week after the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered the ECI to provide such records in the Haryana assembly elections to advocate Mehmood Pracha, suggesting the amendment's purpose was to circumvent judicial directives for greater transparency.

Despite objections from internal law officers regarding potential restrictions and ambiguity, the ECI pushed through the amendment, ostensibly citing "administrative burden" and "misuse" of recorded material. This justification rings hollow given the rapid enactment. This legal manoeuvre, coupled with the ECI's May 30, 2025, decision to reduce CCTV footage retention to 45 days (down from up to a year), and its June 16, 2025, announcement of 100% webcasting while restricting public access to that data, creates a profound contradiction. Critics argue these actions erode public trust, hinder election petitions, and undermine the democratic principles of transparency and accountability.

## H. Insights from *Newslandry's* report on Maharashtra elections: a troubling precedent

The investigative series<sup>5</sup> *Newslandry* on the Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2024 reveals a disturbing chronology of events that closely parallels the issues currently surfacing in Bihar. These findings revealed systemic vulnerabilities in the ECI's voter enrolment processes, particularly concerning address verification and the role of Booth Level Officers (BLOs).

<sup>4</sup><https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJP1KivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzIv7%2FZQ09etPKoyJV5h%2FcTpSBY2rLSWcB8ZqM9aI5Kyrygwuco7jGon2YxNZ%2BOoa6sXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>5</sup> [In 6 months, Fadnavis seat added 29,219 voters. Poll staff claim lapses](#)

The report highlights that many electors were added to the rolls without proper address verification. This occurred despite "address [being] the essential criteria as per ECI's Guidelines." A significant procedural deviation was identified: Forms (Form 6), which are typically submitted by electors to BLOs for verification, were instead received by the BLOs directly from District Election Officers (DEOs).

This top-down distribution severely impacted the integrity of the verification process. BLOs themselves went on record, expressing their predicament: "as the Form 6 were provided by DEOs, they simply uploaded the forms believing that they would be credible. They could not verify many of the forms due to paucity of time." This candid admission underscores the immense pressure and impractical expectations placed upon BLOs, forcing them to bypass essential ground-level verification.

The consequences of this rushed and unverified process became evident: BLOs were reportedly "shocked to see many voters on voting day, whom they had never seen before." This suggests that individuals whose addresses were never physically verified, or who potentially didn't reside at the listed address, were included in the rolls.

Further compounding the issue, the investigation found electoral rolls "replete with voters without addresses." A random check of 50 booths revealed "at least 4,393 voters with blank address columns." This is a significant concern as "ECI requires voters to submit proof of residence along with form 6 and since the manual specifies that the address column must be filled." While the ECI spokesperson claimed such voters could be registered if "temporarily residing in some area with no exact address" after "ground level verification by our BLO," the BLOs' own statements reveal a struggle to conduct such verification due to time constraints and the source of the forms.

The challenge of "untraceable voters" with incomplete addresses is not new. Navdeep Rinwa, Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh, had previously acknowledged this as a "widespread problem" with "no clear SOP by the Election Commission of India to delete such voters." This directly impacts BLOs' ability to conduct subsequent house-to-house verifications or send notices for deletions.

Despite these findings, the ECI spokesperson maintained a stance of "absolute purity" regarding the electoral roll, stating that "any increase or decrease can happen" due to "natural growth" and migration. However, the ground-level accounts from BLOs and supervisors, some of whom "disconnected the call" when pressed on verification issues, paint a different picture.

## I. 'Dysfunctional ECI' and India's Democratic Downslide

### 1. Global perception of India:

- India, once a beacon of democracy, is now described by international bodies as a "partially free" nation (Freedom House) and a "partially free electoral autocracy" (V-

Dem Institute)<sup>6</sup> –India one of the worst autocratisers. This marks a stark contrast to India's historical commitment to universal adult franchise.

- *"India moved from a restrictive 15 percent of Indians having (limited) voting rights to universal adult franchise, driven by the transformative impetus of the national movement and the ideals of equality and non-discrimination that it threw up."*

## 2. Historical context:

- India's inclusionary approach to voting, led by **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar ensured** that universal adult franchise became a non-negotiable part of the nation's democracy.
- *"Ambedkar's articulations were clear when he was categorical that a democratic government was inseparable from the right to vote, and it was voting that would prove to be (one of) the harbinger(s) of political education."*
- This historic commitment positioned India ahead of the United States, which only secured universal voting rights for all citizens in 1964, despite its older democratic tradition.

## J. Undemocratic changes since 2014:

### Overall Context

To start with, Section 59 of the Representation of People's Act, 1951 (RPA) which mandates the conduct of elections through ballot paper has been violated with impunity. This is what the provision says: "Manner of voting at elections: - At every election where a poll is taken votes shall be given by ballot in such manner as may be prescribed and, save as expressly provided by this Act, no votes shall be received by proxy."

This was followed by non-compliance of Section 61A which provides for voting machines at elections subject to conditions: "Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or the rules made thereunder, the giving and recording of votes by voting machines in such manner as may be prescribed, may be adopted in such constituency or constituencies as the Election Commission may, having regard to the circumstances of each case, specify."

It is to be noted that while Section 59 uses the word "shall", Section 61A says only "may" making the legislative intention clear—conduct of elections in India should be with ballot paper and EVM may be an option if that was not possible.

Therefore, as per administrative protocol, Election Commission of India (ECI) is required to issue a constituency-wise 'notification' explaining the circumstances under which elections could not be

<sup>6</sup> <https://v-dem.net/publications/democracy-reports/>; <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-one-of-the-worst-autocratisers-v-dem-report-on-democracy/article67939573.ece>

conducted with ballot papers and electronic voting machines (EVM) would be used for the purpose. No such notifications were issued by the ECI either before or after the announcement of election schedule on 16 March, 2024. This makes the election ab initio illegal.

Next comes the ECI's total inaction on the violation of (a) the Model Code of Conduct, (b) Sections 123(3) and (3A), 125 of the RPA, and Section 153A of the Indian Penal Code by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

At an election rally in Rajasthan's Banswara on April 21, 2024 Modi claimed the Congress manifesto had promised to seize and redistribute private wealth of Indians among "infiltrators" and "those who have more children"—a dog whistle reference to India's Muslims.

In the same speech, the prime minister claimed that the Congress would snatch away the mangalsutras worn by married Hindu women in its bid to distribute wealth among Muslims. Nearly 20,000 individuals had collectively penned letters to the ECI, urging action against the PM for these devastating comments made against Muslims. But there was not even a wimp from the ECI on this and other similar 'poisonous arrows.' Emboldened by this, Prime Minister went on making more inflammatory statements that clearly violated the MCC and RPA.

In fact, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar gave a self-incriminating explanation to this impotent inaction when he said that the Election Commission had deliberated over poll code violations during the 2024 general elections at length and had decided to not admonish two top leaders each from the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Indian National Congress—Narendra Modi and Amit Shah of the BJP and Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra of the INC. This is clear discrimination and constitutional violation by the CEC.

Now, to the ECI's wanton defiance of Supreme Court orders. In its judgment dated 8.10.2013 in Subramanian Swamy v. Election Commission of India, (2013) 10 SCC 500, Supreme Court had clearly laid out the purpose of introducing the Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) along with EVMs. "From the materials placed by both the sides, we are satisfied that the "paper trail" is an indispensable requirement of free and fair elections. The confidence of the voters in the EVMs can be achieved only with the introduction of the "paper trail." EVMs with VVPAT system ensure the accuracy of the voting system. With an intent to have fullest transparency in the system and to restore the confidence of the voters, it is necessary to set up EVMs with VVPAT system because vote is nothing but an act of expression which has immense importance in democratic system," the judgment had said.

Apex Court's purpose was to make the EVM voting/counting to comply with the essential 'Democracy Principles' of End-to-End (E2E) verifiability i.e. voter should be able to verify that her vote is cast-as-intended, recorded-as-cast and counted-as-recorded. This ipso facto meant that EVM should be used for voting and all the printed slips in the VVPAT machine should be counted before declaring results. Pursuant to the 8.10.2013 order and other directives, ECI arranged for all EVMs to be accompanied with VVPAT for the 2019 general elections. Without counting of VVPAT slips in a significant percentage of polling stations in each assembly constituency, the objectives of verifiability and transparency in the democratic process would remain unrealised. But, in defiance of this basic

principle, vide its letter dated 13.02.2018 ECI directed state chief electoral officers to mandatorily verify VVPAT paper slips in only one randomly selected polling station in each assembly constituency.

This being around 0.5% sample size which is pathetically low, defeated the very object of installing VVPATs in all EVMs which tantamount to non-implementation of Supreme Court Order. But ironically Supreme Court endorsed this gross violation when a Bench comprising of Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Sanjay Khanna passed this order on 08-04-2019: “.....our considered view is that the number of EVMs that would now be subjected to verification so far as VVPAT paper trail is concerned would be 5 per Assembly Constituency or Assembly Segments in a Parliamentary Constituency instead of what is provided by Guideline No. 16.6, namely, one machine per Assembly Constituency or Assembly Segment in a Parliamentary Constituency.....”

SC had just increased the sample size from a microscopic 0.5% to miniscule 2 % whereas the demand was for a reasonable 30% to 50% based on sound statistical principles. E2E verifiability had thus been intentionally denied, a typical case of ‘fence eating the crops.’ ECI had nefariously succeeded in effectively blocking the E2E verifiability thereby paving the way for voting and counting manipulation on a selective and secretive basis.

There is worse to come. In the judgment delivered on 26.04.2024 Supreme Court (ADR Case) opened two windows for verification through these directions: “76. (a) On completion of the symbol loading process in the VVPATs undertaken on or after 01.05.2024, the symbol loading units shall be sealed and secured in a container. The candidates or their representatives shall sign the seal. The sealed containers, containing the symbol loading units, shall be kept in the strong room along with the EVMs at least for a period of 45 days post the declaration of results. They shall be opened, examined and dealt with as in the case of EVMs.”

(b) The burnt memory/microcontroller in 5% of the EVMs, that is, the control unit, ballot unit and the VVPAT, per assembly constituency/assembly segment of a parliamentary constituency shall be checked and verified by the team of engineers from the manufacturers of the EVMs, post the announcement of the results, for any tampering or modification, on a written request made by candidates who are at SI.No.2 or SI.No.3, behind the highest polled candidate....”

Both these directions were not carried out in letter and spirit by the ECI and direction (b) was sabotaged and wilfully disobeyed. While hearing the petition Supreme Court had asked the ECI to ensure that no data is deleted from the EVMs. After the court order in April 2024, the ECI came out with its SOP for checking and verification in July that year which states that a mock poll of up to 1,400 votes per machine will be conducted and the result tallied with the VVPAT slips. If the results match, the machines would be considered to have passed the test. ADR has argued that the SOP does not provide for actual verification of the microchips installed in the EVMs and VVPATs. [<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/what-sc-has-told-election-commission-on-evm-data-9832228/>] The entire thing appears to be a farce and ECI is hell-bent on protecting the microchips that seems to have been compromised!

## K. ECI's Lack of Transparency:

- The ECI has been accused of **shifting and changing** Data Release Parameters of release of data even of voter count and voting figures. In the Lok Sabha elections 2024, the ECI was guilty of the release of voting data only by percentages (not actual figures). This has continued in the (Maharashtra) state (2024 polls) as a whole. In the Haryana state elections, percentages of votes case was released at the most district-wise not constituency-wise in the initial declarations. There is no explanation for this when in actuality Voting Figures come in in actual numbers, votes are numerically recorded in actual numbers (be it in the EVM or in the Encore APP). Hence the logic of releasing these actual figures aggregated into percentages is not just inexplicable (even suspicious) but also means that during the exercise *exact vote counts are not being conveyed/computed*.
- Since the results are computed in actual numbers so release of data needs to be in accordance with this. These actions of shifting parameters and releasing percentages – that too not on individual constituencies but districts –leaves scope for manipulation. The illogical method also completely defies the mandate clearly defined for the ECI.
- The shifting and altering parameters of release of data in each election and in each phase of a phased election are, violative of the principle of uniformity of data and makes the analysis extremely difficult if not impossible.
- More than anything else, these sudden unilateral actions signal an era of opaqueness and non-transparency that bodes ill for the constitutional mandate to which the ECI is beholden. Furthermore, the ECI's handling of voter rolls, with accusations of both mass deletions and bogus voter additions, has drawn suspicion, especially around key states where the ruling party benefited from such changes.
- The ECI has failed to explain any logic or scientific principle as to why the ECI in Haryana Assembly elections, declared district wise percentage in its initial two press releases while around 12 hours before counting the percentages were given assembly constituency wise? We all know that in assembly the elections are not held district wise. Constituency wise votes polled that were used to extrapolate the percentage have not been made public till date.
- Similarly in Lok Sabha Phase 1 the state wise percentage was given and the ECI held out the promise vide its Press Release No.ECI/PN/56/2024, Dated 19.04.2024 to release the final figures after receipt of form No. 17A as under:
  - Final figures will be known only after the scrutiny of form 17A. [However to date, in keeping with the ECI's obduracy in imparting public data this verification has not yet taken place.]



Also, the ECI while issuing the vote percentage for 2<sup>nd</sup> phase not only backed out of its promise of releasing the final figures but also refused to declare state wise poll percentage, the only poll percentage for all the 13 states and Union Territories (UTs) was given in the form of single figure of 60.96% as whole, on April 30, 2024 vide its Press release No. ECI/PN/62/2024. The ECI abdicated its duty and declared its refusal to release the voter turn figures by stating:

- Final turnout will only be available post-counting with counting of postal ballots and its addition to total vote count. [This count has not been made available to date]

By further amending the law (December 2024) the ECI has made it clear that it does not believe in transparency and electronic data shall not be given even on demand after payment of charges too.

- *"The utter and abject refusal of the ECI to answer key questions on the conduct of free and fair elections requires us as citizens to launch grassroots campaigns for a free and fair election."*

#### 4. Voter Manipulation (Additions and Deletions):

- [Sabyasachi Das' research into the 2019](#) General Elections revealed patterns of voter registration manipulation, where names of likely opposition voters were deleted, and turnout manipulation, where polling officers discriminated against opposition-supporting voters.
- *"In the latter part of 2023, scholar Sabyasachi Das...studied the 2019 General Election to Parliament, and the study available in the public domain says that electoral manipulation can take place at the stage of voter registration (registration manipulation) or at the time of voting or counting (turnout manipulation)."*
- This pattern was also evident in the **2024 elections**, where allegations of mass deletions of voters and the addition of dubious voters emerged, with no coherent responses from the ECI.
- By filling form No. 7 any person, registered as voter in the constituency can seek removal of any *other* name from the voter list. Given the slip shod was in which the ECI has been –in Delhi 2025 and other elections allowing deletions, even mass deletions with the mandatory period of 7 days clear notice being bypassed, the elector finds the name missing only at the polling booth! Though there is a legal provision to provide the address of the complainant and the proof for a person raising any objection on another voter's right, the conduct of the officials of the ECI – especially in the early 2025 recent assembly polls notified for NCT Delhi –reveal that

bulk/multiple applications from the address of (opposing) political parties are alleged to have been filed to simply ensure mass deletions of sections of voters they believe will not owe allegiance to them.<sup>7</sup> In December 2024, prior to the Delhi Assembly Elections 2025, Aam Aadmi Party convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal alleged that the BJP had sought to delete over 11,000 legitimate voters from the Shahdara electoral roll, claiming that 75% of those targeted were still bona fide residents.

- The person against whom the objection has been made, is not qualified for inclusion in the electoral roll viz. due to death, under age, absent/permanently shifted, already enrolled in the electoral roll at the same place or some other place, not an Indian citizen etc. The onus of proof to substantiate the reason given for objection or removal of name lies with the applicant.

That the ECI has compromised the democratic framework set out in India's Constitution, particularly through its failure to ensure strict procedure in *additions and deletions of votes, consistent data parameters in release of Voter and Voting figures, transparency around the EVS and EVMs*, an absence transparency and its manipulation of electoral data has tainted the entire process. The refusal to allow independent experts to inspect EVM microprocessors or address concerns over election fairness has further led to increased, intense and widespread suspicion.

The "ECI must function in the interests of the people and not the regime in power."

As the opposition attempts –in fits and starts –to raise critical questions, these campaigns need to be intensified and the campaign made people-oriented, effective and consistent. It is time for citizens to demand accountability, transparency, and free and fair elections. Post the April 28, 2024 directive of the Supreme Court of India to allow inspection of the microprocessors<sup>8</sup>, the ECI demanded exorbitant fees per machine for this exercise! Worse, the ECI has refused to check the votes polled in EVM in Haryana Assembly and has deleted the data. The case is currently pending in the Supreme Court and there is no resolution in sight.

- *The ECI's failure to conduct free and fair elections is a significant blow to India's democratic fabric.*
- *There is a strong call for citizen action to demand transparency and accountability in elections.*
- *Manipulation at various stages—voter registration, voting, and counting—raises serious questions about the integrity of the electoral process.*
- *Delay in redressal from the Constitutional Courts has further exacerbated the problem.*

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/delhi-news/bjp-deleting-names-of-delhi-voterskejriwal-101733509630284.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.scobserver.in/reports/top-court-hears-challenges-against-ecis-standard-operating-procedure-for-vote-verification/#:~:text=Bench:%20Judgement%20only%20directed%20to,way%2C%E2%80%9D%20CJI%20Khanna%20said.>



## MAHARASHTRA ASSEMBLY ELECTION-2024: SUMMARY



The VFD conducted a detailed examination of 288 Assembly Constituencies across 35 districts in Maharashtra. This analysis was aimed at highlighting the most competitive constituencies in the state. We further examined 25<sup>9</sup> Assembly Constituencies in Maharashtra where the victory margin was less than 3,000 votes, 39<sup>10</sup> Assembly Constituencies where the victory margin was less than 5,000 votes, analysed 69<sup>11</sup> Assembly Constituencies where the victory margin was less than 10,000 votes and where the margin of victory was less than 26,500 votes<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Table 5 - Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024 Seats with margin less than 3000

<sup>10</sup> Table 6 - Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024 Seats with Margin less than 5000

<sup>11</sup> Table 7 - Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024 Seats with margin less than 10000

<sup>12</sup> Table 3 - Party Wise Margin Below 26500

The analysis, also meticulously conducted by VFD, aided, in some cases, by indicators from initial individual press reports, has unearthed discrepancies in 95<sup>13</sup> Assembly Constituencies, revealing a mismatch between Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) votes polled and those subsequently recovered:

- Allegations have been raised that in 19 constituencies, more votes were counted than were actually cast, suggesting the possibility of extra votes being added to EVMs.
- Furthermore, there are claims that in 76 constituencies, fewer votes were counted than cast, indicating potential tampering or technical faults.
- While in 193 constituencies, the vote counts matched the polling data, the irregularities in almost one-third of the state's constituencies cannot be ignored.
- Detailed booth-level inspections (through Form 20) could have uncovered even more discrepancies, highlighting the need for an immediate and thorough investigation but this has been adamantly resisted by an Election Commission (ECI/SEC) that is constitutionally primarily accountable to the voter.

VFD's analysis of Maharashtra's 288 Assembly Constituencies<sup>14</sup> revealed a discrepancy in 2024 election voting data. Official records cited 6,40,87,713 district-wise votes, while the CEO Maharashtra's app showed 6,40,88,195 EVM votes. This resulted in a 482-vote mismatch, raising concerns about data consistency between official reports and the digital platform.

## I. Issue: Constituency-level irregularities

### 1. Constituencies with fewer votes counted

Regions such as Nagpur Central, Shirpur, Aurangabad West, and Baramati show significant shortfalls in the votes counted compared to those polled. This pattern suggests the possibility of EVM malfunctions, mismanagement, or the intentional suppression of votes.

### 2. Constituencies with excess votes counted

In stark contrast, areas like Aurangabad East, Vaijapur, Malegaon Central, and Boisar reported higher votes counted than recorded during polling. These anomalies further suggest potential manipulation of voting machines or interference during the vote-counting process.

Further investigations revealed variations in vote data stored in EVMs on polling day (November 20) versus counting day (November 23). Such discrepancies point to vulnerabilities in the EVM system and the possibility of tampering during the interim period.

### 1. Suspicious routers found near polling stations: Reports emerged of routers being discovered outside polling stations, raising alarms about potential external

<sup>13</sup> Table 1 - Mismatch between EVM Votes Polled and recovered Constituency Wise: 95 Assembly Constituencies

<sup>14</sup> Table 4 - Mismatch Between District Wise Votes @ District Percentage and the Total EVM Votes shown in App of CEO in the District

**interference with EVM data. Police investigations are underway, but the mere presence of such devices suggests laxity in ensuring the security of election infrastructure.**

## **II. Midnight mystery: Maharashtra's 2024 election sees unexplained voter surge**

A concerning anomaly has emerged from the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections, highlighted by an analysis<sup>15</sup> from Vote for Democracy (VFD). According to data provided by the Election Commission of India (ECI), voter turnout at 5 p.m. stood at 58.22%. However, as the night progressed, a sudden and unexpected increase of 7.83% occurred, bringing the total turnout to 66.05% by midnight. This sharp rise of 7.83% in a span between 5 p.m. turnout and final turnout. VFD's investigation into this anomaly highlighted the peculiar nature of this surge. Traditionally, voter participation tends to slow down after late evening, with minimal activity post-11 p.m. Yet, the unexpected uptick suggests that there may have been last-minute mobilizations or other influencing factors at play during the late hours of voting.

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<sup>15</sup>The Unexplained 7.83 % Hike in Voter Turnout After 5 PM

**Table 2 - The Unexplained 7.83 % Hike in Voter Turnout after 5 p.m.**

District	5 PM Turnout	11.30 PM Turnout	Final Voter Turnout App	Hike b/w 5 PM to Final Voter Turn Out
Ahmednagar	61.95	71.73	72.47	+10.52
Akola	56.16	64.98	64.76	+8.60
Amravati	58.48	65.57	66.40	+7.92
Aurangabad	60.83	68.89	69.64	+8.81
Beed	60.62	66.41	68.88	+8.26
Bhandara	65.88	69.42	70.87	+4.99
Buldhana	62.84	70.32	70.60	+7.76
Chandrapur	64.48	71.27	71.33	+6.85
Dhule	59.75	64.70	65.47	+5.72
Gadchiroli	69.63	73.68	75.26	+5.63
Gondia	65.09	69.53	69.74	+4.65
Hingoli	61.18	71.10	72.24	+11.06
Jalgaon	54.69	64.42	65.80	+11.11
Jalna	64.17	72.30	72.67	+8.50
Kolhapur	67.97	76.25	76.63	+8.66
Lathur	61.43	66.92	67.03	+5.60
Mumbai City	49.07	52.07	52.65	+3.58
Mumbai Suburban	51.76	55.77	56.39	+4.63
Nagpur	56.06	60.49	61.60	+5.54
Nanded	55.88	64.92	69.45	+13.57
Nandurbar	63.72	69.15	71.88	+8.16
Nashik	59.85	67.57	69.12	+9.27
Osmanabad	58.59	64.27	65.62	+7.03
Palghar	59.31	65.95	66.63	+7.32
Parbhani	62.73	70.38	71.45	+8.72
Pune	54.09	60.70	61.62	+7.53
Raigad	61.01	65.97	69.15	+8.14
Ratnagiri	60.35	64.65	65.23	+4.88
Sangli	63.28	71.89	72.12	+8.84
Satara	64.16	71.71	71.95	+7.79
Sindhudurg	62.06	68.40	71.14	+9.08
Solapur	57.09	67.36	67.72	+10.63
Thane	49.76	56.05	56.93	+7.17
Wardha	63.50	68.30	69.29	+5.79
Washim	57.42	66.01	67.09	+9.67
Yavatmal	61.22	69.02	70.86	+9.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>58.22%</b>	<b>65.02%</b>	<b>66.05%</b>	<b>+7.83%</b>

### III. Election Data Mismatch & Voter discrepancy in the election to India's third largest state, Maharashtra, also the second most populous state

Analysis of Maharashtra's electoral data from 2019 to 2024 reveals significant discrepancies and trends requiring urgent clarification from the Election Commission of India (ECI) and Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Maharashtra. **These are:**

- **Between the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Maharashtra saw 43,94,814 new registered voters, yet votes polled only increased by 34,04,229, indicating a substantial non-participation among newly registered electors.**
- In contrast, the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections witnessed a much higher engagement, **with 71,86,852 new registrations correlating with a 96,77,257 increase in votes polled.** This stark difference between Lok Sabha and Assembly election turnout raises questions about voter apathy towards national elections or issues with new voter integration.
- Further compounding these concerns are persistent mismatches in reported elector numbers. For the 2019 Lok Sabha Election, the Maharashtra CEO reported 8,85,64,748<sup>16</sup> electors, while the ECI's 2024 fact sheet cited 8,86,76,946<sup>17</sup> for the same period, a difference of 1,12,198 (a significant difference).
- Similar inconsistencies plagued the 2019 Assembly Election data: ECI's initial report of 8,95,62,706<sup>18</sup> electors changed to 8,98,38,267<sup>19</sup>, only for the Maharashtra CEO to report 8,94,46,211<sup>20</sup> in October 2024.
- The 2024 Assembly Elections further exacerbated this, The ECI's election notification dated October 15, 2024 reported that, as of August 30, 2024, there were 9,64,85,765<sup>21</sup> electors in Maharashtra. However, on the same day, the CEO Maharashtra issued a press release with significantly different figures. **According to the CEO's report, the total number of electors as of August 30, 2024 was 9,53,74,302<sup>22</sup> and by October 15, 2024 this number had dropped further to 9,63,69,410<sup>23</sup> electors, a decrease of 1,16,355 electors from the August figure provided by the ECI!**
- Things took another confusing turn when, on October 30, 2024, the CEO Maharashtra released an updated report showing a drastic increase in electors, now stating that there were 9,70,25,119<sup>24</sup> electors as of October 30, 2024, which is an increase of over 16

<sup>16</sup> Statistics of Electors, Voters & Voter Turnout- PC wise<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> FACT SHEET ON MAHARASHTRA

<sup>18</sup> <https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/10605-schedule-for-general-election-to-the-legislative-assemblies-of-haryana-and-maharashtra-2019/?do=download>

<sup>19</sup> <https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/11699-maharashtra-legislative-assembly-election-2019/?do=download&r=31591&confirm=1&t=1&csrfKey=ddc4d6cc347cf2cb05fc5fa7bf8d30b6>

<sup>20</sup> [https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/ER\\_State\\_Count\\_30102024.pdf](https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/ER_State_Count_30102024.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

<sup>22</sup> <https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/Assembly-2024-PressNote.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> <https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/Assembly-2024-PressNote.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> [https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/ER\\_State\\_Count\\_30102024.pdf](https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/ER_State_Count_30102024.pdf)

**lakh electors in just 15 days. This new figure again contradicts both the previous figures issued by the ECI and CEO Maharashtra.**

The inconsistent and significantly fluctuating Voter Registration figures in Maharashtra raise serious concerns about the integrity and accuracy of electoral rolls, demanding immediate and transparent clarification from the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Maharashtra. Between the 2019 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, Maharashtra added over 12.7 lakh electors. More strikingly, the period between the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections witnessed an increase of approximately 37.9 to 45 lakh electors. The leap to 84.6 lakh additions between the 2019 Lok Sabha and the upcoming 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections, along with an "astonishing" 46.7 lakh increase in just seven months (March-October 2024) between the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls, presents a highly perplexing scenario. The most recent data for the November 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections further exacerbates these concerns: while the voter count grew by a modest 31 lakh over five years (8.98 crore in 2019 to 9.29 crore in May 2024 for Lok Sabha), it then surged by an "extraordinary" 41 lakh in just five months (reaching 9.70 crore for the November 2024 Vidhan Sabha elections), contradicting the previously cited 46.7 lakh increase over seven months!

#### **IV. Unprecedented surge in voter rolls and anomalies**

**Vote for Democracy's (VFD) assimilation of data from the ground after counting day in the Maharashtra elections revealed an Unusual Surge in votes from Lok Sabha to Assembly Elections:**

- In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP contested 28 seats and received 14.9 million votes. Since each parliamentary seat includes six assembly segments, this means they averaged 88,713 votes per assembly segment.
- However, in the Vidhan Sabha elections, where they contested 149 seats, the BJP's vote count rose to 17.29 million votes, an increase of nearly 2.38 million votes.
- This translates to an average of 116,064 votes per assembly seat, showing a sudden increase of over 28,000 votes per seat compared to the Lok Sabha. Such a sharp rise is unusual and has raised concerns about potential manipulation or unexplained factors influencing the results.

This sudden surge is highly anomalous, particularly given that the new total of 9.70 crore registered voters even surpassed the government's own estimate of 9.54 crore adults in Maharashtra. Further deepening the suspicion is the highly concentrated nature of these new additions: out of Maharashtra's

approximately 1 lakh polling booths, the majority of the new voters were reportedly added in only about 12,000 booths across 85 constituencies where the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had performed poorly in the preceding Lok Sabha elections.

This translates to an average of over 600 voters added per booth after 5 PM, implying an improbable 10 hours of additional voting time at each location, which visibly did not occur. Unsurprisingly, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) subsequently secured most of these 85 seats, fuelling allegations of targeted manipulation.

## Some Examples of Unusual Voting Patterns

### Kamthi Constituency:

For instance, in the Kamthi constituency, while the Indian National Congress (INC) maintained its vote count between the Lok Sabha (1.36 lakh) and Vidhan Sabha (1.34 lakh) elections, the BJP's tally surged by 56,000 votes to 1.75 lakh, coinciding with the addition of 35,000 new voters in the constituency, strongly suggesting a deliberate effort to benefit the BJP. This pattern contributed to the BJP achieving an unprecedented 89% strike rate, winning 132 out of 149 contested seats in the Vidhan Sabha elections, a stark contrast to its 32% strike rate just five months earlier in the Lok Sabha elections.<sup>25</sup>

### Nanded Lok Sabha by-election

In the Nanded Lok Sabha by-election, held alongside the Maharashtra Assembly elections, Congress secured victory in the parliamentary seat but lost all six assembly segments within the same constituency. Despite polling simultaneously, it has been provided Congress received 5.87 lakh votes for the Lok Sabha seat but only 4.27 lakh votes across the six assembly segments—a shortfall of 1,59,323 votes. This translates to an average of 26,500 Congress voters per assembly seat who seemingly switched their preference at the assembly level. The party lost the six assembly seats by a combined margin of 1,84,597 votes, a striking contradiction to their success in the Lok Sabha seat. The anomaly raises serious questions about voter behaviour, as it seems unlikely that such a significant portion of voters would favour the BJP-led alliance for the assembly while supporting Congress in the parliamentary race. Congress had called for an investigation into this unexpected and puzzling voting pattern

### Karad Constituency:

Unexplained rise in voters in Karad (South) constituency over six months: Within the Satara Lok Sabha constituency in western Maharashtra is the Karad (South) Assembly Constituency (AC). The Lok Sabha Elections 2024, six months before saw a total voting of 1,98,633 votes. Udayanraj Bhosale got 92,814 votes and Shashikant Shinde 92,198 votes. Six months later, the Vidhan Sabha Karad South Constituency had a total voting of 2,40,743 Votes, that is approximately 41,000 extra votes. The victorious Atul Baba Bhosale got 1,39,505 votes and Prithviraj Chavan 1,00,150 votes. This means

<sup>25</sup> [Match-fixing Maharashtra](#)



that the 40,000 plus that had miraculously increased in six months (votes/voters) all went to the winning candidate!

Now, if we compare this to the 2019 data, Vidhan Sabha Karad South Assembly Constituency had 2,10, 436 Votes/Voters. The winning candidate Prithviraj Chavan got 92,296 votes and Bhosale 83,166 votes. Ironically the six month surge of 41,000 votes has been unmatched! Votes that have not increased in five years (Vidhan Sabha 2019 and Lok Sabha 2024) have increased in the past six months. When political parties (opposition) collect the booth-wise updated data they will be able to study where and in which booths these voters have increased and decreased. Then there may be some answers/accountability?

## The Markadwadi electoral controversy and the push for ballot papers

The controversy surrounding the integrity of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), escalated significantly following the declaration of Maharashtra state assembly election results on November 23, 2024. The unexpected BJP sweep fuelled widespread allegations of manipulation, particularly echoing strongly in Markadwadi village, Solapur district. Here, residents expressed profound disbelief over the Malshiras constituency's results: despite NCP (SP) candidate Uttamrao Jankar winning overall, his traditional stronghold, Markadwadi, showed an improbable BJP lead—according to voters there--suggesting a disconnect between their votes and the EVM outcome.

Driven by this anomaly, Markadwadi villagers<sup>26</sup> planned an unofficial mock-poll using paper ballots for December 3, 2024, aiming to verify the true electoral sentiment. However, this initiative was met with strong state intervention. A large police force imposed a curfew and thwarted the mock-poll, subsequently filing criminal cases against approximately 200 villagers by December 4, 2024, including an FIR against MLA Jankar and 200 others for breaching prohibitory orders. This highlighted the administration's firm stance against any challenge to the EVM results, despite the legal irony that paper ballots are enshrined in Section 59 of the Representation of Peoples Act, while EVM use often relies on specific ECI orders.

The movement for electoral reform gained further momentum when, on January 23, 2025, MLA Uttamrao Jankar issued an ultimatum<sup>27</sup> to the Election Commission of India (ECI). He demanded a fresh by-election in his constituency using paper ballots, substantiating his demand with a formidable collection of approximately 1,76,000 notarized affidavits from voters, of which 1,300 were submitted as initial evidence. Jankar even offered to resign if the ECI agrees to his proposal, underscoring his deep conviction that the official EVM results misrepresent the will of the people. Despite efforts by Jankar and former Justice Kolse Patil to meet with ECI officials on January 23, 2025, they were unsuccessful, though the affidavits were successfully submitted.

<sup>26</sup> [Markadwadi, Pune, Sholapur, Akola, are protests against ECI mounting in Maharashtra? | SabrangIndia](#)

<sup>27</sup> [EVM row: Winning MLA from Malshiras \(Markadwadi\) issues ultimatum to ECI, demands elections by ballot papers | SabrangIndia](#)



## The Nagpur Assembly Poll: Voter roll anomaly in Maharashtra CM, Fadnavis's seat and the "Vote Theft" row

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis's Nagpur South West constituency saw a dramatic 8.25% voter surge—29,219 new voters—in just six months between the 2024 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. This unprecedented increase, more than double the ECI's 4% verification threshold<sup>28</sup>.

Rahul Gandhi<sup>29</sup>, the Leader of the Opposition (LoP in Parliament, MP from Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh) swiftly alleged "vote theft" and "rigging," demanding machine-readable digital voter rolls and CCTV footage. He highlighted that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) reportedly admitted to insufficient verification, with thousands of voters lacking valid addresses. Fadnavis<sup>30</sup>, however, countered by citing similar increases (7-11%) in over 25 other constituencies, including those won by the Congress and its allies (e.g., West Nagpur with 7%, North Nagpur with 7%, Malad West with 11%). Despite his deflection, Fadnavis refrained from addressing detailed reports of procedural lapses by local polling staff. The ECI's blanket assertion of "pure" electoral rolls, amidst these documented irregularities and the admissions of ground staff, fuels calls for greater transparency and accountability.

### Fadnavis's factual fumbles

Devendra Fadnavis's statistical claims on Maharashtra's voter data significantly deviate from official ECI records. He claimed 63 lakh new voters for 2014-2019 Lok Sabha elections, while ECI showed 93.75 lakh. For 2009-2014, he quoted 75 lakh against ECI's 63 lakh. In 2019-2024, he cited 44 lakh, but ECI reports 40.80 lakh. His Vidhan Sabha figures also vary, with 2014 increasing from ECI's 27.29 lakh to his 31.47 lakh.

Fadnavis also provided misleading details on the last-hour vote surge. He cited a 5 p.m. turnout uploaded at 6:14 p.m. and a 6 p.m. figure at 11:53 p.m. without explaining the delay. Crucially, he incorrectly quoted a state-wise 5 p.m. figure for Lok Sabha 2024 (ECI only released aggregate data) and an unreleased 1,770,867 votes polled after 6 p.m. hinting at alarming access to data *not in the public domain*.

Fadnavis' inflated figure of "1.427 lakh" polling booths against the actual 100,186 further undermines his credibility. Additionally, he remains silent on the reported issue of total voters exceeding Maharashtra's adult population and discrepancies in young voter figures (2,646,608 quoted vs. ECI's

<sup>28</sup> In 6 months, Fadnavis seat added 29,219 voters. Poll staff claim lapses

<sup>29</sup> <https://x.com/RahulGandhi/status/1937395692621750346>

<sup>30</sup> Devendra Fadnavis on X: "Rahul Gandhi, It's clear that the sting of Maharashtra's defeat is growing heavier by the day — but how long will these baseless allegations continue? For the record, there are over 25 constituencies in Maharashtra where voter numbers increased by more than 8% between the Lok" / X

22.21 lakh as of November 20, 2024). These consistent inaccuracies and omissions raise serious concerns about data manipulation and transparency.

## V. Crucial other issues raised in the Maharashtra Assembly Polls, November 2024:

1. **EVM Anomalies:** Several candidates who lost by narrow margins have complained of a 99 percent battery in the EVM machine when counting started in certain booths...unlikely given the battery usage for polling-on-polling day.

- This suggests potential manipulation or malfunctioning of the voting machines during counting.

2. **Mismatch in Results:** "There have been no answers for mismatch in Form 17C and final results displayed by CU" during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and subsequent state elections in Haryana, Maharashtra and Delhi pointing to discrepancies that remain unexplained.

3. **Unexplained Events During Counting:** "There was no explanation given for unexplained and sudden power cuts during counting."

- "No explanation for EVMs being taken out of strong rooms" or for "ruling party candidates accessing mobile phones used by DEOs feeding the data in the ENCORE APP."

4. **Voter Turnout Anomalies:** "There has been absolutely no explanation or answer given for the high, absurdly illogical and abnormal rise in Voter Turnout (VTR) percentage over two to more days before counting."

- Voter turnout varied between 6-11% in recent elections, whereas it previously only fluctuated by 1-2%.

5. **Inaction Against Hate Speech:** The ECI's inaction on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's communal slurs during the Lok Sabha 2024 polls remains unanswered.

- During Maharashtra Elections, the inflammatory speeches by Suresh Chavhanke of Sudarshan News selectively targeting Muslim voters and citizens in Jalgaon, Akola, and Pathanpura, divisive remarks by Harsha Thakur in Delgur (Nanded), and BJP MP Dhananjay Mahadik's intimidating comments in Kolhapur regarding women beneficiaries of a welfare scheme have all been carefully documented and complained against by citizens' groups. There had been a notable lack of decisive action by the Election Commission of India (ECI) on these specific complaints except the formality of an FIR registered against Kajal Hindustani and Suresh Chavhanke.
- The ECI did not effectively act on violations of the Model Code of Conduct and the Representation of People's Act, 1951.

6. **Voter Roll Manipulation:** "No answers for the sharp increase and addition of voters between GE 2024 and Maharashtra Elections 2024."

- Questions about the authenticity of voter rolls have been ignored, particularly regarding the increase in registered voters.

7. **EVM Security Concerns:** "No answers for the valid questions raised by technical experts regarding vulnerability of VVPAT, due to its connection with the internet and its potentially dubious role in transferring spurious or manipulated votes."

- Allegations of the late arrival of EVMs at several strong rooms in the state
- Allegations of the storage of unused EVMs protocol being breached
- Allegations of "change" of EVMs from the strong rooms
- Allegations of the unauthorized opening of strong rooms
- Allegations of power failure at strong rooms
- Allegations of CCTV Failure at strong rooms

8. **Control of EVM Source Code:** "No answers as to whether the ECI is in independent control of the Source code in the EVS Unit and why this cannot be made public."

- The lack of transparency regarding the EVM's source code has raised further doubts about the security of the voting process.

9. **Political Influence on EVM Manufacturers:** "No answers as to why BJP's members are on the Board of Directors of Government Companies viz. ECIL and BEL, which manufacture the EVMs. " This involvement of BJP members in the companies responsible for producing EVMs raises questions of conflict of interest and potential bias.

10. **Legal Provisions for Transparency:** Also, Rules 32(b), 31(e), and 33 of the Registration of Electors Rules (1960), which empower citizens to inspect electoral records and demand answers from the ECI regarding electoral rolls and the revision process.

- By urging citizens and media to demand transparency from the ECI and hold it accountable for the election process, emphasising that the questions raised by citizens should be answered for the integrity of India's democracy. The importance of continuing to push for answers, especially as the opposition struggles to effectively challenge the government is crucial.

## PART - II

### MAHARASHTRA STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2024-REPORT

#### [A Factual and Statistical Analysis of Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2024]

##### Introduction

The bedrock of any thriving democracy lies in the integrity and transparency of its electoral processes. In India, the world's largest democracy, recent elections, particularly the Maharashtra Assembly Elections of November 2024 and the impending Bihar Assembly Elections of 2025, have brought these fundamental tenets under intense scrutiny. This report, "Dysfunctional ECI: Conduct of Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2024 & Bihar Assembly Elections 2025 - An Analysis of Voter List Manipulation & Misconduct During Voting & Counting," authored and compiled by Vote for Democracy (VFD), Maharashtra, aims to serve as a critical, factual, and data-driven examination of alleged irregularities.

The 2024 Maharashtra Legislative Assembly elections, which saw the BJP-led Maha Yuti alliance secure a significant victory with 235 out of 288 seats and a voter turnout of 66.05% (the highest since 1995), have been marred by serious allegations of manipulation. Concerned citizens, activists, and the INDIA bloc have consistently pointed towards systemic failures in the electoral process, including alleged irregularities in voter rolls and inconsistencies in turnout figures. While the ECI has vehemently denied these accusations, asserting strict adherence to legal frameworks and procedures, and noting the absence of formal grievances during polling, the persistent questions necessitate a thorough and independent investigation.

This contentious backdrop in Maharashtra casts a long shadow over Bihar, which is gearing up for its Assembly elections in October-November 2025. The ECI's recent directive on June 24, 2025 for a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls, initiated on June 25, 2025, has become a significant point of concern. While the ECI presents the SIR as a vital measure to ensure accurate voter lists through house-to-house verification, opposition leaders, drawing parallels to the Maharashtra experience, fear it could facilitate similar electoral irregularities. Specific anxieties revolve around the tight timeframe for this revision and stringent documentation requirements, which, critics argue, could lead to the disenfranchisement of millions, particularly vulnerable populations. This report, therefore, serves as a crucial analysis, delving into the specifics of the Maharashtra election results, the nature of the alleged manipulations, the intricacies of Bihar's electoral revision, and the critical implications of these interconnected electoral events for the health of Indian democracy. Through a data-driven approach, we aim to shed light on these critical issues and foster an informed public discourse on electoral integrity.

The core premise of the report is that the ECI, a constitutional body tasked with ensuring free and fair elections, has exhibited a pattern of behaviour that raises serious questions about its impartiality and efficiency. The document lays out a comprehensive "Violation/Manipulation Sheet" detailing a range of alleged irregularities.

A significant concern highlighted is the reported mismatch between EVM votes polled and recovered, affecting as many as 95 Assembly Constituencies in Maharashtra. The report also scrutinises "Hike of Votes after 5 p.m." suggesting suspicious increases in voter turnout post-polling hours, an issue that has drawn widespread public and political attention in previous elections as well. The analysis further points to numerous seats where the winning margin was exceptionally narrow (below 26,500, 10,000, 5000, and even 3000 votes), making these discrepancies particularly impactful.

The report delves into specific instances, such as the village of Markadwadi (Malshiras assembly constituency) demanding fresh by-elections by ballot papers due to alleged data destruction in EVMs. It also spotlights significant voter additions in constituencies like Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis's Nagpur South West seat, where 29,219 voters were reportedly added in just six months between the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, raising questions of "Fadnavis's Factual Fumbles."

Furthermore, VFD brings to light critical procedural changes and practices, including the ECI's amendment of election conduct rules (Rule 93) in just two days, bypassing law officer suggestions, and a concerning reduction in storage time for election CCTV footage to 45 days. The report also examines the ECI's alleged concealment or withholding of Form 17C and 17A data, critical documents for verifying voter turnout and votes polled.

The report notes a recurring pattern of "Hike of Voter Turnout Data of 5-6 % by the ECI" in earlier Lok Sabha 2024 election phases, suggesting an accumulating lack of transparency with no credible explanations to doubts and queries raised from the Commission. It also points to similarly questionable voter turnout figures in the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections.

For Bihar –due for the Vidhan Sabha elections in the third quarter of 2025 --the report expresses grave concerns regarding the hasty and ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. While the ECI states its purpose is to ensure accurate lists, VFD, and opposition leaders view it as a potential tool for disenfranchisement, especially given the tight timeframe and stringent documentation requirements. The report argues that the ECI is self-assuming the right to decide or evaluate a voter's citizenship when that is not a task it is statutorily mandated to do.

Overall, "Dysfunctional ECI..", the report, serves as a detailed indictment, using quantitative data and specific examples to argue that the ECI's recent conduct has destroyed the public faith in the electoral process, calling for urgent action, protest, corrective measures and reforms to safeguard India's democratic foundation—the integrity of the constitutional right to universal adult franchise and the right to vote.

Post-Lok Sabha polls 2024, Haryana and Maharashtra polls (October 2024 and November 2024), Delhi 2025 and now the impending Bihar Vidhan Sabha elections scheduled for October-November 2025, it is time to speak only and specifically of the Election Commission of India (ECI), a constitutional body that has clearly abdicated any and every semblance of transparency and accountability. If Articles 324-326 enjoin the ECI, a constitutional body to ensure impartial, free and fair elections, these articles of the Constitution as its Preamble underline that the ECI is answerable to the Indian people alone not the government in power. Yet, election after election, especially those held after 2017 – when for the first time a standalone EVM machine was coupled with three-part system (VVPAT attached to a laptop and Symbol Loading Unit) making the EVS open to manipulation—elections have drawn sharp questions from a scattered but active citizenry. The use of hate speech, e.g. Mangal Sutra, Beti Mati le Jayenge and so on, slur and vitriol by men and women in constitutional posts—including the prime minister and home minister—have gone unchecked despite election law demanding action from the ECI. 2024, saw these questions at their peak.

From the general elections that took place in seven phases from April 19 to June 1 2024, to the Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir elections (October 2024), and finally to the one phase Maharashtra state assembly polls, two phase Jharkhand Assembly polls (November 13, 2024 Phase 1 and November 20, 2024) the questions and voter disillusionment with towards the ECI has not stemmed nor stopped. In response to these developments, serious and persistent questions, the ECI has maintained an autocratic and obdurate silence. Worse, the ‘constitutional body’ has tried to shrug off the most significant investigations, findings and searching questions raised by citizens.

Is India’s unique experiment on people’s democracy with the right to universal franchise being lampooned by a compliant Election Commission?

This cogent analysis backed by statistics reveals how the Election Commission (ECI) under the present government, in its third term (with truncated numbers post Lok Sabha Polls in 2024) have (together) increasingly compromised the integrity of the electoral process.

This report by the Vote for Democracy (VFD) reveals how India's democratic ideals have been tainted by the manipulation of institutions, the entire electoral voting system (EVS), electoral rolls, and voting mechanisms. In decades past, previous persons who headed the constitutional body, were all chief election commissioners that held governments to account. Today, the men in that position represent a stultified and manipulated Election Commission of India (ECI) that is both structurally and otherwise holding elections in an un-free and un-fair manner violating not just the Preamble of India but Articles 324-326 of the Indian Constitution. Be it in the manipulation of electoral rolls—bogus injection of voters or mass deletion of sections opposed to the BJP, or in the actual manipulation of the Electronic Voting System (EVS) through the vulnerable Symbol Loading Unit and the Microprocessors in the VVPATs. Both have labile memories and ever since 2017 when the EVM stopped being a standalone unit the vulnerability of external malware changing/shifting and altering votes cast (from one to another candidate and party) began.

Citizens have not stopped raising questions. The Citizens Commission on Elections (CCE) Report of 2020 asked whether it is this possibility of manipulation that is behind the reluctance of the ECI/system to allow the easy checking of the actual microprocessor through independent experts." Apart from a non-response to these serious doubts and queries, the ECI has indulged in a breach of almost each and every step in the regulatory mechanism of the conduct of polls as well as the mandatory checks and balances, codified over decades by the ECI itself.



## I

### Table of Mismatch between EVM Votes Polled and recovered Constituency Wise: 95 Assembly Constituencies

The integrity of electoral processes hinges on the precise correspondence between votes cast and votes counted. Yet, a disquieting anomaly has surfaced, casting a shadow over the transparency of recent elections.

A meticulous analysis, conducted by VFD, has unearthed discrepancies in 95 Assembly Constituencies, revealing a mismatch between Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) votes polled and those subsequently recovered. This data, compiled in a comprehensive table, meticulously outlines the affected constituencies, their respective districts, and the magnitude of the identified discrepancies.

Each entry in the table details the Assembly Constituency number and name, the total EVM votes recorded, the percentage-wise mismatch, and the precise number of EVM votes recovered. Crucially, the table also identifies the winning and losing candidates, prompting critical questions about the potential impact of these discrepancies on the electoral outcome.

**Table 1 - Mismatch between EVM Votes Polled and recovered Constituency Wise: 95 ACs**

District	AC. No.	AC Name	EVM Votes AC % wise	EVM vote Recovered	Mismatch	Winner	Loser
<b>NANDURBAR</b>							
	1	AKKALKUWA	228871	228870	-1	SS	INC
	4	NAWAPUR	240022	239311	-711	INC	INDP
<b>DHULE</b>							
	5	SAKRI	239762	239751	-11	SS	INC
	9	SHIRPUR	230765	230131	-634	BJP	INDP
<b>JALGAON</b>							
	10	CHOPDA	220650	220304	-346	SS	SSUBT
	12	BHUSAWAL (SC)	182683	182285	-398	BJP	INC
	13	JALGAON CITY	238186	238185	-1	BJP	SSUBT
	17	CHALISGAON	231269	231168	-101	BJP	SSUBT
	18	PACHORA	229377	228725	-652	SS	SSUBT
	19	JAMNER	236534	236531	-3	BJP	NCP SP
<b>AKOLA</b>							
	28	AKOT	212690	212252	-438	BJP	INC
	30	AKOLA WEST	203347	202875	-472	INC	BJP
<b>AMARAVATI</b>							
	43	MORSHI	208619	208615	-4	BJP	INC



<b>WARDHA</b>							
	47	WARDHA	193585	193584	-1	BJP	INC
<b>NAGPUR</b>							
	49	SAVNER	221495	221494	-1	BJP	INC
	55	NAGPUR CENTRAL	195060	195058	-2	BJP	INC
	56	NAGPUR WEST	216625	216622	-3	INC	BJP
	58	KAMTHI	321385	320687	-698	BJP	INC
<b>GONDIA</b>							
	66	AMGAON (ST)	195184	195187	+3	BJP	INC
<b>GADCHIROLI</b>							
	67	ARMORI (ST)	202267	201688	-579	INC	BJP
	69	AHERI (ST)	185795	184869	-926	NCP	INDP
<b>CHANDRAPUR</b>							
	72	BALLARPUR	217978	217829	-149	BJP	INC
	74	CHIMUR	230133	230132	-1	BJP	INC
<b>YAVATMAL</b>							
	76	WANI	219887	218823	-1064	SSUBT	BJP
	82	UMARKHED	218654	218656	+2	BJP	INC
<b>NANDED</b>							
	87	NANDED SOUTH	202732	202196	-536	SS	INC
	88	LOHA	226837	226991	+154	NCP	SSUBT
	90	DEGLUR (SC)	197408	197409	+1	BJP	INC
	91	MUKHED	215401	215397	-4	BJP	INC
<b>HINGOLI</b>							
	93	KALAMNURI	243490	243488	-2	SS	SSUBT
	94	HINGOLI	227202	227204	+2	BJP	SSUBT
<b>PARBHANI</b>							
	95	JINTUR	292634	291745	-889	BJP	NCPSP
	97	GANGAKHED	307683	307682	-1	RSP	SSUBT
	98	PATHRI	279104	279103	-1	NCP	INC
<b>JALNA</b>							
	100	GHANSAWANGI	254863	254860	-3	SS	NCPSP
	102	BADNAPUR (SC)	248881	248005	-876	BJP	NCPSP
<b>AURANGABAD</b>							
	108	AURANGABAD	246638	245989	-649	SS	SSUBT

		WEST (SC)					
	109	AURANGABAD EAST	215029	215030	+1	BJP	AIMIM
	111	GANGAPUR	269075	268059	-1016	BJP	NCPSP
	112	VAIJAPUR	243379	243381	+2	SS	SSUBT
<b>NASIK</b>							
	113	NANDGAON	242744	242741	-3	SS	INDP
	114	MALEGAON CENTRAL	239501	239503	+2	AIMIM	ISLAM
	115	MALEGAON OUTER	257843	257053	-790	SS	INDP
	116	BAGLAN (ST)	203863	203860	-3	BJP	NCPSP
	117	KALWAN (ST)	236845	236850	+5	NCP	CPIM
	118	CHANDVAD	237552	237554	+2	BJP	PJP
	120	SINNAR	242115	241435	-680	NCP	NCPSP
	121	NIPHAD	221509	218922	-2587	NCP	SSUBT
	122	DINDORI (ST)	256905	256906	+1	NCP	NCPSP
<b>PALGHAR</b>							
	131	BOISAR (ST)	277634	277635	+1	SS	BVA
	132	NALASOPARA	349110	349106	-4	BJP	BVA
	133	VASAI	218058	218057	-1	BJP	BVA
<b>THANE</b>							
	136	BHIWANDI WEST	181682	181002	-680	BJP	SP
	138	KALYAN WEST	243009	243008	-1	SS	SSUBT
	140	AMBERNATH (SC)	183533	183529	-4	SS	SSUBT
	142	KALYAN EAST	192753	192162	-591	BJP	INDP
	144	KALYAN RURAL	294894	294888	-6	SS	MNS
	145	MIRA BHAYANDAR	264354	262538	-1816	BJP	INC
	146	OVALA-MAJIWADA	285826	284109	-1717	SS	SSUBT
	147	KOPRI-PACHPAKHADI	203206	202518	-688	SS	SSUBT
<b>MUMBAI SUBURBAN</b>							
	159	DINDOSHI	177009	177008	-1	SSUBT	SS
	161	CHARKOP	183337	182627	-710	BJP	INC
	167	VILE PARLE	156865	156864	-1	BJP	SSUBT
	168	CHANDIVALI	239739	239483	-256	SS	INC

<b>MUMBAI CITY</b>							
	179	SION KOLIWADA	151711	151710	-1	BJP	INC
	186	MUMBADEVI	117986	117985	-1	INC	SS
<b>RAIGAD</b>							
	188	PANVEL	382335	381596	-739	BJP	PWP
	189	KARJAT	240010	238996	-1014	SS	INDP
	192	ALIBAG	236244	236234	-10	SS	PWP
<b>PUNE</b>							
	196	AMBEGAON	221511	220731	-780	NCP	NCPSP
	198	SHIRUR	321180	319725	-1455	NCP	NCPSP
	200	INDAPUR	262635	262634	-1	NCP	NCPSP
	201	BARAMATI	272402	271759	-643	NCP	NCPSP
	204	MAVAL	280319	278307	-2012	NCP	INDP
	207	BHOSARI	374424	374425	+1	BJP	NCPSP
	210	KOTHRUD	232064	232063	-1	BJP	SSUBT
	211	KHADAKWASAL A	325841	325835	-6	BJP	NCPSP
	214	PUNE CANTONMENT (SC)	156359	156357	-2	BJP	INC
<b>AHMEDNAGAR</b>							
	219	KOPARGAON	206555	206554	-1	NCP	NCPSP
	222	SHEVGAON	259722	259092	-630	BJP	NCPSP
<b>BEED</b>							
	233	PARLI	254383	254452	+69	NCP	NCPSP
<b>LATUR</b>							
	234	LATUR RURAL	233950	233432	-518	BJP	INC
	235	LATUR CITY	250975	250163	-812	INC	BJP
	236	AHMADPUR	239625	238074	-1551	NCP	NCPSP
	239	AUSA	209593	208830	-763	BJP	SSUBT
<b>OSMANABAD</b>							
	241	TULJAPUR	256569	256561	-8	BJP	INC
<b>SOLAPUR</b>							
	244	KARMALA	229375	229377	+2	NCPSP	INDP
	245	MADHA	267691	267021	-670	NCPSP	INDP
	249	SOLAPUR CITY CENTRAL	200291	200289	-2	BJP	AIMIM

	251	SOLAPUR SOUTH	223624	223625	+1	BJP	SSUBT
<b>KOLHAPUR</b>							
	273	KAGAL	283568	283569	+1	NCP	NCPSP
	274	KOLHAPUR SOUTH	281743	281745	+2	BJP	INC
	276	KOLHAPUR NORTH	197666	197665	-1	SS	INDP
	278	HATKANANGLE (SC)	261215	261222	+7	JSS	INC
<b>SANGLI</b>							
	286	KHANAPUR	250160	249322	-838	SS	NCPSP

## II

### **The Unexplained 7.83 % Hike in Voter Turnout after 5 P.M.**

In the analysis conducted by VFD, a significant, unexplained surge in voter turnout was observed during the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections. According to data provided by the Election Commission of India (ECI), voter turnout at 5 p.m. stood at 58.22%. However, as the night progressed, a sudden and unexpected increase of 7.83% occurred, bringing the total turnout to 66.05% by midnight. This sharp rise of 7.83% in a span between 5 p.m. turnout and final turnout. VFD's investigation into this anomaly highlighted the peculiar nature of this surge. Traditionally, voter participation tends to slow down after late evening, with minimal activity post-11 p. m. Yet, the unexpected uptick suggests that there may have been last-minute mobilizations or other influencing factors at play during the late hours of voting.

Despite various theories being proposed, the exact cause of this midnight surge remains unclear. Some speculate about the influence of local campaigns, while others point to irregularities or logistical factors affecting the final count. Regardless, this unexplained jump in turnout adds a layer of complexity to the election's overall analysis, prompting further scrutiny from the Election Commission.

**Table 2 - The Unexplained 7.83 % Hike in Voter Turnout after 5 P.M.**

District	5 PM Turnout	11.30 PM Turnout	Final Voter Turnout App	Hike b/w 5 PM to Final Voter Turn Out
Ahmednagar	61.95	71.73	72.47	+10.52
Akola	56.16	64.98	64.76	+8.60
Amravati	58.48	65.57	66.40	+7.92
Aurangabad	60.83	68.89	69.64	+8.81
Beed	60.62	66.41	68.88	+8.26
Bhandara	65.88	69.42	70.87	+4.99
Buldhana	62.84	70.32	70.60	+7.76
Chandrapur	64.48	71.27	71.33	+6.85
Dhule	59.75	64.70	65.47	+5.72
Gadchiroli	69.63	73.68	75.26	+5.63
Gondia	65.09	69.53	69.74	+4.65
Hingoli	61.18	71.10	72.24	+11.06
Jalgaon	54.69	64.42	65.80	+11.11
Jalna	64.17	72.30	72.67	+8.50
Kolhapur	67.97	76.25	76.63	+8.66
Lathur	61.43	66.92	67.03	+5.60
Mumbai City	49.07	52.07	52.65	+3.58
Mumbai Suburban	51.76	55.77	56.39	+4.63

Nagpur	56.06	60.49	61.60	+5.54
Nanded	55.88	64.92	69.45	+13.57
Nandurbar	63.72	69.15	71.88	+8.16
Nashik	59.85	67.57	69.12	+9.27
Osmanabad	58.59	64.27	65.62	+7.03
Palghar	59.31	65.95	66.63	+7.32
Parbhani	62.73	70.38	71.45	+8.72
Pune	54.09	60.70	61.62	+7.53
Raigad	61.01	65.97	69.15	+8.14
Ratnagiri	60.35	64.65	65.23	+4.88
Sangli	63.28	71.89	72.12	+8.84
Satara	64.16	71.71	71.95	+7.79
Sindhudurg	62.06	68.40	71.14	+9.08
Solapur	57.09	67.36	67.72	+10.63
Thane	49.76	56.05	56.93	+7.17
Wardha	63.50	68.30	69.29	+5.79
Washim	57.42	66.01	67.09	+9.67
Yavatmal	61.22	69.02	70.86	+9.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>58.22%</b>	<b>65.02%</b>	<b>66.05%</b>	<b>+7.83%</b>

### III

#### Assembly Constituencies (Acs) where Margin is Below 26,500 votes

The VFD conducted a detailed examination of 288 Assembly Constituencies across 35 districts in Maharashtra, identifying key constituencies where the margin of victory was less than 26,500 votes. This analysis was aimed at highlighting the most competitive constituencies in the state. Constituencies where BJP had a narrow margin are marked in red, while those with a similar result for the Indian National Congress are highlighted in yellow.

**Table 3 - Assembly Constituencies (Acs) where Margin is Below 26,500 votes**

Less than 26500 Margin;

BJP –  

INC –  

District	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
1	2	3			
<b>1.NANDURBAR</b>					
	<b>1</b>	AKKALKUWA	<b>SS</b>	<b>2904</b>	<b>INC</b>
	2	SHAHADA	BJP	53204	INC
	3	NANDURBAR	BJP	76247	INC
	4	NAWAPUR	<b>INC</b>	<b>1121</b>	<b>INDP</b>
<b>2. DHULE</b>					
	<b>5</b>	SAKRI	<b>SS</b>	<b>5584</b>	<b>INC</b>
	6	DHULE RURAL	BJP	66320	INC
	7	DHULE CITY	BJP	45750	AIEIM
	8	SINDKHEDA	BJP	95884	NCP
	9	SHIRPUR	BJP	145944	INDP
<b>3.JALGAON</b>					
	10	CHOPDA	SS	32313	SSUBT
	11	RAVER	BJP	43562	INC
	12	BHUSAWAL (SC)	BJP	47488	INC
	13	JALGAON CITY	BJP	87503	SSUBT
	14	JALGAON RURAL	SS	59232	NCP SP
	15	AMALNER	NCP	33435	INDP
	16	ERANDOL	SS	56332	NCP SP
	17	CHALISGAON	BJP	85653	SSUBT
	18	PACHORA	SS	38689	SSUBT
	19	JAMNER	BJP	26885	NCP SP
	<b>20</b>	MUKTAINAGAR	<b>SS</b>	<b>23904</b>	<b>NCP SP</b>

District	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
<b>4.BULDHANA</b>					
	21	MALKAPUR	BJP	26397	INC
	22	BULDHANA	SS	841	SSUBT
	23	CHIKHLI	BJP	3201	INC
	24	SINDKHED RAJA	NCP	4650	NCP SP
	25	MEHKAR (SC)	SSUBT	4819	SS
	26	KHAMGAON	BJP	25477	INC
	27	JALGAON (JAMOD)	BJP	18771	INC
<b>5.AKOLA</b>					
		AKOT	BJP	18851	INC
	29	BALAPUR	SSUBT	11739	VBA
	30	AKOLA WEST	INC	1283	BJP
	31	AKOLA EAST	BJP	50613	SSUBT
	32	MURTIZAPUR (SC)	BJP	35864	NCP SP
<b>6.WASHIM</b>					
	33	RISOD	INC	6136	INDP
	34	WASHIM (SC)	BJP	19874	SSUBT
	35	KARANJA	BJP	35073	NCP SP
<b>7. AMARAVATI</b>					
	36	DHAMANGAON RAILWAY	BJP	16228	INC
	37	BADNERA	RYSP	66974	INDP
	38	AMRAVATI	NCP	5413	INC
	39	TEOSA	BJP	7617	INC
	40	DARYAPUR (SC)	SSUBT	19709	RYSP
	41	MELGHAT (ST)	BJP	1,06,859	INC
	42	42 ACHALPUR	BJP	12131	PJP
	43	43 MORSHI	BJP	64988	INC
District	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
<b>8. WARDHA</b>					
	44	ARVI	BJP	39574	NCP SP
	45	DEOLI	BJP	9308	INC
	46	HINGANGHAT	BJP	30094	NCPSP
	47	WARDHA	BJP	7470	INC
<b>9. NAGPUR</b>					
	48	KATOL	BJP	38816	NCPSP



	49	SAVNER	BJP	26401	INC
	50	HINGNA	BJP	78931	NCP SP
	51	UMRED (SC)	INC	12825	BJP
	52	NAGPUR SOUTH WEST	BJP	39710	INC
	53	NAGPUR SOUTH	BJP	15658	INC
	54	NAGPUR EAST	BJP	115288	NCPSP
	55	NAGPUR CENTRAL	BJP	11632	INC
	56	NAGPUR WEST	INC	5824	BJP
	57	NAGPUR NORTH (SC)	INC	28467	BJP
	58	KAMTHI	BJP	40946	INC
	59	RAMTEK	SS	26555	INDP
<b>10. BHANDARA</b>					
	60	TUMSAR	NCP	64305	NCPSP
	61	BHANDARA (SC)	SS	38367	INC
	62	SAKOLI	INC	208	BJP
<b>11. GONDIA</b>					
	63	ARJUNI MORGAON (SC)	NCP	16415	INC
	64	TIRORA	BJP	42686	NCPSP
	65	GONDIYA	BJP	61608	INC
	66	AMGAON (ST)	BJP	32721	INC
<b>District</b>					
	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
<b>12. GADCHIROLI</b>					
	67	ARMORI (ST)	INC	6210	BJP
	68	GADCHIROLI (ST)	BJP	15505	INC
	69	AHERI (ST)	NCP	16814	INDP
<b>13. CHANDRAPUR</b>					
	70	RAJURA	BJP	3053	INC
	71	CHANDRAPUR (SC)	BJP	22804	INC
	72	BALLARPUR	BJP	25985	INC
	73	BRAHMAPURI	INC	13971	BJP
	74	CHIMUR	BJP	9853	INC
	75	WARORA	BJP	15450	INDP
<b>14. YAVATMAL</b>					
	76	WANI	SSUBT	15560	BJP
	77	RALEGAON (ST)	BJP	2812	INC

	78	YAVATMAL	INC	11381	BJP
	79	DIGRAS	SS	28775	INC
	80	ARNI (ST)	BJP	29313	INC
	81	PUSAD	NCP	90769	NCPSP
	82	UMARKHED (SC)	BJP	16629	INC
<b>15. NANDED</b>					
	83	KINWAT	BJP	5636	NCPSP
	84	HADGAON	SS	30067	INC
	85	BHOKAR	BJP	50551	INC
	86	NANDED NORTH	SS	3502	INC
	87	NANDED SOUTH	SS	2132	INC
	88	LOHA	NCP	10973	SSUBT
	89	NAIGAON	BJP	47629	INC
	90	DEGLUR (SC)	BJP	42999	INC
	91	MUKHED	BJP	37784	INC
<b>District</b>	<b>AC. No.</b>	<b>AC Name</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Margin</b>	<b>Loser</b>
<b>16. HINGOLI</b>					
	92	BASMATH	NCP	29588	NCPSP
	93	KALAMNURI	SS	31083	SSUBT
	94	HINGOLI	BJP	10936	SSUBT
<b>17. PARBHANI</b>					
	95	JINTUR	BJP	4546	NCPSP
	96	PARBHANI	SSUBT	34216	SS
	97	GANGAKHED	RSP	26292	SSUBT
	98	PATHRI	NCP	13244	INC
<b>18. JALNA</b>					
	99	PARTUR	BJP	47240	SSUBT
	100	GHANSAWANGI	SS	2309	NCPSP
	101	JALNA	SS	31651	INC
	102	BADNAPUR (SC)	BJP	45531	NCPSP
	103	BHOKARDAN	BJP	23179	NCPSP
<b>19. AURANGABAD</b>					
	104	SILLOD	SS	2420	SSUBT
	105	KANNAD	SS	18201	INDP
	106	PHULAMBRI	BJP	32501	INC
	107	AURANGABAD CENTRAL	SS	8119	AIMIM
	108	AURANGABAD WEST (SC)	SS	16351	SSUBT

	109	AURANGABAD EAST	BJP	2161	AIMIM
	110	PAITHAN	SS	29192	SSUBT
	111	GANGAPUR	BJP	5015	NCPSP
	112	VAIJAPUR	SS	41658	SSUBT
<b>District</b>	<b>AC. No.</b>	<b>AC Name</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Margin</b>	<b>Loser</b>
<b>20. NASIK</b>					
	113	NANDGAON	SS	89874	INDP
	114	MALEGAON CENTRAL	AIMIM	162	ISLAM
	115	MALEGAON OUTER	SS	1,06,606	INDP
	116	BAGLAN (ST)	BJP	1,29,297	NCPSP
	117	KALWAN (ST)	NCP	8432	CPIM
	118	CHANDVAD	BJP	48961	PJP
	119	YEVLA	NCP	26400	NCPSP
	120	SINNAR	NCP	40884	NCPSP
	121	NIPHAD	NCP	29239	SSUBT
	122	DINDORI (ST)	NCP	44403	NCPSP
	123	NASHIK EAST	BJP	87817	NCPSP
	124	NASHIK CENTRAL	BJP	17856	SSUBT
	125	NASHIK WEST	BJP	68177	SSUBT
	126	DEOLALI (SC)	NCP	40679	SS
	127	IGATPURI (ST)	NCP	86581	INC
<b>36. PALGHAR</b>					
	128	DAHANU (ST)	CPIM	5133	BJP
	129	VIKRAMGAD (ST)	BJP	41408	NCPSP
	130	PALGHAR (ST)	SS	40337	SSUBT
	131	BOISAR (ST)	SS	44455	BVA
	132	NALASOPARA	BJP	36875	BVA
	133	VASAI	BJP	3153	BVA
<b>21 THANE</b>					
	134	BHIWANDI RURAL (ST)	SS	57962	SSUBT
	135	SHAHAPUR (ST)	NCP	1672	NCPSP
	136	BHIWANDI WEST	BJP	31293	SP
	137	BHIWANDI EAST	SP	52015	SS
	138	KALYAN WEST	SS	42454	SSUBT
	139	MURBAD	BJP	52392	NCPSP
	140	AMBERNATH (SC)	SS	51375	SSUBT
	141	ULHASNAGAR	BJP	30754	NCPSP

	142	KALYAN EAST	BJP	26408	INDP
	143	DOMBIVALI	BJP	77106	SSUBT
	144	KALYAN RURAL	SS	66396	MNS
	145	MIRA BHAYANDAR	BJP	60433	INC
	146	OVALA-MAJIWADA	SS	1,08,158	SSUBT
	147	KOPRI- PACHPAKHADI	SS	1,20,717	SSUBT
	148	THANE	BJP	58253	SSUBT
	149	MUMBRA-KALWA	NCPS	96228	NCP
	150	150 AIROLI	BJP	91880	INDP
	151	151 BELAPUR	BJP	377	NCPS
<b>22. MUMBAI SUBURBAN</b>					
	152	BORIVALI	BJP	1,00,257	SSUBT
	153	DAHISAR	BJP	44329	SSUBT
	154	MAGATHANE	SS	58164	SSUBT
	155	MULUND	BJP	90032	INC
	156	VIKHHOLI	SSUBT	15526	SS
	157	BHANDUP WEST	SS	6764	SSUBT
	158	JOGESHWARI EAST	SSUBT	1541	SS
	159	DINDOSHI	SSUBT	6182	SS
	160	KANDIVALI EAST	BJP	83593	INC
	161	CHARKOP	BJP	91154	INC
	162	MALAD WEST	INC	6227	BJP
	163	GOREGAON	BJP	63600	SSUBT
	164	VERSOVA	SSUBT	1600	BJP
	165	ANDHERI WEST	BJP	19599	INC
	166	ANDHERI EAST	SS	25486	SSUBT
	167	VILE PARLE	BJP	54935	SSUBT
	168	CHANDIVALI	SS	20625	INC
<b>District</b>	<b>AC. No.</b>	<b>AC Name</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Margin</b>	<b>Loser</b>
	169	GHATKOPAR WEST	BJP	12971	SSUBT
	170	GHATKOPAR EAST	BJP	34999	NKPS
	171	MANKHURD SHIVAJI NAGAR	SP	12753	AIMIM
	172	ANUSHAKTI NAGAR	NCP	3378	NCPS
	173	CHEMBUR	SS	10711	SSUBT
	174	KURLA (SC)	SS	4187	SSUBT
	175	KALINA	SSUBT	5008	BJP
	176	VANDRE EAST	SSUBT	11365	NCP

	177	VANDRE WEST	BJP	19931	INC
<b>23. MUMBAI CITY</b>					
	178	DHARAVI (SC)	INC	23459	SS
	179	SION KOLIWADA	BJP	7895	INC
	180	WADALA	BJP	24973	SSUBT
	181	MAHIM	SSUBT	1316	SS
	182	WORLI	SSUBT	8801	SS
	183	SHIVADI	SSUBT	7140	MNS
	184	BYCULLA	SSUBT	31361	SS
	185	MALABAR HILL	BJP	68019	SSUBT
	186	MUMBADEVI	INC	34844	SS
	187	COLABA	BJP	48581	INC
<b>24. RAIGAD</b>					
	188	PANVEL	BJP	51091	PWP
	189	KARJAT	SS	5694	INDP
	190	URAN	BJP	6512	PWP
	191	PEN	BJP	60810	SSUBT
	192	ALIBAG	SS	29565	PWP
	193	SHRIVARDHAN	NCP	82798	NCPSP
	194	MAHAD	SS	26210	SSUBT
<b>District</b>	<b>AC. No.</b>	<b>AC Name</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Margin</b>	<b>Loser</b>
<b>25. PUNE</b>					
	195	JUNNAR	INDP	6664	NCPSP
	196	AMBEGAON	NCP	1523	NCPSP
	197	KHED ALANDI	SSUBT	51743	NCP
	198	SHIRUR	NCP	14550	NCPSP
	199	DAUND	BJP	13889	NCPSP
	200	INDAPUR	NCP	19410	NCPSP
	201	BARAMATI	NCP	100899	NCPSP
	202	PURANDAR	SS	24188	INC
	203	BHOR	NCP	19638	INC
	204	MAVAL	NCP	108565	INDP
	205	CHINCHWAD	BJP	103865	NCPSP
	206	PIMPRI (SC)	NCP	36664	NCPSP
	207	BHOSARI	BJP	63765	NCPSP
	208	VADGAON SHERI	NCPSP	4710	NCP
	209	SHIVAJINAGAR	BJP	36702	INC
	210	KOTHRUD	BJP	112041	SSUBT

	211	KHADAKWASALA	BJP	52322	NCPSP
	212	PARVATI	BJP	54660	NCPSP
	213	HADAPSAR	NCP	7122	NCPSP
	214	PUNE CANTONMENT (SC)	BJP	10320	INC
	215	KASBA PETH	BJP	19423	INC
<b>26. AHMEDNAGAR</b>					
	216	AKOLE (ST)	NCP	5156	NCPSP
	217	SANGAMNER	SS	10560	INC
	218	SHIRDI	BJP	70282	INC
	219	KOPARGAON	NCP	12426	NCPSP
	220	SHRIRAMPUR (SC)	INC	13373	SS
	221	NEVASA	SS	4021	SSUBT
	222	SHEVGAON	BJP	19043	NCPSP
	223	RAHURI	BJP	34487	NCPSP
<b>District</b>	<b>AC. No.</b>	<b>AC Name</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Margin</b>	<b>Loser</b>
	224	PARNER	NCP	1526	NCPSP
	225	AHMEDNAGAR CITY	NCP	39618	NCPSP
	226	SHRIGONDA	BJP	37156	INDP
	227	KARJAT JAMKHED	NCPSP	1243	BJP
<b>27. BEED</b>					
	228	GEORAI	NCP	42390	SSUBT
	229	MAJALGAON	NCP	5899	NCPSP
	230	BEED	NCPSP	5324	NCP
	231	ASHTI	BJP	77975	INDP
	232	KAIJ (SC)	BJP	2687	NCPSP
	233	PARLI	NCP	140224	NCPSP
<b>28. LATUR</b>					
	234	LATUR RURAL	BJP	6595	INC
	235	LATUR CITY	INC	7398	BJP
	236	AHMADPUR	NCP	31669	NCPSP
	237	UDGIR (SC)	NCP	93214	NCPSP
	238	NILANGA	BJP	13740	INC
	239	AUSA	BJP	33462	SSUBT
<b>29. OSMANABAD</b>					
	240	UMARGA (SC)	SSUBT	4365	SS
	241	TULJAPUR	BJP	36879	INC
	242	OSMANABAD	SSUBT	36566	SS

	243	PARANDA	SS	1509	NCPSP
<b>30. SOLAPUR</b>					
	244	KARMALA	NCPSP	16085	INDP
	245	MADHA	NCPSP	30621	INDP
	246	BARSHI	SSUBT	6472	SS
	247	MOHOL (SC)	NCPSP	30202	NCP
<b>District</b>	<b>AC. No.</b>	<b>AC Name</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Margin</b>	<b>Loser</b>
	248	SOLAPUR CITY NORTH	BJP	54583	NCPSP
	249	SOLAPUR CITY CENTRAL	BJP	48850	AIMIM
	250	AKKALKOT	BJP	49572	INC
	251	SOLAPUR SOUTH	BJP	77127	SSUBT
	252	PANDHARPUR	BJP	3430	INC
	253	SANGOLE	PWP	25386	SS
	254	MALSHIRAS (SC)	NCPSP	13147	BJP
<b>31. SATARA</b>					
	255	PHALTAN (SC)	NCP	17046	NCPSP
	256	WAI	NCP	61392	NCPSP
	257	KOREGAON	SS	45063	NCPSP
	258	MAN	BJP	49675	NCPSP
	259	KARAD NORTH	BJP	43691	NCPSP
	260	KARAD SOUTH	BJP	39355	INC
	261	PATAN	SS	34824	INDP
	262	SATARA	BJP	142124	SSUBT
<b>32. RATNAGIRI</b>					
	263	DAPOLI	SS	24093	SSUBT
	264	GUHAGAR	SSUBT	2830	SS
	265	CHIPLUN	NCP	6768	NCPSP
	266	RATNAGIRI	SS	41590	SSUBT
	267	RAJAPUR	SS	19677	SSUBT
<b>33. SINDHUDURG</b>					
	268	KANKAVLI	BJP	58007	SSUBT
	269	KUDAL	SS	8176	SSUBT
	270	SAWANTWADI	SS	39899	SSUBT

District	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
<b>34. KOLHAPUR</b>					
	271	CHANDGAD	<b>INDP</b>	<b>24134</b>	<b>NCP</b>
	272	RADHANAGARI	SS	38259	SSUBT
	273	KAGAL	<b>NCP</b>	<b>11581</b>	<b>NCPSP</b>
	274	KOLHAPUR SOUTH	<b>BJP</b>	<b>17630</b>	<b>INC</b>
	275	KARVIR	<b>SS</b>	<b>1976</b>	<b>INC</b>
	276	KOLHAPUR NORTH	SS	29673	INDP
	277	SHAHUWADI	JSS	36053	INC
	278	HATKANANGLE (SC)	JSS	46249	INC
	279	ICHALKARANJI	BJP	56811	NCPSP
	280	SHIROL	RSVA	40616	INC
<b>35. SANGLI</b>					
	281	MIRAJ (SC)	BJP	45195	SSUBT
	282	SANGLI	BJP	36135	INC
	283	ISLAMPUR	<b>NCPSP</b>	<b>13027</b>	<b>NCP</b>
	284	SHIRALA	<b>BJP</b>	<b>22689</b>	<b>NCPSP</b>
	285	PALUS-KADEGAON	INC	30064	BJP
	286	KHANAPUR	SS	78181	NCPSP
	287	TASGAON-KAVATHE MAHANKAL	NCPSP	27644	NCP
	288	JAT	BJP	38240	INC



#### IV

### **Mismatch between District Wise Votes @ District Percentage and the Total EVM Votes shown in App of CEO in the District**

VFD conducted a meticulous analysis of the voting data from 288 Assembly Constituencies across 36 districts of Maharashtra. During this review, a significant discrepancy was uncovered between the district-wise votes reported in the official records and the total EVM votes displayed in the app of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Maharashtra. The total number of votes reported for all districts combined was 6,40,87,713, whereas the app indicated a slightly higher figure of 6,40,88,195 EVM votes. This revealed a mismatch of 482 votes between the two sources of data.

This inconsistency raised concerns about the accuracy of the vote count as recorded in the official app, especially considering that even a small difference in the reported numbers can have broader implications for election integrity and transparency. Such discrepancies can lead to questions about the reliability of the data presented to the public and whether the vote totals accurately reflect the actual number of votes cast.

The VFD's findings suggest that there may be an issue with the data synchronization between district-level records and the central system, which could be caused by technical glitches, human errors, or other administrative challenges. In any case, it calls for a thorough investigation to ensure the election results' credibility and transparency. This mismatch, though seemingly minor, highlights the importance of accurate data handling and reporting in maintaining public trust in the electoral process. Moving forward, it is crucial for the Election Commission and relevant authorities to address such discrepancies and enhance the verification process, ensuring that every vote is accounted for without error.

**Table 4 - Mismatch between District Wise Votes @ District Percentage and the Total EVM Votes shown in App of CEO in the District**

District	AC. No.	EVM Vote%	EVM Votes Polled Distt%	EVM Votes AC% wise	Mismatch
1	2	4	5	6	7
1. NANDURBAR	4	71.88	949996	950001	+5
2. DHULE	5	65.47	1198969	1198960	-9
3. JALGAON	11	65.80	2420198	2420278	+80
4. BULDHANA	7	70.60	1506957	1506925	-32
5. AKOLA	5	64.76	1060700	1060652	-48
6. WASHIM	3	67.09	677010	676968	-42
7. AMARAVATI	8	66.40	1690848	1690880	+32
8. WARDHA	4	69.29	784589	784555	-34
9. NAGPUR	12	61.60	2788014	2788217	+203

10. BHANDARA	3	70.87	720656	720641	-15
11. GONDIA	4	69.74	784645	784606	-39
12. GADCHIROLI	3	75.26	618227	618236	+9
13. CHANDRAPUR	6	71.33	1319678	1319736	+58
14. YAVATMAL	7	70.86	1595888	1595818	-80
15. NANDED	9	69.45	1936229	1936167	-62
16. HINGOLI	3	72.24	711394	711429	+35
17. PARBHANI	4	71.45	1109882	1109845	-37
18. JALNA	5	72.67	1200880	1200907	+27
19. AURANGABAD	9	69.64	2230396	2230334	-62
20. NASIK	15	69.12	3498291	3498258	-33
21. PALGHAR	6	66.63	1527204	1527121	-83
22. THANE	18	56.93	4115663	4115757	+94
23. MUMBAI SUBURBAN	26	56.39	4334191	4334513	+322
24. MUMBAI CITY	10	52.65	1339211	1339299	+88
25. RAIGAD	7	69.15	1720997	1721038	+41
26. PUNE	21	61.62	5453117	5453176	+59
27. AHMEDNAGAR	12	72.47	2742255	2742277	+22
28. BEED	6	68.88	1534539	1534436	-103
29. LATUR	6	67.03	1369253	1369245	-8
30. OSMANABAD	4	65.62	921313	921280	-33
31. SOLAPUR	11	67.72	2606454	2606571	+117
32. SATARA	8	71.95	1901490	1901590	+100
33. RATNAGIRI	5	65.23	873884	873837	-47
34. SINDHUDURG	3	71.14	482989	483001	+12
35. KOLHAPUR	10	76.63	2532696	2532657	-39
36. SANGLI	8	72.12	1829010	1828984	-26
<b>GT</b>	<b>288</b>		<b>6,40,87,713</b>	<b>6,40,88,195</b>	

## V

### Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024

#### AC seats with margin of votes less than 3,000

VFD examined 25 Assembly Constituencies in Maharashtra where the victory margin was less than 3,000 votes in the 2024 State Assembly Election. These constituencies include high-stakes areas such as Akkalkuwa, Nawapur, Buldhana, Akola West, Sakoli, Rajura, Ralegaon (ST), Nanded South, Ghansawangi, Sillod, Aurangabad East, Malegaon Central, Vasai, Shahapur (ST), 151 Belapur, Jogeshwari East, Versova, Mahim, Ambegaon, Parner, Karjat Jamkhed, Kaij (SC), Paranda, Guhagar, and Karvir.

**Table 5 - ACs seats with Margin of Votes less than 3,000**

Sr. No.	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
1	1	AKKALKUWA	SS	2904	INC
2	4	NAWAPUR	INC	1121	INDP
3	22	BULDHANA	SS	841	SSUBT
4	30	AKOLA WEST	INC	1283	BJP
5	62	SAKOLI	INC	208	BJP
6	70	RAJURA	BJP	3053	INC
7	77	RALEGAON (ST)	BJP	2812	INC
8	87	NANDED SOUTH	SS	2132	INC
9	100	GHANSAWANGI	SS	2309	NCPSP
10	104	SILLOD	SS	2420	SSUBT
11	109	AURANGABAD EAST	BJP	2161	AIMIM
12	114	MALEGAON CENTRAL	AIMIM	162	ISLAM
13	133	VASAI	BJP	3153	BVA
14	135	SHAHAPUR (ST)	NCP	1672	NCPSP
15	151	151 BELAPUR	BJP	377	NCPSP
16	158	JOGESHWARI EAST	SSUBT	1541	SS
17	164	VERSOVA	SSUBT	1600	BJP
18	181	MAHIM	SSUBT	1316	SS
19	196	AMBEGAON	NCP	1523	NCPSP
20	224	PARNER	NCP	1526	NCPSP
21	227	KARJAT JAMKHED	NCPSP	1243	BJP
22	232	KAIJ (SC)	BJP	2687	NCPSP
23	243	PARANDA	SS	1509	NCPSP
24	264	GUHAGAR	SSUBT	2830	SS
25	275	KARVIR	SS	1976	INC

## VI

### Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024

#### ACs seats with Margin of Votes less than 5,000

In the Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024, VFD examined 39 Assembly Constituencies where the victory margin was less than 5,000 votes. These include key constituencies such as Akkalkuwa, Nawapur, Buldhana, Chikhli, Sindkhed Raja, Mehkar (SC), Akola West, Sakoli, Rajura, Ralegaon (ST), Nanded North, Nanded South, Jintur, Ghansawangi, Sillod, Aurangabad East, Gangapur, Malegaon Central, Dahanu (ST), Vasai, Shahapur (ST), 151 Belapur, Jogeshwari East, Versova, Anushakti Nagar, Kurla (SC), Kalina, Mahim, Ambegaon, Vadgaon Sheri, Nevasa, Parner, Karjat Jamkhed, Kaij (SC), Umarga (SC), Paranda, Pandharpur, Guhagar, and Karvir. Among these 39 seats with where the margin of votes was less than 5,000 22 seats were won by the MVA (Opposition) alliance.

**Table 6 - ACs seats with Margin of Votes less than 5,000**

Sr. No.	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
1	1	AKKALKUWA	SS	2904	INC
2	4	NAWAPUR	INC	1121	INDP
3	22	BULDHANA	SS	841	SSUBT
4	23	CHIKHLI	BJP	3201	INC
5	24	SINDKHED RAJA	NCP	4650	NCP SP
6	25	MEHKAR (SC)	SSUBT	4819	SS
7	30	AKOLA WEST	INC	1283	BJP
8	62	SAKOLI	INC	208	BJP
9	70	RAJURA	BJP	3053	INC
10	77	RALEGAON (ST)	BJP	2812	INC
11	86	NANDED NORTH	SS	3502	INC
12	87	NANDED SOUTH	SS	2132	INC
13	95	JINTUR	BJP	4546	NCPSP
14	100	GHANSAWANGI	SS	2309	NCPSP
15	104	SILLOD	SS	2420	SSUBT
16	109	AURANGABAD EAST	BJP	2161	AIMIM
17	111	GANGAPUR	BJP	5015	NCPSP
18	114	MALEGAON CENTRAL	AIMIM	162	ISLAM
19	128	DAHANU (ST)	CPIM	5133	BJP
20	133	VASAI	BJP	3153	BVA
21	135	SHAHAPUR (ST)	NCP	1672	NCPSP
22	151	151 BELAPUR	BJP	377	NCPSP
23	158	JOGESHWARI EAST	SSUBT	1541	SS
24	164	VERSOVA	SSUBT	1600	BJP
25	172	ANUSHAKTI NAGAR	NCP	3378	NCPSP
26	174	KURLA (SC)	SS	4187	SSUBT
27	175	KALINA	SSUBT	5008	BJP
28	181	MAHIM	SSUBT	1316	SS
29	196	AMBEGAON	NCP	1523	NCPSP
30	208	VADGAON SHERI	NCPSP	4710	NCP
31	221	NEVASA	SS	4021	SSUBT

32	224	PARNER	NCP	1526	NCPSP
33	227	KARJAT JAMKHED	NCPSP	1243	BJP
34	232	KAIJ (SC)	BJP	2687	NCPSP
35	240	UMARGA (SC)	SSUBT	4365	SS
36	243	PARANDA	SS	1509	NCPSP
37	252	PANDHARPUR	BJP	3430	INC
38	264	GUHAGAR	SSUBT	2830	SS
39	275	KARVIR	SS	1976	INC

## VII

### Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024

#### ACs seats with Margin of Votes less than 10,000

In the Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024, VFD analyzed 69 Assembly Constituencies where the victory margin was less than 10,000 votes. These constituencies include significant areas such as Akkalkuwa, Nawapur, Sakri, Buldhana, Chikhli, Sindkhed Raja, Mehkar (SC), Akola West, Risod, Amravati, Teosa, Deoli, Wardha, Nagpur West, Sakoli, Armori (ST), Rajura, Chimur, Ralegaon (ST), Kinwat, Nanded North, Nanded South, Jintur, Ghansawangi, Sillod, Aurangabad Central, Aurangabad East, Gangapur, Malegaon Central, Kalwan (ST), Dahanu (ST), Vasai, Shahapur (ST), 151 Belapur, Bhandup West, Jogeshwari East, Dindoshi, Malad West, Versova, Anushakti Nagar, Kurla (SC), Kalina, Sion Koliwada, Mahim, Worli, Shivadi, Karjat, Uran, Junnar, Ambegaon, Vadgaon Sheri, Hadapsar, Akole (ST), Nevasa, Parner, Karjat Jamkhed, Majalgaon, Beed, Kaij (SC), Latur Rural, Latur City, Umarga (SC), Paranda, Barshi, Pandharpur, Guhagar, Chiplun, Kudal, and Karvir. Of these 69 assembly constituencies, 40 were won by the Opposition MVA alliance.

**Table 7 - ACs seats with Margin of Votes less than 10,000**

Sr. No.	AC. No.	AC Name	Winner	Margin	Loser
1	1	AKKALKUWA	SS	2904	INC
2	4	NAWAPUR	INC	1121	INDP
3	5	SAKRI	SS	5584	INC
4	22	BULDHANA	SS	841	SSUBT
5	23	CHIKHLI	BJP	3201	INC
6	24	SINDKHED RAJA	NCP	4650	NCP SP
7	25	MEHKAR (SC)	SSUBT	4819	SS
8	30	AKOLA WEST	INC	1283	BJP
9	33	RISOD	INC	6136	INDP
10	38	AMRAVATI	NCP	5413	INC
11	39	TEOSA	BJP	7617	INC
12	45	DEOLI	BJP	9308	INC
13	47	WARDHA	BJP	7470	INC
14	56	NAGPUR WEST	INC	5824	BJP
15	62	SAKOLI	INC	208	BJP
16	67	ARMORI (ST)	INC	6210	BJP
17	70	RAJURA	BJP	3053	INC
18	74	CHIMUR	BJP	9853	INC
19	77	RALEGAON (ST)	BJP	2812	INC
20	83	KINWAT	BJP	5636	NCPSP
21	86	NANDED NORTH	SS	3502	INC
22	87	NANDED SOUTH	SS	2132	INC
23	95	JINTUR	BJP	4546	NCPSP
24	100	GHANSAWANGI	SS	2309	NCPSP
25	104	SILLOD	SS	2420	SSUBT
26	107	AURANGABAD CENTRAL	SS	8119	AIMIM

27	109	AURANGABAD EAST	BJP	2161	AIMIM
28	111	GANGAPUR	BJP	5015	NCPSP
29	114	MALEGAON CENTRAL	AIMIM	162	ISLAM
30	117	KALWAN (ST)	NCP	8432	CPIM
31	128	DAHANU (ST)	CPIM	5133	BJP
32	133	VASAI	BJP	3153	BVA
33	135	SHAHAPUR (ST)	NCP	1672	NCPSP
34	151	151 BELAPUR	BJP	377	NCPSP
35	157	BHANDUP WEST	SS	6764	SSUBT
36	158	JOGESHWARI EAST	SSUBT	1541	SS
37	159	DINDOSHI	SSUBT	6182	SS
38	162	MALAD WEST	INC	6227	BJP
39	164	VERSOVA	SSUBT	1600	BJP
40	172	ANUSHAKTI NAGAR	NCP	3378	NCPSP
41	174	KURLA (SC)	SS	4187	SSUBT
42	175	KALINA	SSUBT	5008	BJP
43	179	SION KOLIWADA	BJP	7895	INC
44	181	MAHIM	SSUBT	1316	SS
45	182	WORLI	SSUBT	8801	SS
46	183	SHIVADI	SSUBT	7140	MNS
47	189	KARJAT	SS	5694	INDP
48	190	URAN	BJP	6512	PWP
49	195	JUNNAR	INDP	6664	NCPSP
50	196	AMBEGAON	NCP	1523	NCPSP
51	208	VADGAON SHERI	NCPSP	4710	NCP
52	213	HADAPSAR	NCP	7122	NCPSP
53	216	AKOLE (ST)	NCP	5156	NCPSP
54	221	NEVASA	SS	4021	SSUBT
55	224	PARNER	NCP	1526	NCPSP
56	227	KARJAT JAMKHED	NCPSP	1243	BJP
57	229	MAJALGAON	NCP	5899	NCPSP
58	230	BEED	NCPSP	5324	NCP
59	232	KAIJ (SC)	BJP	2687	NCPSP
60	234	LATUR RURAL	BJP	6595	INC
61	235	LATUR CITY	INC	7398	BJP
62	240	UMARGA (SC)	SSUBT	4365	SS
63	243	PARANDA	SS	1509	NCPSP
64	246	BARSHI	SSUBT	6472	SS
65	252	PANDHARPUR	BJP	3430	INC
66	264	GUHAGAR	SSUBT	2830	SS
67	265	CH IPLUN	NCP	6768	NCPSP
68	269	KUDAL	SS	8176	SSUBT
69	275	KARVIR	SS	1976	INC

## VIII

### **Number of electors notified at the time Notification of election have been changed by the CEO Maharashtra**

The unexplained surge in the number of electors in Maharashtra, as reported by the Election Commission of India (ECI), requires immediate attention and scrutiny. On October 15, 2024, the ECI's notification for the Maharashtra State Assembly Election 2024 stated that there were 9, 64, 85,765 electors as of August 30, 2024. This included 1,355 service voters and the enrolment of 20, 93, 206 young electors who turned 18 between January 1 and July 1, 2024. However, just 15 days later, on October 30, 2024, the CEO of Maharashtra announced an increase in the number of electors to 9,70,25,119. This represents a sudden rise of 5,39,354 electors from August 30, 2024.

The surge in electors from 9, 64, 85,765 to 9,70,25,119 in such a short span of time raises serious questions. The increase of over 5 lakh electors seems unusually high, especially given the relatively brief period between the period of the first notification by the ECI (October 15, 2024) and thereafter (October 30, 2024). This surge could be attributed to new voter registrations, but it is crucial to ask why this large number of new voters would be added so quickly after the election schedule was announced.

- Was this increase a result of natural enrolment, or is it indicative of irregularities or errors in the electoral roll updating process?

The question for the Commission is whether this surge in the number of electors is a reflection of genuine, accurate voter registration or if it points to a discrepancy in the reporting process. The rapid increase in the number of electors, particularly after the election schedule was made public, suggests that the process may have been influenced by external factors. The Commission's scrutiny of these figures is essential to uphold the integrity of the electoral system and to ensure that the electoral roll remains accurate and transparent.



## IX

### New Addition of Voters between 2019 and 2024 in Maharashtra

#### 1. Between Lok Sabha Election 2019 and Assembly Election Maharashtra 2019:

- **12,73,519 new electors**

Between the Lok Sabha Election 2019 and the Maharashtra Assembly Election 2019, there was a noticeable increase in the number of electors. According to data from the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Maharashtra, the total number of electors in the state during the Lok Sabha Election 2019 was 8,85,64,748. However, by the time of the Maharashtra Assembly Election 2019, the number of electors had risen to 8,98,38,267, as stated by the Election Commission of India (ECI). This represents an increase of **12,73,519** electors, highlighting a significant jump in voter enrolment over a relatively short period.

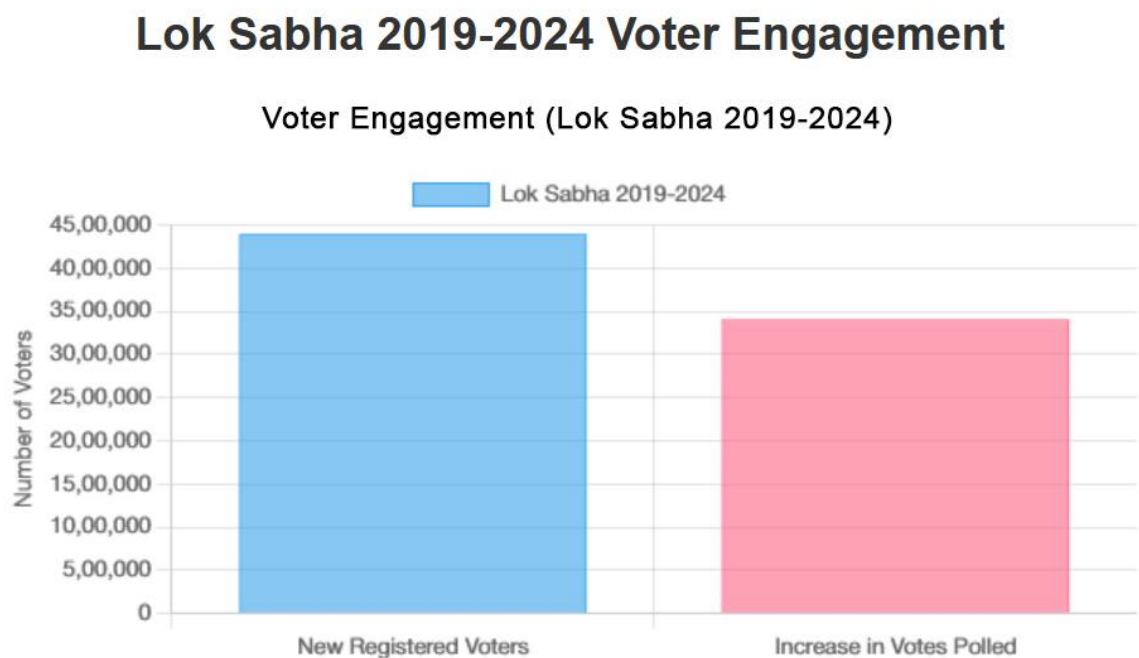
#### 2. Between Lok Sabha Election 2019 to Lok Sabha Election 2024:

- **37,91,503 new electors**

The noticeable increase in the number of electors between the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha Elections in Maharashtra has raised some important questions, and it's crucial for citizens to understand the factors behind this hike to ensure transparency in the process.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections, the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Maharashtra reported a total of 8,85,64,748 electors. However, by March 30, 2024, the Election Commission of India (ECI) reported that the number of electors had risen to 9,23,56,251 electors. This represents an increase of **37,91,503** electors over the five-year period. While this increase could be attributed to factors such as natural population growth, voter registration drives, and the inclusion of eligible youth turning 18, it's important to ensure that these additions are legitimate and accurately recorded.

Graph 1 - Maharashtra: Lok Sabha 2019-2024 Voter Engagement



- 44,96,912 new electors

Shockingly, in 2024, the CEO of Maharashtra reported a slightly higher number of electors—9,30,61,660—indicating a further difference of 7,05,409 electors compared to the ECI’s data. If we calculate the total increase in electors based on the CEO’s figures, the number of electors rose from 8,85,64,748 to 9,30,61,660, representing an increase of **44,96,912** electors. This is a significant jump, and it’s important to scrutinize how this increase was accounted for, especially in the context of voter registration processes, new additions from youth enrolment, and any possible irregularities.

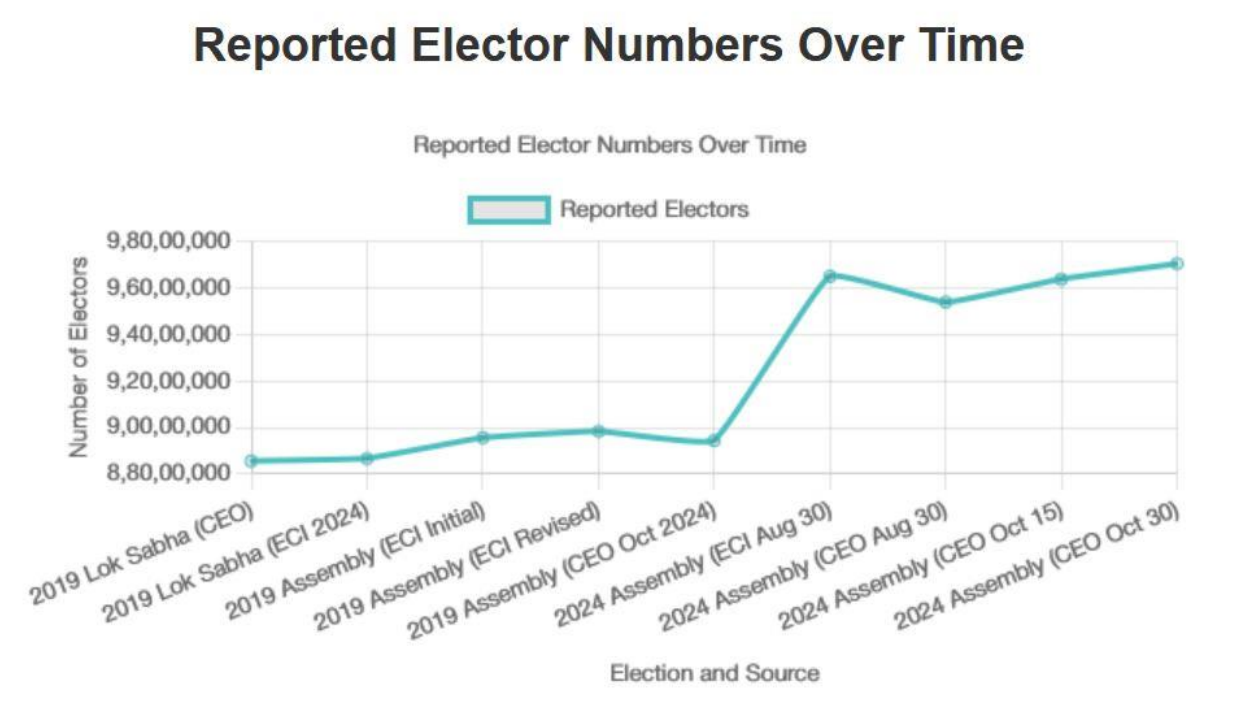
The main concern arises from the unexplained hike and the differences in data provided by the CEO and the ECI. The citizens of Maharashtra have the right to know if these numbers reflect genuine voter registration or if there may have been inconsistencies or errors in the electoral roll. Therefore, it's essential for authorities to ensure that the entire process is transparent, and every addition to the voter list is verifiable. Such transparency is crucial in maintaining the integrity of the electoral system and in upholding the trust of the people in the election process.

3. Between Lok Sabha Election 2019 and Assembly Election Maharashtra 2024:
- 84,60,371 new electors

Between the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections and the 2024 Maharashtra State Assembly Elections, Maharashtra saw a significant rise in the number of registered voters. As per the data, in the

2019 Lok Sabha Elections, Maharashtra had 8, 85, 64,748 electors, as per CEO, Maharashtra. However, by October 30, 2024, the number had increased to 9, 70, 25,119 electors. This represents an addition of **84, 60,371** electors, a 9.55% increase over a span of five years.

Graph 2 - Reported Elector Numbers over Time



Such a notable increase raises several questions about the processes behind voter registration. While some of the growth can be attributed to the natural increase in population, the addition of a large number of new electors warrants further scrutiny.

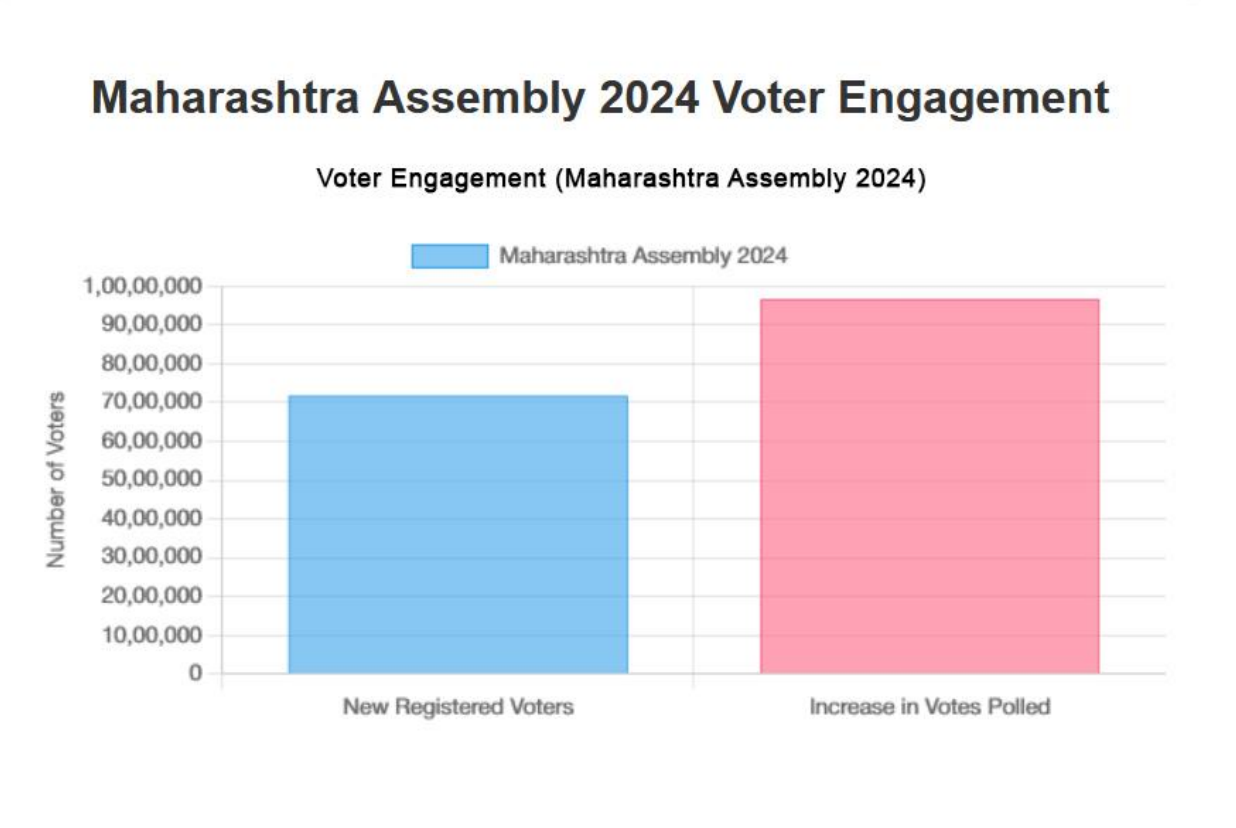
- Increased voter registration campaigns and outreach efforts could have played a role, but transparency is essential in verifying whether all additions were legitimate. Furthermore, is this increase the result of data updates or rectifications in the electoral rolls?

Given the size of this increase, the Election Commission of India (ECI) should and must provide clarity on the specific methods employed in voter roll updates, as such changes are crucial for maintaining the integrity of the electoral process.

Table 8 - Number of Electors between Lok Sabha Election 2019 and Assembly Election Maharashtra 2024

Election	Electors in 2019 Lok Sabha	Electors in 2024 State Assembly	Voter Addition	Percentage Increase
2019 Lok Sabha Elections	8,85,64,748	N/A	N/A	N/A
2024 Maharashtra Assembly	N/A	9,70,25,119	84,60,371	9.55%

Graph 3 - Maharashtra: Assembly Election 2024 Voter Engagement



4. Between Lok Sabha Election 2024 and Assembly Election Maharashtra 2024:

The increase in registered voters between the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections and the Maharashtra State Assembly Elections 2024 raises significant questions, especially when compared to the voter additions observed in previous cycles. According to the Election Commission of India (ECI), Maharashtra had 9,23,56,251 electors as of March 3, 2024, for the Lok Sabha Elections. By October 30, 2024, just seven months later, the number surged to 9,70,25,119 electors, reflecting an addition of **46,68,868** electors — a 5.05% increase in a very short time span.

In contrast, during the period between the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections and the 2019 Maharashtra State Assembly Elections, the increase in electors was much smaller. The total number of electors in Maharashtra was 8, 85, and 64,748 in the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections. When we compare these two periods, the addition of **46, 68,868** electors between March and October 2024 is significantly higher than the 12, 73,519 electors added in the same time frame during the 2019 cycle.

This raises the following questions:

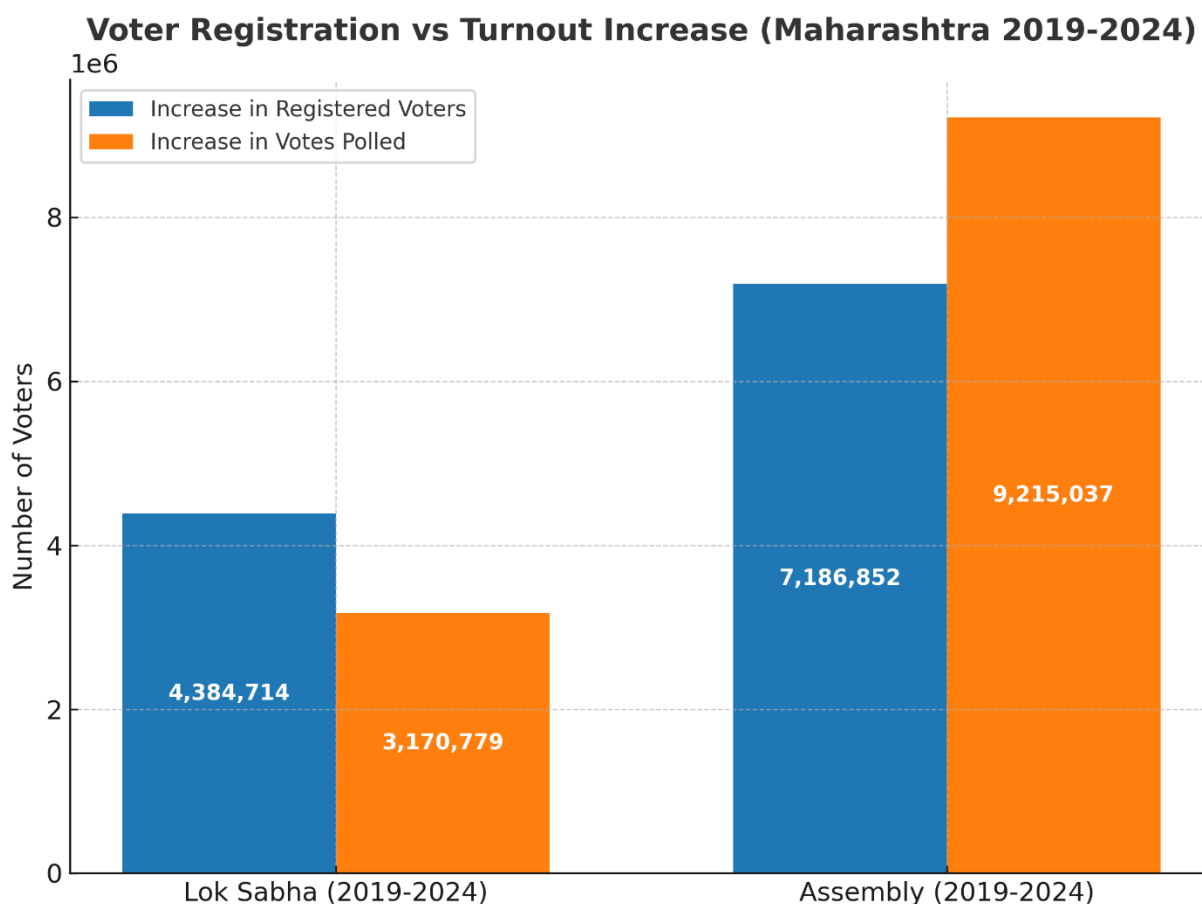
1. How can there be such a large increase in voters in just 7 months? Given that the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections already had extensive voter registration efforts, how were so many additional voters enrolled so quickly?
2. What factors contributed to this drastic rise?
3. Is the rise in electors reflective of actual voter growth, or could there be discrepancies in the updating process? The increase seems unusually large compared to previous years, warranting a closer look at how these figures were compiled.

## X

### The mismatch between newly registered voters in case of Lok Sabha Election 2019, 2024 and the results of by-elections 2024

The data on voter registration and turnout between the 2019 Lok Sabha elections and the 2024 elections in Maharashtra raises significant concerns regarding the surge in voter registration and the actual voter turnout. Between 2019 and 2024, Maharashtra saw an increase of **43,84,714** newly registered voters for the Lok Sabha elections. However, the number of votes polled in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections only rose by **31,70,779**, highlighting a notable gap between the number of registered voters and those who actually cast their ballots. This discrepancy suggests that a substantial portion of newly registered voters did not participate in the election, raising questions about voter engagement and the effectiveness of efforts to encourage turnout.

Graph 4 - Voter Engagement: Lok Sabha (2029-2024) vs Assembly (2024)



On the other hand, the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections saw a much more pronounced increase in voter participation. The number of newly registered voters for the Assembly elections increased by 7,186,852, with the votes polled rising by **92,15,037**. This indicates significantly higher voter engagement for state elections compared to national elections.

The question that arises is:

***What factors are contributing to the stark difference in voter turnout between the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections? Is it a matter of voter apathy towards national elections, or is there a deeper issue regarding the addition of new voters and their integration into the voting process?***

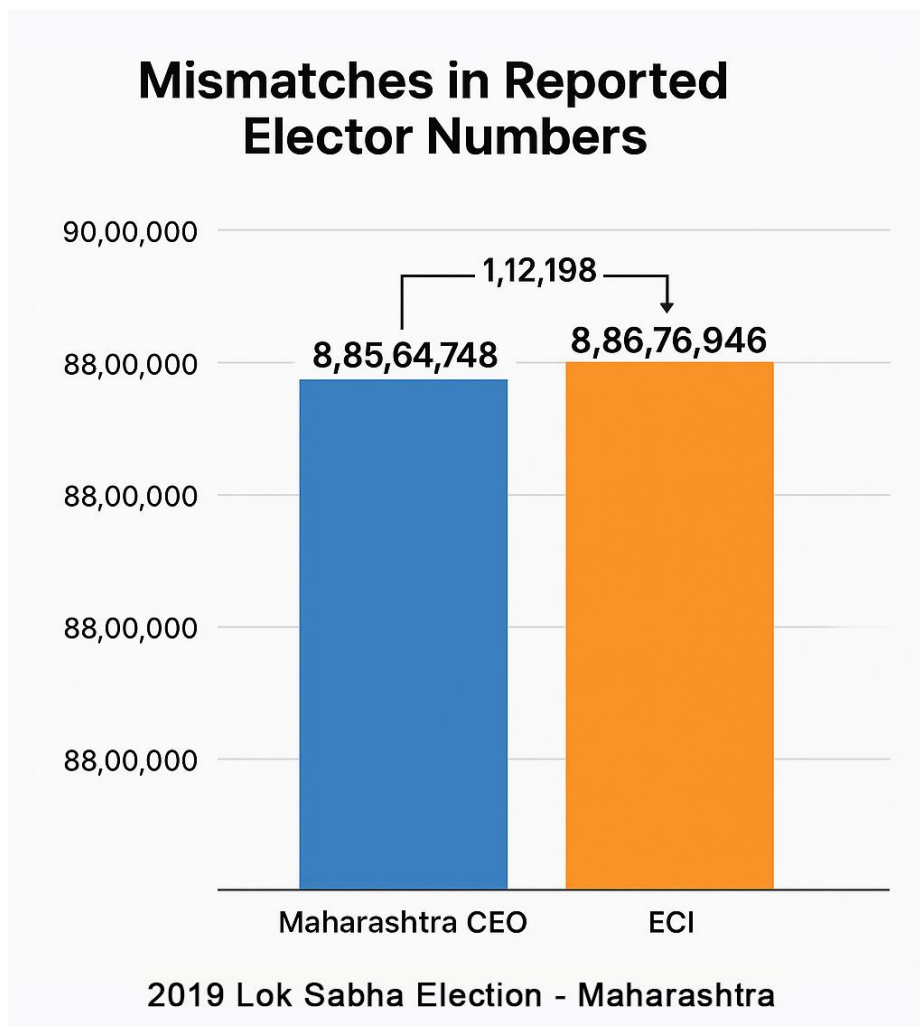
This disparity calls for closer scrutiny of voter behaviour, registration practices, and the impact of political campaigns at both the national and regional levels.

## XI

### Mismatch between Number of Total Electors [2019] Reported by CEO, Maharashtra and ECI in Maharashtra Lok Sabha Election in 2019 and 2024

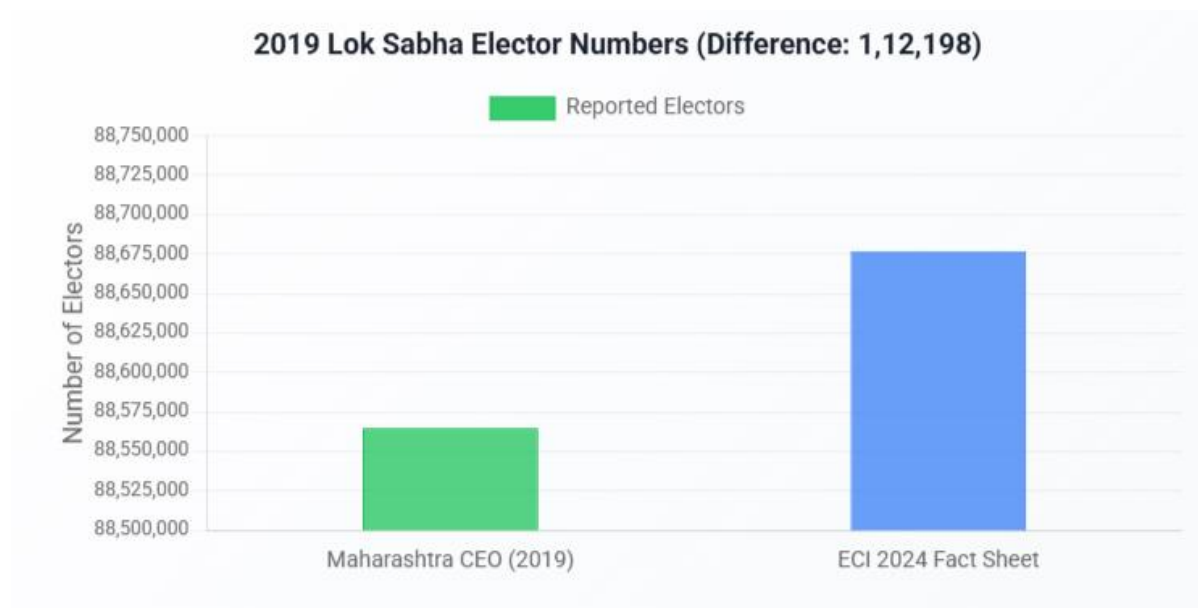
There is a noticeable discrepancy between the total number of electors reported by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Maharashtra in 2019 and the Election Commission of India (ECI) in 2024. According to the Statistics of Electors, Voters & Voter Turnout—PC wise, issued by CEO Maharashtra in 2019, the total number of electors during the Lok Sabha Election in Maharashtra was 8,85,64,748. However, in the ECI’s fact sheet on Maharashtra released on May 28, 2024, the number of electors is reported as 8, 86, 76, 946 in Look Sabha Election 2019. **This represents a difference of 1,12,198 electors between the two official sources, a figure that is significant as much as it is disturbing.**

Graph 5 - Mismatch in Reported Elector Numbers





Graph 6 - 2019 Lok Sabha Elector Discrepancies



**Table 9 - Mismatch between Number of Total Electors [2019] Reported by CEO, Maharashtra and ECI in Maharashtra Lok Sabha Election in 2019 and 2024**

Maharashtra Lok Sabha Election 2019			
Sr. No.	Total Electors	Issued By	Date
1.	8,85,64,748	CEO, Maharashtra	2019
Source: <a href="#">Statistics of Electors, Voters &amp; Voter Turnout- PC wise</a>			
3.	8,86,76,946	ECI	2019
Source: <a href="#">13 - PC WISE VOTERS TURN OUT</a>			
2.	8,86,76,946	ECI	28.05.2024
Source: <a href="#">FACT SHEET ON MAHARASHTRA</a>			

The mismatch in these figures raises several important questions that need clarification.

- What could be the reasons for this increase in the number of electors according to the ECI’s updated report for 2019 Lok Sabha Election?
- Did the CEO Maharashtra revise or update their data after the 2019 report was issued?
- Were there any new registrations, corrections, or errors in the data between 2019 and 2024 that could have caused this difference?

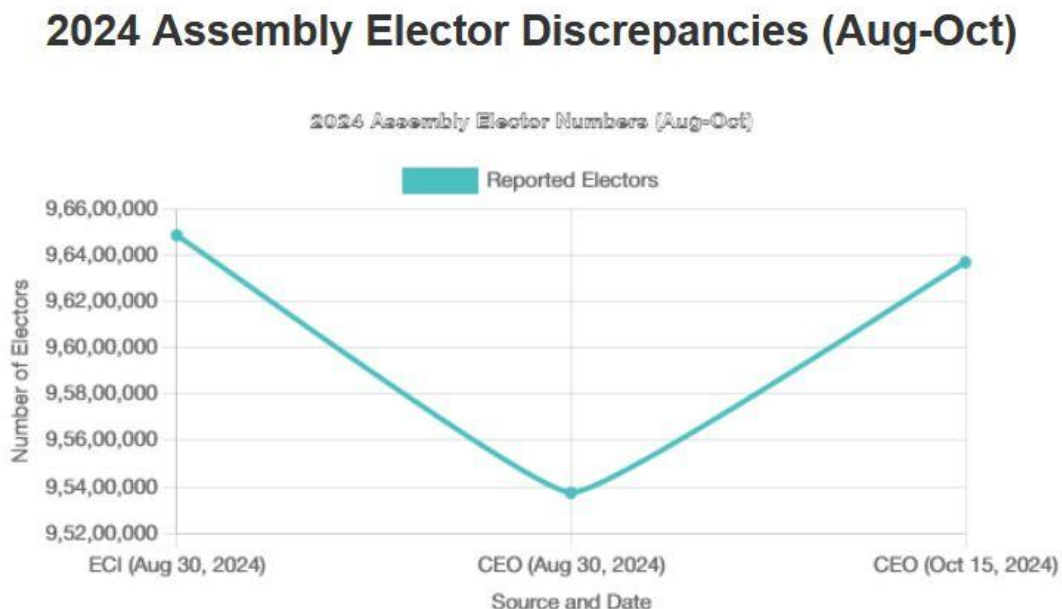
## XII

### Mismatch between Number of Total Electors Reported by CEO, Maharashtra and ECI in Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024

The discrepancy in the official figures of total electors between the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Maharashtra has raised significant concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of the voter data for Maharashtra’s 2024 Assembly Elections. The ECI's election notification dated October 15, 2024 reported that, as of August 30, 2024, there were 9, 64, 85,765 electors in Maharashtra. However, on the same day, the CEO Maharashtra issued a press release with significantly different figures. According to the CEO's report, the total number of electors as of August 30, 2024 was 9,53,74,302 and by October 15, 2024 this number had increased to 9,63,69,410 electors, a decrease of 1,16,355 electors from the August figure provided by the ECI. Again this figure is substantial and needs to be explained by the ECI.

This sudden drop in electors between the ECI's August data and the CEO's October data is both unexpected and contradictory. The figures reported by the CEO do not align with the steady growth or stability in voter registration one would typically expect in the period leading up to elections.

**Graph 7 - 2024: Assembly Electors Discrepancies (August 30 (ECI), August 30 (CEO) and October 15 (CEO), 2024)**



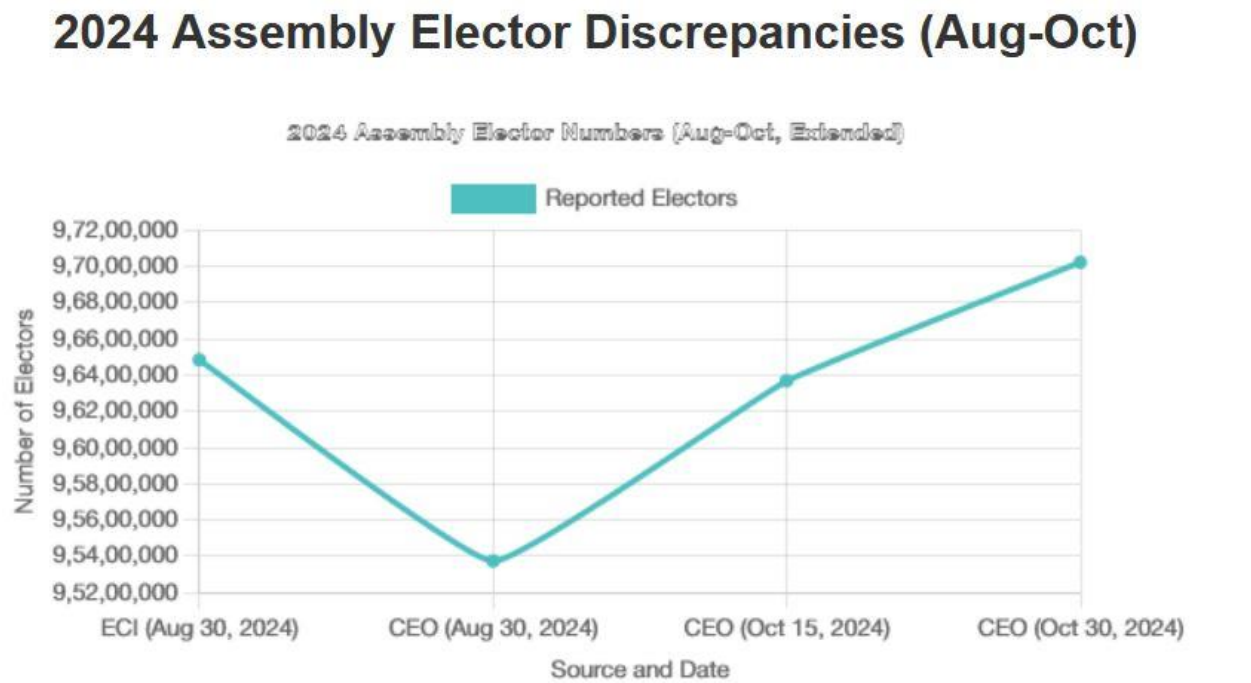
Things took another confusing turn when, on October 30, 2024, the CEO Maharashtra released an updated report showing a drastic *increase* in electors, now stating that there were 9,70,25,119 electors

as of October 30, 2024, which is an increase of over 16 lakh electors in just 15 days! This new figure again contradicts both the previous figures issued by the ECI and CEO Maharashtra.

**Table 10** - Mismatch between Number of Total Electors Reported by CEO, Maharashtra and ECI in Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024

Maharashtra Assembly Election 2024			
Sr. No.	Total Electors	Issued By	Date
1.	9,64,85,765 [as on 30.08.2024]	ECI	15.10.2024
Source: <a href="#">ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA</a>			
2.	9,53,74,302 [as on 30.08.2024]	CEO, Maharashtra	15.10.2024
Source: <a href="https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/Assembly-2024-PressNote.pdf">https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/Assembly-2024-PressNote.pdf</a>			
3.	9,63,69,410 [as on 15.10.2024]	CEO, Maharashtra	15.10.2024
Source: <a href="https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/Assembly-2024-PressNote.pdf">https://ceoelection.maharashtra.gov.in/Downloads/PDF/Assembly-2024-PressNote.pdf</a>			
4.	9,70,25,119 [as on 30.10.2024]	CEO, Maharashtra	30.10.2024
Source: <a href="#">Electors count as on 30-10-2024</a>			

Graph 8 - 2024: Assembly Electors Discrepancies (Aug, 2024 – October, 2024)



The analysis of this issue reveals an unexplained rise and fall in the number of electors, with a sharp discrepancy between the dates and reports issued by the ECI and CEO Maharashtra. On the 15th October 2024, the figures from the CEO showed a decrease of 30, 11,463 electors from the ECI's report issued on the same date (9, 64, 85,765 - 9, 53, 74,302). However, just 15 days later, the number of electors rose by 16, 50,709 electors (9, 70, 25,119 - 9, 53, 74,302).

- This raises multiple concerns: Was there a delay in updating the electoral roll?
- Did the CEO inadvertently miss out on electors in the earlier reports?
- Or was there a sudden surge in voter registrations that wasn't reflected earlier?

The Election Commission of India must provide a clear and transparent explanation regarding these discrepancies. The ECI must clarify why there was such a sudden drop in electors reported by the CEO in October 2024, followed by a rapid increase shortly thereafter. To restore confidence in the election process, the ECI must ensure that data reporting is accurate and consistent across all platforms, and the reasons for these fluctuations should be thoroughly investigated and communicated to the public.

### XIII

#### Mismatch between Number of Total Electors Reported by CEO, Maharashtra and ECI in Maharashtra Assembly Election 2019

The analysis by Vote for Democracy (VFD) reveals a significant issue with discrepancies in the reported number of electors for the Maharashtra Assembly Election – 2019, casting a long shadow over the transparency and reliability of India’s Electoral Data Management. This suggests that these data discrepancies and absence of precision has plagued the ECI’s counting process in 2019, *and since*, as well. The sections in this report reveal consistent and continuous errors in the official data reporting by the ECI.

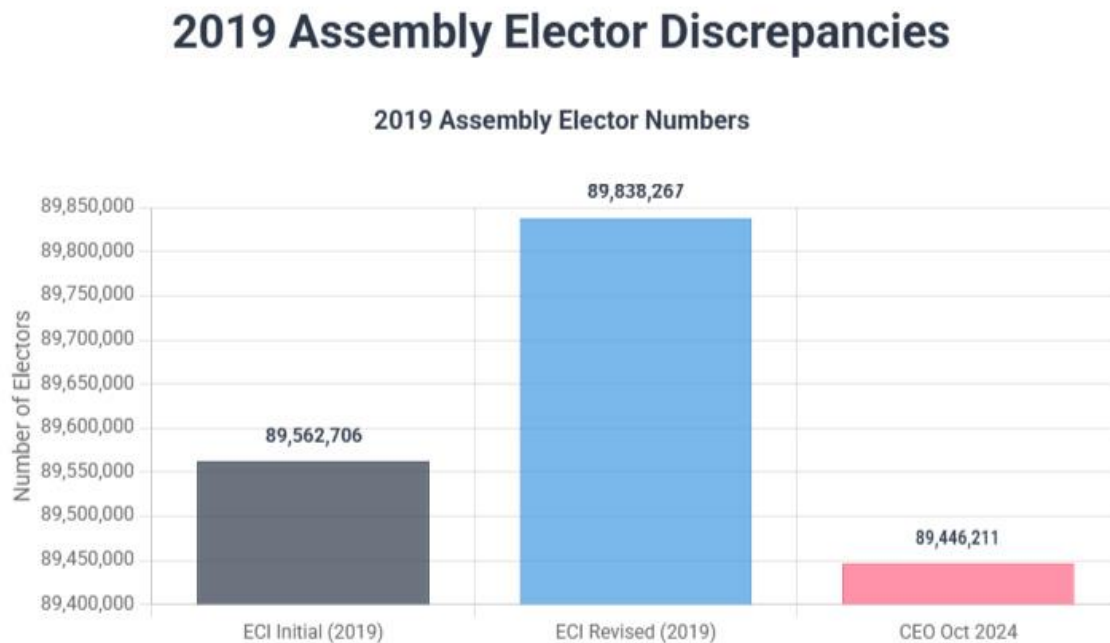
Initially, the Election Commission of India (ECI) reported a total of **8, 95, 62,706** electors in Maharashtra in its notification on September 21, 2019. Yet, a subsequent Electoral Summary issued by the ECI in 2019 showed a slight increase to **8, 98, 38,267** electors. While such revisions might be explained by routine updates to electoral rolls, the inconsistency between the initial and revised figures raises serious doubts.

- Why are there these inconsistencies between the official data?
- Can the electors simply accept these fluctuations without knowing the cause?

The lack of transparency surrounding these revisions leaves room for suspicion about data manipulation or errors in the process.

What is even more concerning is the press note issued by the CEO of Maharashtra on October 15, 2024, which reported a significantly lower figure—**8,94,46,211** total electors in Maharashtra during the 2019 Assembly Elections—showing a substantial decrease from both the initial and revised ECI numbers.

Graph 9 - 2019: Assembly Electors Discrepancies



The drastic differences between these official figures raise even sharper questions:

- Why does the number of electors continue to change?
- How can citizens trust the integrity of an election process when such inconsistencies persist?

These discrepancies are not mere administrative errors; they signal a breakdown in the electoral system’s core functions.

**Table 11 - Mismatch between Number of Total Electors Reported by CEO, Maharashtra and ECI in Maharashtra Assembly Election 2019**

Maharashtra Assembly Election 2019			
Sr. No.	Total Electors	Issued By	Date
1.	8,95,62,706	ECI	21.09.2019
Source: <a href="https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/10605-schedule-for-general-election-to-the-legislative-assemblies-of-haryana-and-maharashtra-2019/?do=download">https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/10605-schedule-for-general-election-to-the-legislative-assemblies-of-haryana-and-maharashtra-2019/?do=download</a>			
2.	8,98,38,267	ECI	2019
Source: <a href="https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/11699-maharashtra-legislative-assembly-election-2019/?do=download&amp;r=31591&amp;confirm=1&amp;t=1&amp;csrfKey=ddc4d6cc347cf2cb05fc5fa7bf8d30b6">https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/11699-maharashtra-legislative-assembly-election-2019/?do=download&amp;r=31591&amp;confirm=1&amp;t=1&amp;csrfKey=ddc4d6cc347cf2cb05fc5fa7bf8d30b6</a>			
3.	8,94,46,211	CEO, Maharashtra	15.10.2024
Source: <a href="#">Electors count as on 30-10-2024</a>			

When the highest election authority reports such inconsistent data, as a clear mismatch between the CEO Maharashtra and ECI figures on total electors in Maharashtra, serious doubts and concerns are bound to be raised. When any doubts are met by evasion and silence, the doubts only increase. This lack of consistency and discrepancies not only erodes public trust but also threatens the very legitimacy of the election system. How can voters have confidence that their voices are accurately represented if the foundation of the electoral rolls is unreliable?

## XIV

### **Maharashtra Chief Minister Defender Fadnavis' Assembly Seat [Nagpur South West] added 29,219 voters in 6 Months between the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections & 2024 Assembly Elections**

#### **Voter roll anomaly in Fadnavis's seat**

The dramatic increase of 29,219 voters in Nagpur South West, the constituency of Maharashtra Chief Minister Defender Fadnavis, within a mere six months between the 2024 Lok Sabha and Maharashtra Assembly elections, has ignited a fierce debate about the integrity of electoral rolls. This astonishing 8.25 percent surge, more than double the Election Commission of India's (ECI) own 4 percent threshold for mandatory verification, has brought to the forefront long-standing accusations of discrepancies and possible potential manipulation of voter lists, forming a critical section in this comprehensive report on the Maharashtra Assembly Elections.

#### **Unprecedented voter surge: a Statistical anomaly**

The sheer volume of new additions in Nagpur South West – approximately 162 voters daily – is statistically anomalous for non-migratory driven population growth. Census data for Nagpur district suggests a significantly lower population increase rate. This raises immediate red flags about the organic nature of such a rapid voter surge. While the ECI acknowledges that "any increase or decrease can happen" and attributes it to "natural growth" and "mobile migration," experts like former Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, AR Nanda, and Jagdeep S Chhokar of the Association for Democratic Reforms, strongly contend that such an inflow is not "normal" without a significant, visible demographic shift like the construction of new multi-storied buildings. The 20-50% voter spikes in specific booths further intensify these concerns, moving beyond mere "natural growth" into the realm of statistical improbability.

#### **ECI guidelines ignored: a Failure of Verification mechanisms**

The ECI's own manual and guidelines explicitly mandate additional layers of cross-verification when voter additions exceed the 4 percent threshold. This includes field verifications by Booth Level Officers (BLOs), multi-tier double-checking mechanisms by supervisors, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs), Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), District Electoral Officers (DEOs), and even the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).



However, the ground reality painted by local polling staff contradicts these stipulated procedures<sup>31</sup>

- **BLOs' Admissions:** A significant number of BLOs, particularly in booths with the highest spikes (20-58% increases), explicitly denied carrying out thorough verification processes. They claimed to have received applications in bulk from the district election office, making comprehensive ground checks impossible. Some even reported inability to trace voters at given addresses and returning undelivered voter ID cards, yet these voters were still added to the rolls.
- **Supervisor Accountability Lapses:** Supervisors, who are meant to verify 5% of BLOs' work, also admitted to not having time for ground verification, instead relying on BLO reports. This indicates a systemic breakdown in the supervisory chain designed to ensure accuracy.
- **Missing Addresses:** Random checks revealed thousands of voters with blank address columns, directly contravening ECI requirements for proof of residence. While the ECI spokesperson vaguely stated these are "voters who are residing in an area" and "temporarily residing with no exact address" after "ground level verification," the lack of specific SOPs for handling such cases and the admission by officials like UP CEO Navdeep Rinwa about this being a "widespread problem" highlight a glaring loophole.

The ECI's blanket assertion that "there was no problem in the Maharashtra elections" and that the "electoral roll is absolutely pure" rings hollow against the backdrop of these documented procedural failures (exposures by independent media) and the admissions of their own ground staff. The apparent unwillingness of ERO Suresh Bagale and DEO Pravin Mahire to respond to queries further exacerbates the perception of a cover-up.

### Accusations and counter-accusations

The discrepancies in Nagpur South West have naturally ignited a political firestorm, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi leading the charge. His strong allegations of "vote theft" and "rigging" against the ECI and the ruling party resonate with the detailed findings of the voter roll anomalies, particularly his demand for "immediate release of machine-readable digital voter rolls and CCTV footage," which directly ties into broader transparency concerns.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, while vehemently refuting the allegations as "baseless" and "vote theft," strategically deflected by pointing to similar voter increases in other constituencies, including those won by the Congress and its allies. He cited examples like West Nagpur (7% increase, Congress win), North Nagpur (7% increase, Congress win), Wadgaon Sheri (10% increase, Sharad Pawar group win), Malad West (11% increase, Congress win), and Mumbra (9% increase, Sharad Pawar group win).

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.newslandry.com/2025/06/23/in-6-months-fadnavis-seat-added-29219-voters-poll-staff-claim-lapses>

Fadnavis's argument attempts to normalise the high voter increases across the state, implying that if it happened in opposition-won seats, it cannot be deemed manipulative solely for his constituency.

However, Fadnavis notably *recused himself from commenting on the Newslaundry report [June 23, 2025]*<sup>32</sup> which meticulously detailed the procedural lapses and BLO admissions. This selective response weakens his overall defense, as it fails to address the core allegations of compromised verification processes and the presence of unverified or improperly registered voters, irrespective of which party benefited in other constituencies. The existence of anomalies across multiple constituencies does not negate the problem; rather, it suggests a potentially widespread systemic issue that the ECI is failing to address or investigate.

### Analysis of ECI's alleged misconduct and electoral mismatch

The situation in Nagpur South West, viewed within the broader context of Maharashtra's Assembly elections, presents a compelling case for a critical examination of the ECI's conduct and the underlying systemic vulnerabilities.

- **Systemic Failure of Verification:** The consistent failure of BLOs, supervisors, and higher-level officials to conduct mandated field verifications, especially when thresholds are breached, points to a profound systemic failure. Whether due to lack of resources, overwhelming workload, or deliberate dereliction of duty, this lapse undermines the very foundation of an accurate electoral roll.
- **Lack of Accountability:** The ECI's initial outright denial, followed by a vague justification of "natural growth" and an invitation for a meeting, demonstrates a lack of transparent accountability. The inability to produce documented findings from mandated senior-level field verifications is deeply troubling.
- **The "Blank Address" Problem:** The presence of thousands of voters without verifiable addresses is a critical flaw that opens avenues for bogus voting. The ECI's explanation – that these are "temporarily residing" individuals – is insufficient given the explicit requirement for proof of residence and field verification for even homeless voters. This loophole needs urgent rectification and rigorous auditing.
- **Allegations of Targeted Manipulation:** While Fadnavis rightly points to similar increases in other constituencies, the sheer magnitude and the specific procedural irregularities unearthed in his seat warrant a focused investigation. The disproportionate increase in voters in a Chief Minister's stronghold, coupled with alleged unverified additions and the ECI's lax oversight, feeds into the narrative of targeted electoral roll manipulation.
- **Erosion of Public Trust:** The ECI's reluctance to provide machine-readable digital voter rolls and CCTV footage, alongside these documented discrepancies, significantly erodes public trust. When an electoral body appears to shield information and dismiss credible reports of

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.newslaundry.com/2025/06/23/in-6-months-fadnavis-seat-added-29219-voters-poll-staff-claim-lapses>

irregularities without thorough, transparent investigation, it invites accusations of complicity and undermines the democratic process itself.

However, it must be stated that, the voter roll anomalies in Nagpur South West are not isolated incidents but symptomatic of deeper systemic issues within the ECI's voter registration and verification processes. The ECI's response, characterized by defensive statements and a lack of substantive action to address the irregularities, contributes to the growing perception of a compromised electoral system. For a comprehensive election manipulation report, these findings underscore the urgent need for radical reforms in voter roll management, robust independent auditing, and unreserved transparency from the ECI to restore public faith in the sanctity of India's elections.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Sources

1. [In 6 months, Fadnavis seat added 29,219 voters. Poll staff claim lapses; https://www.newslaundry.com/2025/06/23/in-6-months-fadnavis-seat-added-29219-voters-poll-staff-claim-lapses](https://www.newslaundry.com/2025/06/23/in-6-months-fadnavis-seat-added-29219-voters-poll-staff-claim-lapses)
2. <https://x.com/RahulGandhi/status/1937395692621750346>
3. [https://x.com/Dev\\_Fadnavis/status/1937500344067801515](https://x.com/Dev_Fadnavis/status/1937500344067801515)

## XV

### **Fadnavis's Factual Fumbles: Discrepancies Cloud Maharashtra Election Data<sup>34</sup>**

A political storm was freshly unleashed in early June 2025 (June 7) when in a multi-edition article, Leader of the Opposition (LoP), Rahul Gandhi levelled a series of allegations against mass additions of voters in Maharashtra in which he also therefore questioned the robustness of the electoral roll and the integrity of the superintendence and free and fair conduct of the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha election of November 2024.<sup>35</sup> The ECI, instead of responding with details, appeared to sub-contract the responses to leading functionaries of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) including Maharashtra chief minister, Devendra Fadnavis among others.<sup>36</sup>

Devendra Fadnavis appeared to be navigating a treacherous labyrinth of statistics, presenting figures that, upon closer inspection, diverge significantly from the Election Commission of India's (ECI) own official records. His attempts to dismiss allegations of voter roll manipulation by selectively quoting and misrepresenting data have only intensified citizens' scrutiny, suggesting a deliberate obfuscation rather than a factual rebuttal. This critical analysis forms a pivotal chapter in our comprehensive election manipulation report, exposing the disconcerting discrepancies and raising leading questions about the integrity of the Maharashtra Assembly Election.

#### **The unreliable numbers: Fadnavis's voter data discrepancies**

Fadnavis's assertions regarding historical voter increases in Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections, as reported on June 8, 2025, do not align with publicly available ECI statistical reports.

- Lok Sabha Voter Increases:
  - Fadnavis claims **63 lakh new voters** were added between 2014-2019 Lok Sabha elections, whereas official ECI figures show an increase of approximately **93.75 lakh**.
  - For 2009-2014, he quoted 75 lakh, while ECI records indicate around 63 lakh new voters.
  - While his figure of "one crore" for 2004-2009 is approximately correct, the exact ECI figure is closer to 99.42 lakh.
  - For the 2019-2024 period, Fadnavis quoted a figure of 44 lakh, when ECI data suggests around 40.80 lakh new voters.

<sup>34</sup> <https://votefordemocracy.org.in/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/rahul-gandhi-writes-match-fixing-maharashtra-10052638/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/rahul-gandhi-maharashtra-election-commission-10053941/>

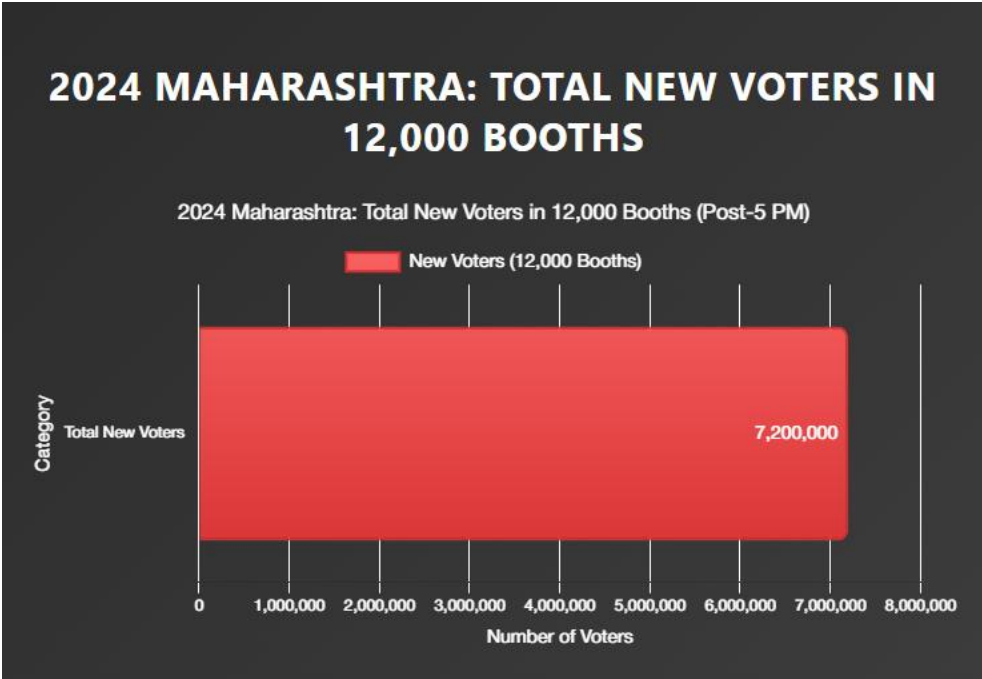
- Vidhan Sabha Voter Increases (from preceding Lok Sabha):
  - Fadnavis's figures for Vidhan Sabha voter increases (from the preceding Lok Sabha elections) also deviate from ECI official statistical reports:
    - 2004: His figure of 29.23 lakh is close to the ECI's 29.53 lakh.
    - 2009: His figure of 28.57 lakh is lower than ECI's 30.14 lakh.
    - 2014: His figure of 31.47 lakh is higher than ECI's 27.29 lakh.
    - 2019: His figure of 11.61 lakh matches the ECI.
    - 2024: His figure of 39.63 lakh is slightly lower than the ECI's 40.80 lakh.

Such consistent inaccuracies in presenting historical data, particularly when attempting to normalise recent anomalies, raise serious concerns about whether Fadnavis is genuinely using official records or selectively manipulating figures to fit a narrative.

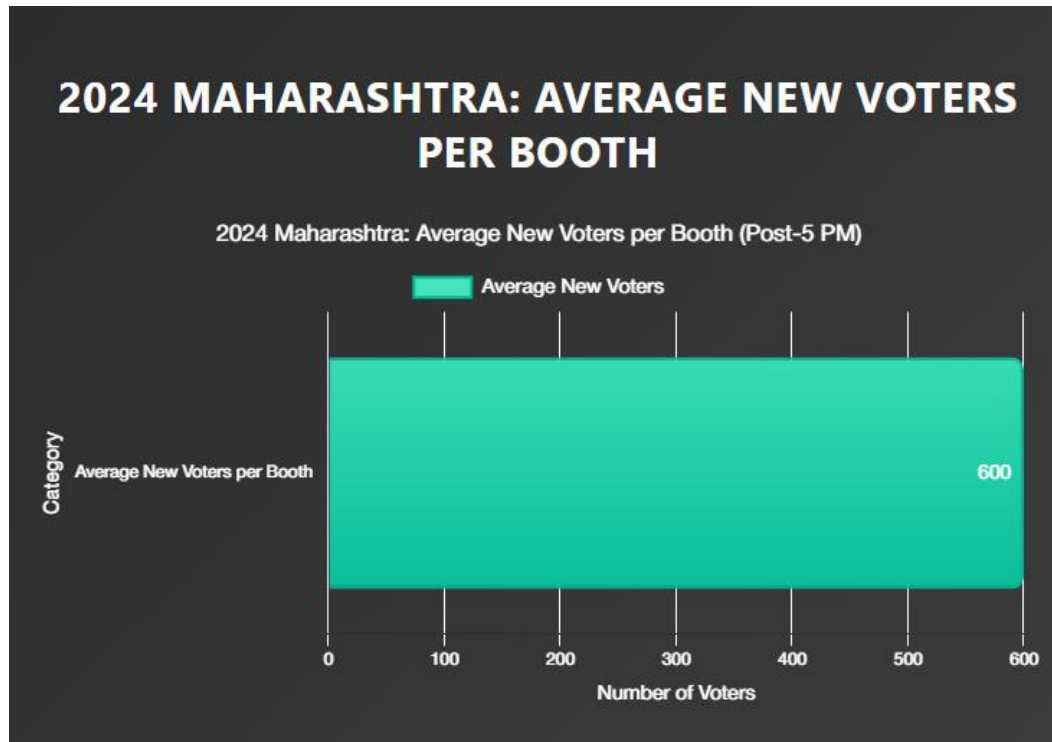
### The mystery of the last-hour vote surge: unanswered questions

Fadnavis attempted to explain the unusual surge in voter turnout during the last hour of polling by citing an increase from 5.82 percent per hour to 7.83 percent per hour, a 2 percent hike equivalent to 65.97 lakh votes. He then extrapolated this figure to mean around 65 votes per hour per booth. While mathematically plausible at a glance, his subsequent assertions about the ECI's data release practices are deeply misleading and demand immediate clarification from the poll body.

Graph 10 - 2024 Maharashtra: Average New Voters per Booth (12000 Booths)



Graph 11 - 2024 Maharashtra: Average New Voters per Booth

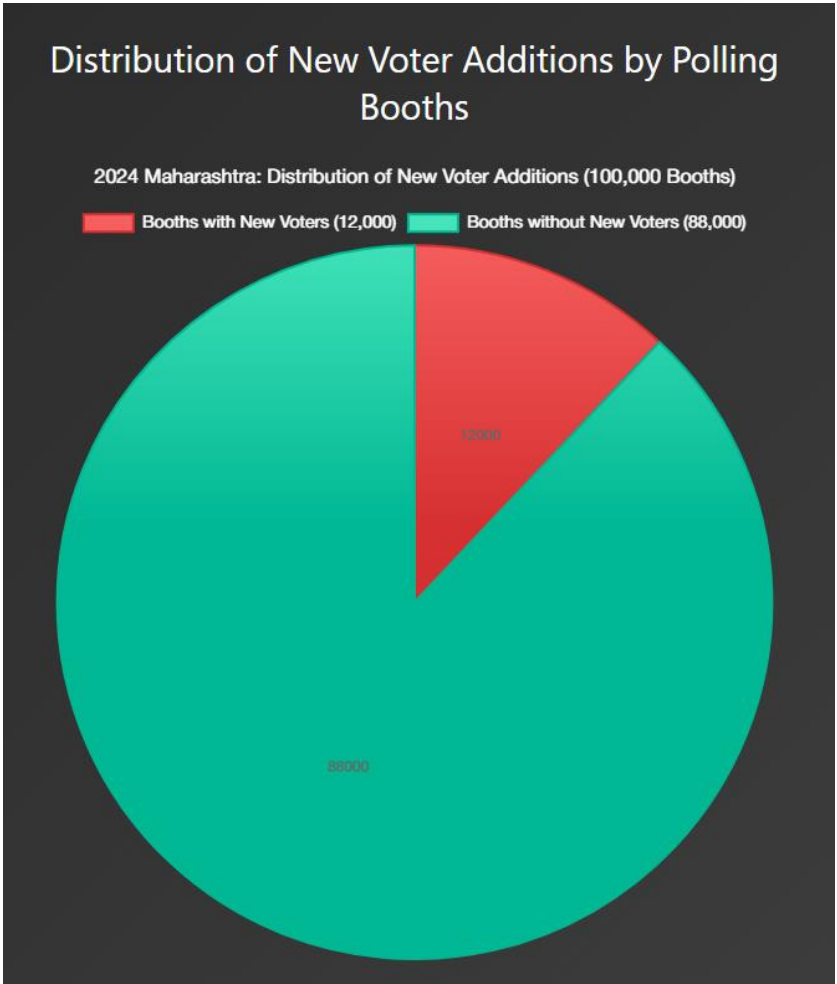


- Discrepant Data Release Timelines:** Fadnavis highlighted that the 5 p.m. voter turnout figure was uploaded by the ECI at 6:14 p.m., yet the 6 PM figure was delayed until 11:45 PM (uploaded at 11:53 PM). The critical question he fails to address is *why* this delay occurred, especially when it coincides with the period of the alleged voter surge. If the ECI could upload earlier figures promptly, what prevented it from doing so for the crucial last hour, particularly when it directly impacts the transparency of final voter turnout?
- Selective Comparison with Jharkhand:** Fadnavis cited the simultaneous second phase of Jharkhand elections where the turnout increase between 5 p.m. and 11:45 p.m. was only 0.86 percent (where the NDA lost the election), suggesting that a high last-hour surge is not inherently suspicious if it also happens in opposition-won seats. However, this comparison is flawed. The issue isn't merely the "increase" but the *absence of transparency and explanation* for the sudden, disproportionate surge in specific constituencies. The lack of a similar phenomenon in Jharkhand does not negate the need for accountability in Maharashtra.
- Fabricated ECI Figures:** Most critically, Fadnavis is factually incorrect on multiple counts regarding ECI's voter turnout releases:
  - No State-wise 5 p.m. figure:** Fadnavis quoted a 5 p.m. figure for Maharashtra in Lok Sabha 2024 Phase 2. The ECI *never* released a state-wise voter turnout figures on the day of polling for the Lok Sabha elections. The ECI only published an aggregated 60.96 percent for *all* PCs taken together, and its first release was for 7 p.m. or later.
  - Unreleased Post-6 PM Data:** Fadnavis quoted a specific figure of 1,770,867 votes polled after 6 p.m. The ECI has *never* officially released any such figure. If Fadnavis

possesses this unreleased data, it speaks volumes about an alarming proximity to undeclared official information, raising grave concerns about information asymmetry and potential insider access.

- Inflated Booth Figures: Fadnavis's figure of "1.427 lakh" polling booths is an unsubstantiated creation, as the actual number of polling booths in Maharashtra is 100,186. Such a significant exaggeration of basic electoral infrastructure further undermines his credibility.

Graph 12 - Distribution of New Voter Additions by Polling Booths



ECI's Omission and Fadnavis's silence: a deeper concern

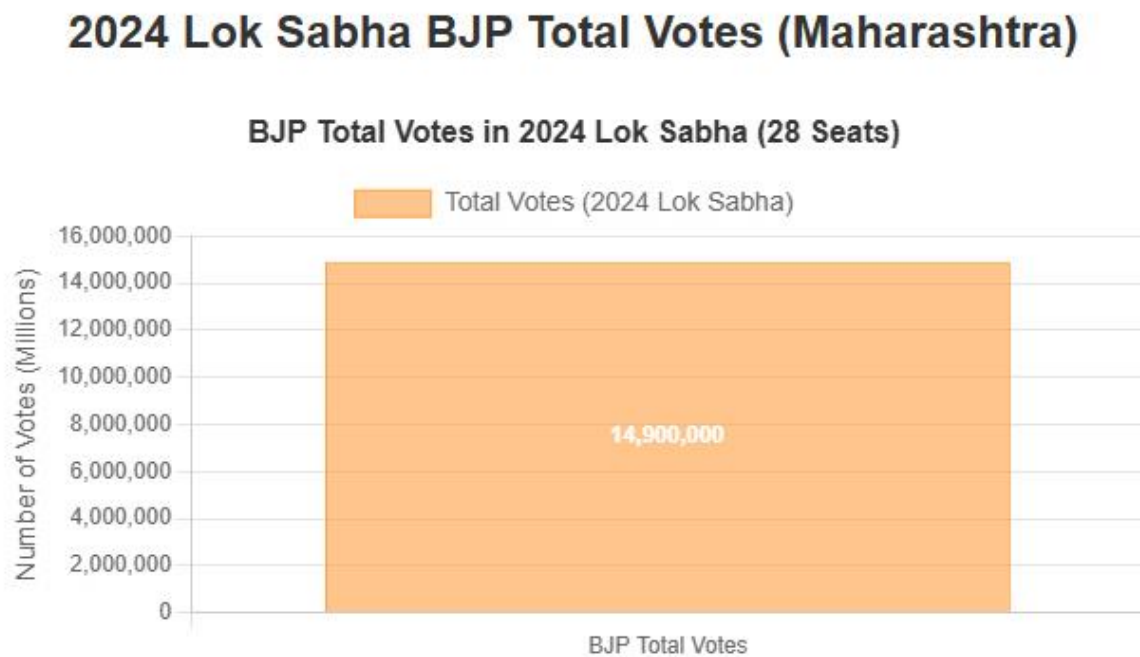
Beyond the numerical discrepancies, two crucial issues remain unaddressed by Fadnavis, pointing to a potentially more insidious aspect of electoral manipulation:

- **Voters Exceeding Adult Population:** Fadnavis has maintained a conspicuous silence on the allegation that the total number of voters in Maharashtra exceeds the total adult population

(18 years and above). If true, this points to a fundamental flaw in the electoral roll, potentially indicating a large number of "bogus voters."

- **Discrepancy in Young Voter Figures:** Fadnavis quoted 2,646,608 young voters, which is significantly higher than the ECI's official figure of 22.21 lakh as on November 20, 2024, per ECI Press Note No. ECI/PN/163/2024. This discrepancy, if not explained, suggests an inflated count in a demographic group often targeted for new registrations.

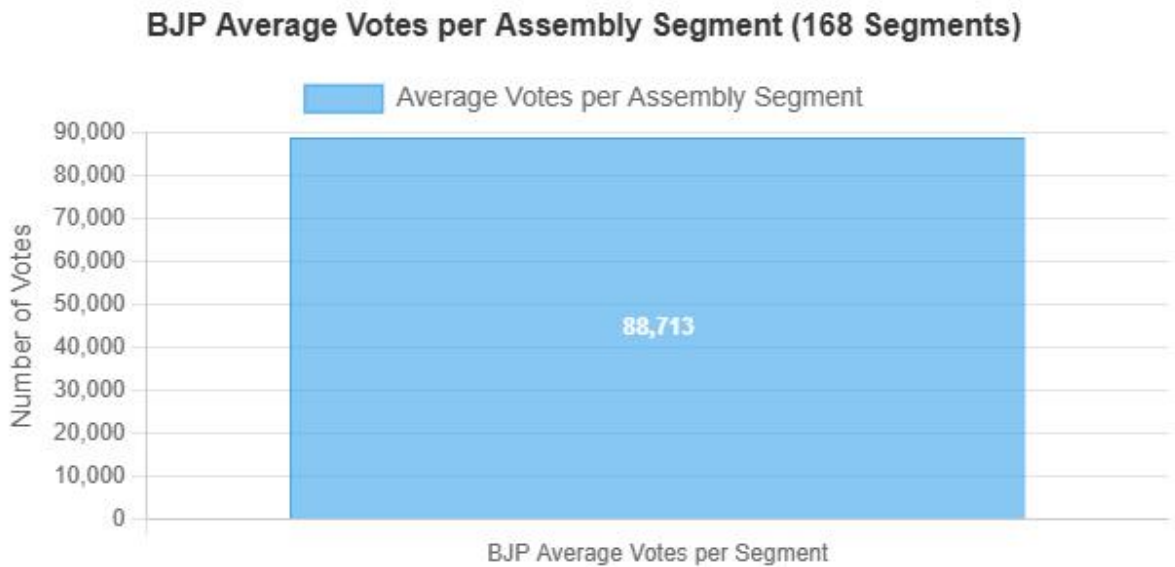
Graph 13 - 2024 Lok Sabha BJP Total Votes Maharashtra





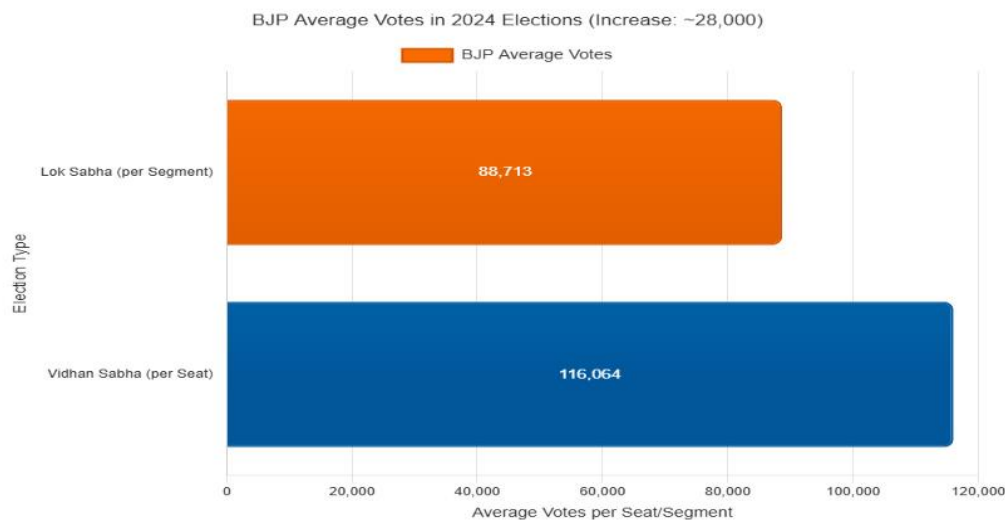
Graph 14 - 2024 Lok Sabha BJP Total Votes (Maharashtra, Assembly Segment)

## 2024 Lok Sabha BJP Average Votes per Assembly Segment



Graph 15 - 2024 BJP Average Votes Per Seats: Lok Sabha Vs Vidhan Sabha

## 2024 BJP AVERAGE VOTES PER SEAT: LOK SABHA VS VIDHAN SABHA



## A Crisis of Trust and Transparency

Devendra Fadnavis's defense against allegations of electoral manipulation is severely undermined by his reliance on figures that contradict official ECI records and his silence on critical structural anomalies. His attempt to normalise disproportionate voter increases and last-hour surges by selective comparisons, while avoiding the direct issues of procedural lapses by BLOs and the presence of thousands of voters without verifiable addresses, is deeply troubling.

The ECI's own opaqueness, its delayed release of crucial turnout data, and its alleged failure to maintain clear and verifiable records, only compound the suspicions. For a comprehensive report on election manipulation, the situation in Maharashtra, particularly the detailed discrepancies surrounding Devendra Fadnavis's constituency, serves as a stark example of how official data can be obscured or misrepresented, eroding public faith in the democratic process. The onus remains on the Election Commission to provide transparent, verifiable data and credible explanations, or face an irreversible loss of legitimacy.

## XVI

### **When villagers of Markadwadi [Malshiras AC] demanded fresh by-election by ballot papers**

As discussed on November 23, 2024, the results of the Maharashtra state assembly elections, encompassing 288 constituencies across 36 districts, were declared. The unexpected sweep by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) immediately ignited a firestorm of controversy, with local and social media abuzz with allegations of "manipulation." This pervasive dissatisfaction with the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) counting process found a particularly potent expression in the small village of Markadwadi, located in Malshiras taluka, Solapur district.

#### **The shocking case of Markadwadi**

A profound sense of disbelief and anger gripped<sup>37</sup> the villagers of Markadwadi following the declaration of the Malshiras seat's outcome. While Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) (NCP (SP)) candidate Uttamrao Jankar secured the seat with a margin of 13,147 votes, the voting numbers from their own village booth were met with utter astonishment. Jankar, a historically strong favourite in the area, received a mere 843 votes, while BJP's Ram Satpute surprisingly garnered 1,003 votes. This outcome was widely deemed implausible by the villagers, who pointed to their unwavering historical support for Jankar.

Markadwadi, with a population of approximately 2,000, saw 1,900 of its residents cast their votes in the assembly elections. The villagers vehemently argued that the booth-level results defied logic. Satpute, they contended, had consistently polled only 200-300 votes in their village in previous elections, making his sudden lead an inexplicable anomaly. The local sentiment was clear: the numbers did not reflect the will of Markadwadi.

#### **A call for a "Repoll": the mock ballot initiative**

As an unequivocal expression of their dissatisfaction and deep-seated disbelief in the official results, a determined group of Markadwadi villagers resolved to take a stand against the EVM voting system. They conceived an audacious plan: an unofficial mock-poll using traditional paper ballots, scheduled for December 3. This audacious initiative aimed to independently verify the election outcome, demonstrating what they believed to be the true voting patterns of their community.

The villagers meticulously set up five makeshift booths and replicated official electoral rolls, even including the exact candidates and party symbols. This period, from November 23 to December 3, was particularly sensitive in Maharashtra, as no stable government was in place; the outgoing Chief Minister, Eknath Shinde, was merely heading a caretaker administration under the governor's directive.

<sup>37</sup> [EVM row: Winning MLA from Malshiras \(Markadwadi\) issues ultimatum to ECI, demands elections by ballot papers | SabrangIndia](#)

## The state's heavy hand: curfew and criminal charges

The villagers' resolve to conduct their "repoll" quickly drew the attention and stern disapproval of the state authorities. In a swift and decisive response, a large police contingent descended upon Markadwadi on December 3, imposing a curfew and effectively quashing the planned mock-poll. The situation escalated dramatically, culminating in the filing of criminal cases against approximately 200 villagers, a clear sign of the administration's determination to suppress any challenge to the official election results.

Despite initial preparations and widespread enthusiasm, the overwhelming show of force from the police and district administration ultimately compelled the villagers to abandon their re-poll plan.

## Irony and the Law: Paper Ballots vs. EVMs

The Markadwadi incident brought into sharp focus a significant legal irony within India's electoral framework. Section 59 of the Representation of Peoples Act explicitly recognises paper ballots as the legal voting system in India. Conversely, EVM voting is considered illegal unless a specific speaking order is passed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) under Section 61A of the Act, providing justification for its use in each constituency. This legal disparity led many to question whether the Supreme Court judges, in their rulings concerning EVMs, had adequately considered the foundational legal text.

## FIRs and allegations: the aftermath

The unrest in Markadwadi quickly translated into legal repercussions. On December 4, 2024, the Solapur Rural police filed a First Information Report (FIR) against the newly elected NCP (SP) MLA, Uttam Jankar, and approximately 200 others. The charges stemmed from their alleged breach of prohibitory orders issued under section 163. This action followed the district administration's formal cancellation of the planned re-polling exercise, which was explicitly designed to challenge the November 20 election's EVM results. Despite the administration's denial of permission, MVA (Maha Vikas Aghadi) supporters, led by Jankar, had initially intended to proceed with the ballot voting.

Anticipating potential unrest, district authorities had proactively imposed prohibitory orders and deployed a significant police presence in Markadwadi. Jankar, who had defeated BJP's Ram Satpute in Malshiras, was present to lend his support to the mock polling initiative. While MVA supporters had set up a pandal and made necessary arrangements, police engaged in multiple meetings with villagers and Jankar to persuade them to call off the event.

Jankar subsequently alleged that the police had used pressure tactics, threatening to seize materials and initiate legal action, to compel the villagers to cancel the poll. He maintained that the villagers had organized the exercise peacefully and vowed to continue their fight for justice, including a protest march against alleged EVM manipulation.

BJP's Satpute, meanwhile, dismissed the event as a "drama" orchestrated by Jankar, accusing him of propagating a false narrative against EVMs. Satpute also claimed that Jankar, with the purported backing of BJP MLC Ranjeetsinh Mohite Patil, had intimidated villagers who opposed the mock polling.

In response to the police charges, Jankar was quoted by the Hindustan Times stating, *"We have a right to know the truth of voting. We are not technical experts, so we wanted to conduct a ballot-paper re-poll. Is there any democracy left in this country? When we want to speak up, who will give us justice? If no one listens to the people's voice, it will lead to chaos in the country."*

### **NCP (SP) MLA Uttam Rao Jankar issued ultimatum to ECI<sup>38</sup>**

In an unprecedented move to directly confront the perceived flaws in India's Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) system, Uttamrao Jankar, the sitting NCP (SP) MLA from the 254-Malshiras Assembly Constituency, had also issued a bold ultimatum to the Election Commission of India (ECI). Demonstrating his profound commitment to electoral transparency, Jankar had demanded a fresh by-election in his constituency, to be conducted exclusively using traditional paper ballots. As irrefutable evidence of alleged EVM manipulation, he has submitted a sample of 1,300 legally sworn affidavits from voters who claim to have cast their ballots for him, part of a much larger collection of approximately 1,76,000 notarised affidavits. Jankar's audacious offer to resign from his MLA post if the ECI accedes to his demand underscores the gravity of his conviction that the official EVM results do not accurately reflect the will of his constituents, asserting that he received fewer votes than cast for him in every village.

With the ECI having seemingly declined a direct meeting on January 23, 2025, Jankar, alongside former Justice Kolse Patil and Advocate Mehmood Pracha, under the banner of "Mission Save Constitution," had scheduled a crucial press conference for January 24, 2025, at the Press Club of India in New Delhi. Justice Patil had passionately articulated the movement's objective: to provide concrete evidence to the ECI, arguing that even a winning candidate like Jankar recognises the systemic issues with EVMs, and to expose what they perceive as deliberate obfuscation by authorities.

<sup>38</sup> [EVM row: Winning MLA from Malshiras \(Markadwadi\) issues ultimatum to ECI, demands elections by ballot papers | SabrangIndia](#)

## XVII

### Changing Parametres for Reporting of Data: ECI

ECI is refusing to share public documents mandated towards transparency, nor video recordings to the public. Over past months, the ECI has also been guilty of alteration of timings of the declaration of the first set of poll data:

- at the end of scheduled closing time
- and at the end of the close of the poll
- the same is obvious from the following table below

**Table 12 - Time given in the First Press Release by the ECI of Voter Turnout on the day of polling in various phases of the Lok Sabha and Assembly Polls in Haryana, J&K, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and NCR Delhi**

Time given in the First Press Release by the ECI of Voter Turnout on the day of polling in various phases of the Lok Sabha and Assembly Polls in Haryana, J and K, Maharashtra, Jharkand and NCR Delhi

Poll	Phase	Time	Date
Lok Sabha 2024	1	7.00 p.m.	19.04.2024
	2	7.00 p.m.	26.04.2024
	3	8.00 p.m.	07.05.2024
	4	8.00 p.m.	13.05.2024
	5	7.45 p.m.	20.05.2024
	6	7.45 p.m.	25.05.2024
	7	8.45 p.m.	01.06.2024
J & K	1	7.30 p.m.	18.09.2024
	2	7.00 p.m.	25.09.2024
	3	7.00 p.m.	01.10.2024
Haryana Assembly		7.00 p.m.	05.10.2024
Jharkhand	1	5.00 p.m.	13.11.2024
	2	5.00 p.m.	20.11.2024
Maharashtra		5.00 p.m.	20.11.2024
NCT Delhi		5.00 p.m.	05.02.2025

**Table 13 - Second Press Release by the ECI of Voter Turnout on the day of polling in various phases of the Lok Sabha and Assembly Polls in Haryana, J and K, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and NCR Delhi**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Press Release** by the ECI of Voter Turnout on the day of polling in various phases of the Lok Sabha and Assembly Polls in Haryana, J and K, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and NCR Delhi.

Poll	Phase	Time	Date
Lok Sabha 2024	1	7.53 p.m.	30.04.2024
DO	2	7.53 p.m.	30.04.2024
DO	3	11.40 p.m.	07.05.2024
DO	4	11.45 p.m.	13.05.2024
DO	5	11.30 p.m.	20.05.2024*  (Released at 12.03 a.m. on 21.05.2-24)
DO	6	11.45 p.m.	25.05.2024
DO	7	11.45 p.m.	01.06.2024
J & K	1	11.30 p.m.	18.09.2024
DO	2	11.45 p.m.	25.09.2024
DO	3	11.45 p.m.	01.10.2024
Haryana Assembly		11.45 p.m.	05.10.2024
Jharkhand	1	11.30 p.m.	13.11.2024
DO	2	11.30 p.m.	20.11.2024
Maharashtra		11.30 p.m.	20.11.2024
NCT Delhi		11.30 p.m.	05.01.2025

**Table 14 - Third and or Fourth Press Releases by the ECI of Voter Turnout on the day of polling in Various Phases of the Lok Sabha and Assembly Polls in Haryana, J&K, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and NCR Delhi**

Third and or Fourth Press Releases by the ECI of Voter Turnout on the day of polling in Various Phases of the Lok Sabha and Assembly Polls in Haryana, J and K, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and NCR Delhi.

Poll	Phase	Time	Date	4 <sup>TH</sup> Time	Date
Lok Sabha 2024	1	4.03 p.m.	25.05.2024	-	-
	2	4.03 p.m.	25.05.2024	-	-
	3	10.00 p.m. 03.44 p.m.	08.05.2024 & 11.05.2024	4.03 p.m.	25.05.2024
	4	3.57 p.m.	17.05.2024	4.03 p.m.	25.05.2024
	5	2.15 p.m.	23.05.2024	4.03PM	25.05.2024
	6	6.08 p.m.	28.05.2024	-	-
	7	4.18 p.m.	06.06.2024	-	-
J & K	1	4.57 p.m.	20.09.2024		
	2	12.58 p.m.	27.09.2024		
	3	5.19 p.m.	03.10.2024		
Haryana Assembly		6.39 p.m.	07.10.2024		
Jharkhand	1	4.11 p.m.	15.11.2024		
Jharkhand	2	-	-		
Maharashtra			23.11.2024  (CEO Released on 22.11.2024)		
NCT Delhi					



**Table 15 - Days for final announcement of Voter turnout and/or absolute numbers**

**Days for final announcement of Voter turnout and/or absolute numbers**

Poll	Phase	Days	Date	Absolute Numbers Days	Date
Lok Sabha 2024	1	11	30.04.2024	36	25.05.2024
	2	4	30.04.2024	29	25.05.2024
	3	1&4	08.05.2024 & 11.05.2024	18	25.05.2024
	4	3	17.05.2024	12	25.05.2024
	5	4	23.05.2024	5	25.05.2024
	6	3	28.05.2024	3	28.05.2024
	7	5	06.06.2024	5	06.06.2024
J & K	1	2	20.05.2024		
	2	2	27.09.2024		
	3	2	03.10.2024		
Haryana Assembly		2	07.10.2024		
Jharkhand	1	2	15.10.2024		
Jharkhand	2	-	20.10.2024		
Maharashtra		2	22.11.2024		
NCT Delhi		-	05.02.2025		

This shifting and changing data from the ECI in the absence of absolute voting figures raises more questions than it answers.

## XVIII

### Discrepancy in ECI Data of Electors registered in Maharashtra & Delhi

Table 16 - Discrepancy in ECI Data of Electors registered in Maharashtra

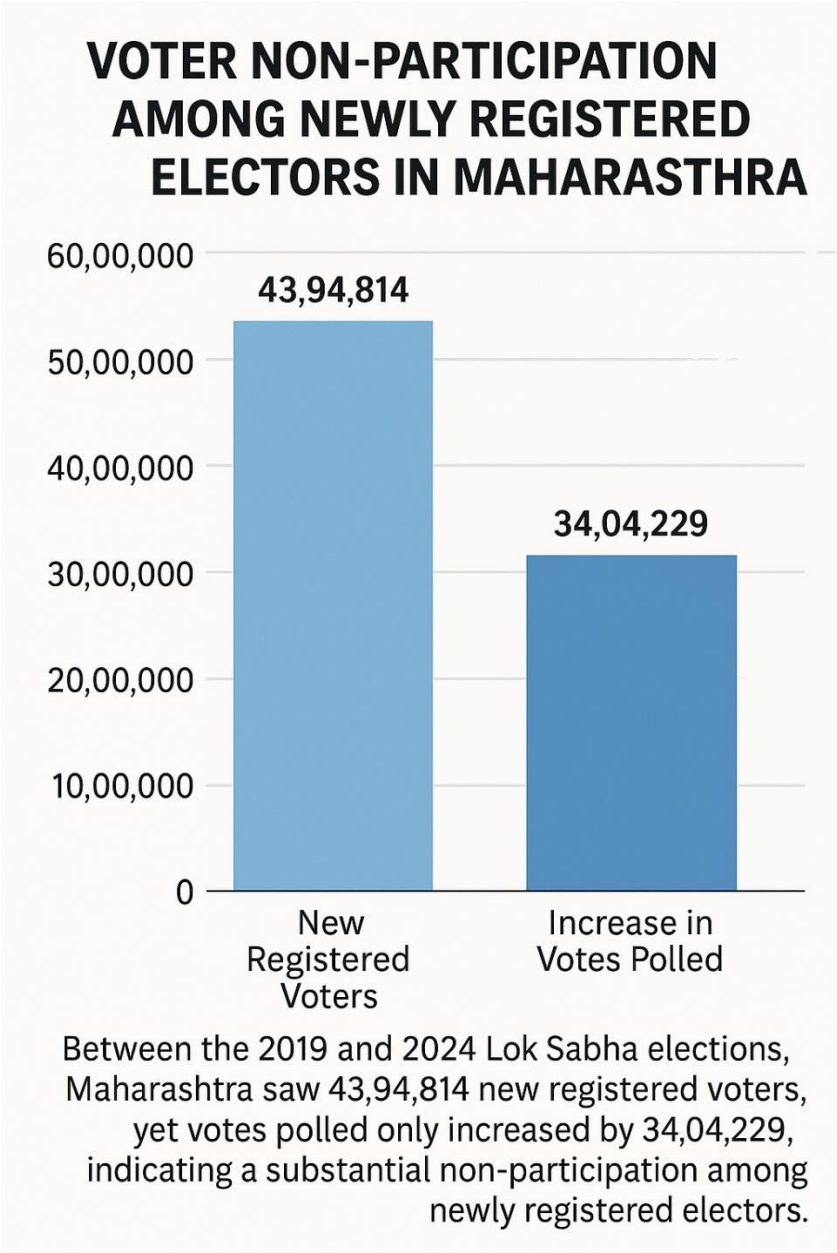
#### Maharashtra

YEAR	ELECTOR S LOK SABHA	ELECTORS ASSEMBLY	NEW VOTERS REGISTERED	VOTES POLLED LOK SABHA EVM	VOTES POLLED ASSEMBLY EVM
2019	8,86,76,946[A1]  8,85,64,748 [As per CEO]	8,98,38,267[A2] ]	11,61,321	5,35,65,479  5,38,38,394 <sup>39</sup>	5,44,07,795  5,48,73,158 as per detailed results [A3]  5,48,73,158 as per detailed results [A3]
2024	9,30,61,660  (CEO, Maharashtra 12.12.2024)	9,70,25,119[A4] ]	39,63,459	5,69,69,708  5,70,09,173 <sup>40</sup> (State Wise Turnout LS 2024)	6,40,85,091  [6,40,88,195 As per End of Poll VTR][A5]  CEO, Maharashtra
New Votes In 5 years	43,84,714  43,84,714	71,86,852		34,04,229 31,70,779	96,77,296 92,15,037

<sup>39</sup> <https://hindi.eci.gov.in/files/file/10091-13-pc-wise-voters-turn-out/?do=download&r=24791&confirm=1&t=1&csrfKey=6f7a25965443d330fccddf67819dd78c>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/general-election-to-loksabha-2024-statistical-reports>

Graph 16 - Voter No-Participation among Newly Registered Electors in Maharashtra



**Table 17 - Discrepancy in ECI Data of Electors registered in Delhi**

**NCT Delhi**

Year	Electors	Male	Female	TD	Total	
2020 [Electors Data Summary]		81,15,483	66,81,638	869	1,47,97,790[A6]	
22.01.2024					1,47,18,119[A7] [A8]	
LOK SABHA					1,52,24,638	25.05.24
<b>ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2025</b>						
07.01.2025	Election Notification				1,55,37,634	07.01.25[A9]
17.01.2025					1,56,14,000	17.01.25[A10]

Table 18 - Source

Source
[A1] <u>13 - PC WISE VOTERS TURN OUT</u>
[A2] <a href="https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/11699-maharashtra-legislative-assembly-election-2019/?do=download&amp;r=31591&amp;confirm=1&amp;t=1&amp;csrfKey=ddc4d6cc347cf2cb05fc5fa7bf8d30b6">https://old.eci.gov.in/files/file/11699-maharashtra-legislative-assembly-election-2019/?do=download&amp;r=31591&amp;confirm=1&amp;t=1&amp;csrfKey=ddc4d6cc347cf2cb05fc5fa7bf8d30b6</a>
[A3] <u>DETAILED RESULTS</u>
[A4] <u>Electors count as on 30-10-2024</u>
[A6] <a href="https://hindi.eci.gov.in/files/file/10850-%E0%A4%A6%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%B2%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B2%E0%A5%80-%E0%A4%B5%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%A7%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%A8%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%AD%E0%A4%BE-%E0%A4%A8%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%B0%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B5%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%9A%E0%A4%A8-%E0%A4%95%E0%A4%BE-%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%82%E0%A4%96%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%AF%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%95%E0%A5%80%E0%A4%AF-%E0%A4%A1%E0%A5%87%E0%A4%9F%E0%A4%BE-2020/?do=download&amp;r=26071&amp;confirm=1&amp;t=1&amp;csrfKey=73463c1e9f9ec76d1a196c1f131ff681">https://hindi.eci.gov.in/files/file/10850-%E0%A4%A6%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%B2%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B2%E0%A5%80-%E0%A4%B5%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%A7%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%A8%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%AD%E0%A4%BE-%E0%A4%A8%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%B0%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%B5%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%9A%E0%A4%A8-%E0%A4%95%E0%A4%BE-%E0%A4%B8%E0%A4%BE%E0%A4%82%E0%A4%96%E0%A5%8D%E0%A4%AF%E0%A4%BF%E0%A4%95%E0%A5%80%E0%A4%AF-%E0%A4%A1%E0%A5%87%E0%A4%9F%E0%A4%BE-2020/?do=download&amp;r=26071&amp;confirm=1&amp;t=1&amp;csrfKey=73463c1e9f9ec76d1a196c1f131ff681</a>
[A7] <u>Parliamentary And Assembly Constituency Wise No. of Electors as on 22.01.2024</u>
[A8] <a href="https://ceodelhi.gov.in/PDFFolder/CEO_PR_22_01_2024_CEO.pdf">https://ceodelhi.gov.in/PDFFolder/CEO_PR_22_01_2024_CEO.pdf</a>
[A9] <a href="https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJp1KivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzGjJMI0%2FjETs7fjrM8lYn4mJFS24%2B6KLdZH117RiuKqEGtRcBKH%2B4ACCxImmH6o%2BYO4jyvJqQIR5ZMChqCiQwfQ%3D%3D">https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJp1KivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzGjJMI0%2FjETs7fjrM8lYn4mJFS24%2B6KLdZH117RiuKqEGtRcBKH%2B4ACCxImmH6o%2BYO4jyvJqQIR5ZMChqCiQwfQ%3D%3D</a>
[A10] <u>District And Assembly Constituency wise No. of Electors as on 17.1.2025</u>

## XIX

### Hike in Voter Turnout Data Repeatedly By ECI by 5-6% In First Two Phases Of Lok Sabha Elections 2024

In the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, the VFD Report: “Conduct of Lok Sabha Elections 2024 [Analysis of ‘Vote Manipulation’ and ‘Misconduct during Voting and Counting],” released on July 22, 2024, meticulously details significant discrepancies and a concerning lack of transparency in the voter turnout data provided by the Election Commission of India (ECI), particularly evident in the first two phases. Specifically, from page no. 65 to 69 of Chapter 3 (Voting Process) of the Report, VFD's statistical and factual analysis highlights alarming trends: for instance, in Phase 1, covering 102 seats across 21 states/UTs on April 19, the ECI's initial press release at 7 PM reported a turnout **"above 60%"**; however, when the final figures were eventually released on April 30—a substantial eleven days later, contravening the ECI's own stated commitment to release data by the next day from Form 17A—this percentage inexplicably jumped to **66.14%**, with no explanation for the hike or the prolonged delay, and without adhering to the age-old practice of providing constituency-wise final figures the next day.

Similarly, Phase 2, held on April 26 for 88 seats across 13 states/UTs, saw an initial tentative turnout of **60.96%** at 7 PM, but the final data, released four days later on April 30, indicated a **66.71%** turnout—an increase of approximately **6%**, notably without state-wise data as initially provided for Phase 1. This pattern of increased turnout, particularly in Phase 2, is argued by the VFD report to have sharply benefited the NDA/BJP in numerous states, including West Bengal (3/3), Uttar Pradesh (8/8), Madhya Pradesh (6/6), Chhattisgarh (3/3), Tripura (1/1), Jammu and Kashmir (1/1), Karnataka (12/14), Rajasthan (10/13), and Assam (4/5), a trend not consistently observed in the other six phases or in the same states in subsequent phases, with the unique case of Kerala in Phase 2 where the BJP secured one seat, placed second in another, and third in 14 out of 20 seats, strongly suggesting a clear manipulation of data.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> <https://votefordemocracy.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FINAL-VFD-Report-July-30-2024.pdf>

## XX

### Findings

#### A. ECI is trying to explain the procedure rather than clarify issues on facts

The Commission has consistently adopted a questionable and unrealistic approach since Lok Sabha Election – 2024 as when addressing allegations of malpractice and manipulation raised by candidates or electors, particularly during critical moments such as polling day or counting day. Instead of directly addressing the specific facts of the grievances, the ECI often resorts to explaining the procedure, which does little to address the real concerns of the parties involved. This mechanical response casts doubt on the ECI's intent to ensure transparency and fairness in the election process.

Equally troubling is the lack of action from the Returning Officer, who is the designated authority to take cognizance of any alleged irregularities or malpractice. Despite numerous media reports and complaints from losing candidates, alleging misconduct and manipulation by the Returning Officer, the officer remains a passive participant in the process, failing to investigate or take corrective measures. This passivity is particularly concerning as the Returning Officer is entrusted with upholding the integrity of the election and must act swiftly to address any violations or discrepancies.

Furthermore, when faced with accusations of malpractice, the ECI has habitually offered explanations in a procedural manner without providing genuine or satisfactory answers. These responses avoid addressing the substance of the allegations and give the impression that the Commission is more concerned with maintaining the procedural facade than with taking meaningful action to investigate and rectify the problems at poll day or counting day as such issues substantially affected the elections of the many candidates in arbitrary manner.

This pattern of behaviour raises significant questions about the ECI's role in safeguarding the election process, and whether it is truly fulfilling its duty to ensure fair and free elections. Immediate attention is required to ensure that grievances are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and resolved appropriately in accordance with provisions of RP Act, 1951.

## XXI

### B. On Voter Registration

**Under the guise of ‘giving chance to new voters,’ the Cut-off date has been revised from April 2024 four times last year i.e. in 2024: Maharashtra**

The revision of the cut-off date for voter registration from April 1 to four specific dates annually—January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1—raises questions regarding its reasonableness under existing legal provisions. The Representation of People Act, 1950, which governs the electoral process, provides clear guidelines about the "qualifying date" for voter registration.

Under Section 14 of the original Representation of People Act, 1950, the qualifying date for the preparation or revision of electoral rolls is traditionally defined as the 1st day of January in the year the electoral roll is prepared or revised. This legal provision ensures uniformity and fairness in voter eligibility across the country. Notably, the Act further allows the qualifying date to change, as seen in 1989, when it was revised to April 1 for that year. However, such a change was specific and not a recurring practice.

Section 15 of the Act outlines the procedure for the preparation and maintenance of electoral rolls, ensuring that the Election Commission supervises this process. The introduction of multiple qualifying dates—January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1—in December 2021—introduces flexibility in the electoral process, potentially offering more chances for new voters to register. Section 23 of the Act also allows individuals to apply for inclusion in the electoral roll, provided they meet the requirements. However, any changes to the electoral roll must cease after the last date for nominations, ensuring the integrity of the electoral process.

While the idea of offering multiple cut-off dates *is* beneficial for new voters, it is also important to consider whether such changes are in line with the original intent of the legal framework. The Election Commission should clarify whether the revised dates align with the spirit of the Representation of People Act, ensuring fairness and accuracy in the electoral roll without causing confusion or disruption to the election schedule. The justification for such frequent revisions needs careful consideration of the legal provisions and their long-term impact on the electoral process; the elections are affected from the unexplained surge in voter turnout in voting.

#### **B. (i) Lack of uniformity in deciding last date for making nominations in election notification**

The lack of uniformity in deciding the last date for making nominations in election notifications raises concerns, especially in light of allegations related to the addition of new voters at various stages of the election process. The different nomination deadlines in the Maharashtra State Assembly Elections of 2014, 2019, and 2024 reflect an inconsistency that could potentially lead to challenges in the transparency and fairness of the electoral process.



According to the Handbook for Returning Officer (HRO) 2023, after the final publication of electoral rolls, no suo-moto deletions are allowed, and deletions can only occur based on Form 7 or requests from the elector in Form 8. This restriction is put in place to prevent unauthorized modifications to the voter list, especially during an election year, when political manipulation could occur. However, the lack of uniformity in the nomination deadlines could undermine this effort.

### **The Impact of Voter Additions on the Electoral Process:**

The allegations regarding new voter additions often arise from the perception that the last date for nominations has been manipulated to allow last-minute changes to the voter rolls. In Sub-rule 1.7.3, additions to the electoral rolls continue until the last date for filing nominations, which creates a time frame during which citizens may still register to vote or make changes to their details. This extended period allows for new voter registrations but also opens the door to potential claims of vote manipulation through late additions, especially if the timeline is not consistent across elections.

For instance, in 2014, the last date for nominations was set as September 27, with the poll date scheduled for October 15—an 18-day gap. In 2019, the last date for nominations was set to October 4, with the election scheduled for October 21, giving only 17 days between the nomination deadline and the poll date. Meanwhile, in 2024, the last date for nominations was set as October 29, with the poll date scheduled for November 20, resulting in a 22-day gap between the nomination deadline and the election.

### **The Inconsistent Nomination Deadlines:**

The inconsistency in the nomination deadline across these elections raises questions about the fairness of the process. Each change in the timeline provides an opportunity for voters to be added or removed from the rolls in a manner that may not be transparent. Although the sub-rule 1.7.1 of the HRO ensures that deletions are only made based on forms submitted by voters and with consultations, the extended deadlines in 2024 raise concerns about whether such additions could be used to influence the outcome of the election.

The lack of uniformity in nomination deadlines could also cause confusion among voters and candidates, as different election years have varying periods between the nomination and election days. This inconsistency complicates the process of preparing accurate voter rolls and raises doubts about whether the electoral rolls are being maintained with sufficient oversight.

## Days between Nomination Deadlines and Poll Dates:

- 2014 Maharashtra Assembly Election:
  - Last Date for Nominations: September 27, 2014
  - Poll Date: October 15, 2014
  - Gap: 18 days
- 2019 Maharashtra Assembly Election:
  - Last Date for Nominations: October 4, 2019
  - Poll Date: October 21, 2019
  - Gap: 17 days
- 2024 Maharashtra Assembly Election:
  - Last Date for Nominations: October 29, 2024
  - Poll Date: November 20, 2024
  - Gap: 22 days

The difference in nomination deadlines—with the gap between nominations and poll date increasing from 17 days in 2019 to 22 days in 2024—suggests a shift in administrative scheduling. However, the lack of uniformity in these timelines raises serious concerns about the integrity of the voter roll process, especially when allegations of late voter additions are taken into account. While the longer period in 2024 might provide more time for additions, it also leaves room for potential manipulation in terms of voter registrations.

## XXII

### **C. ECI's Concealment or Withholding of Form 17C and 17A Data**

ECI has made out in the Supreme Court during the ADR's petition, in April 2024, that Form 17C cannot be uploaded because it may not be tampered and they don't have the scanners.

- The original Form 17C will be with the ECI. How can it be tampered?
- They have only to put up a soft copy of it.
- There is no need for scanners.
- The presiding officer, when the polls are closed, The PO can only take a click of Form 17C.

***Not only Form 17C, also Form 17A (after the close of poll), electors who refused to vote are to be recorded and ECI is duty bound to make it public.***

Not only is Form 17C important, but Form 17A, which records electors who refuse to vote after the polls close, must also be documented and made publicly available by the ECI. According to Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, if an elector decides not to vote after their electoral roll number has been entered in Form 17A, along with their signature or thumb impression, the presiding officer must note this refusal in the register. Furthermore, the elector's signature or thumb impression must be obtained next to this remark. The ECI is legally bound to ensure this information is publicly disclosed, as part of its duty to maintain transparency in the electoral process.

- *Is it truly necessary to have scanners to upload a soft copy of Form 17C, or can a simple digital copy suffice?*
- *Why can't the presiding officer take a digital photograph of Form 17C at the close of polls, as it should be a simple task?*
- *Why is the ECI not also required to make public not just Form 17C but also Form 17A, which records electors who refused to vote after the polls close?*
- *Does the ECI recognize its duty under Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, to record and make public the names of electors who refuse to vote, as required by the election rules?*
- *How does Rule 49-O, which mandates the recording of electors' refusal to vote and the obtaining of their signature or thumb impression, align with the ECI's current actions or omissions?*

### **C (i) How valid is the procedure and the use of Form 17-C or 17-A if the Election Commission of India (ECI) has no information regarding pre-numbered slips?**

- *Pre-numbered slips are those slips, designed to record the total number of voters standing in the queue after closing of polling hour/ scheduled time. It must be serial number wise given to the electors standing in the queue after the scheduled time.*

Senior Right to Information Activist, Venkatesh Nayak has been probing this issue with the Election Commission<sup>42</sup>. In response, the Election Commission of India has informed him that the Commission has no information about the total number constituency and segment wise pre-numbered slips issued by presiding officers of all polling stations in Maharashtra. Previously, 2024, Nayak and asked for a list of all the Returning Officers (ROs) the reply was that the ECI did not possess this list!

If the Election Commission of India (ECI) has no data or records regarding the issuance of pre-numbered slips at polling stations during the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, how can citizens trust the accuracy, integrity, or legitimacy of the election results recorded in Forms 17-C and 17-A, which depend on this critical data for validating final vote counts?

**ECI's Statement on Missing Data:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) has stated in response to Nayak that it has no information about the constituency and segment-wise pre-numbered slips issued by presiding officers in Maharashtra for both the November 2024 Assembly elections and the April-May 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

**RTI request by Nayak:** Venkatesh Nayak, director of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, filed another RTI request highlighting the procedural mandate for presiding officers to record and issue these slips, as outlined in the ECI's 2023 handbook. **The ECI's response was that this data was not available.**

**Impact on election integrity:** Nayak opposed the ECI's response, stating that the commission, being the highest election body with constitutional and statutory powers, should have this data at its disposal. The lack of such information raises questions about the transparency and accountability of the election process.

**Procedure for pre-numbered slips:** According to ECI's guidelines, presiding officers are required to issue serially numbered slips to electors still in line after close of polling hours. The handbook further specifies that these details should be recorded in the presiding officer's diary.

**Voter turnout concerns:** The ECI's data showed an increase in registered voters and votes cast, with a notable surge in voter turnout between 5 pm and 11 pm and even after 11 p.m. on polling day. Opposition parties, including Congress, raised concerns about this increase, pointing out that it disproportionately benefitted the ruling party. The ECI defended this increase, calling it "normal."

**Request for transparency:** Nayak asked for the disclosure of detailed voter turnout data, including the distribution of pre-numbered slips and two-hourly voter turnout reports. Without these records, the accuracy of the final turnout figures, as recorded in Forms 17-C and 17-A, remains uncertain.

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<sup>42</sup> In the wake of the ongoing SIR in Bihar, his latest column mentions all the election-related docs from 2024 which the ECI refused to disclose under RTI: <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/when-an-opaque-election-commission-demands-voter-transparency-3627726>

## XXIII

### **D. Election Schedules Lack Reasonableness**

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has been entrusted with ensuring the smooth and efficient conduct of elections across the country. However, the election schedules for Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and Haryana in 2024 raise serious concerns regarding the reasonableness and fairness of the Commission's decision-making process, particularly regarding the number of phases allocated to each state and Union Territory (UT).

In its election notification dated October 15, 2024, the ECI scheduled the Maharashtra Assembly Elections in a single phase, despite the state having a massive 288 Assembly Constituencies (ACs). The logistical complexity of conducting elections for such a large number of constituencies in one day raises concerns. Maharashtra, with its vast geographical expanse and diverse terrain, requires a comprehensive approach to ensure a fair election, especially when considering security measures, voter participation, and accessibility. A single-phase election could strain resources and lead to longer wait times for voters, potentially reducing voter turnout and impacting the overall fairness of the process. In contrast, Jharkhand, with only 143 ACs, was allocated two phases—81 ACs in Phase 1 and 62 ACs in Phase 2. This discrepancy in the number of phases is puzzling and raises questions about the criteria the ECI used to determine the election schedules. The need for two phases in Jharkhand, with fewer constituencies, seems disproportionate compared to the single-phase election in Maharashtra.

A similar pattern of inconsistency can be observed in the scheduling of elections for Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana. Haryana, with 90 ACs, had its election conducted in a single phase on October 10, 2024. Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir, with fewer ACs, held its election in three phases: 24 ACs in Phase 1 (September 18, 2024), 26 ACs in Phase 2 (September 25, 2024), and 40 ACs in Phase 3 (October 1, 2024). Given the smaller number of constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir compared to Haryana, it is unclear why the former required three phases, while the latter could manage with just one.

The disparities in the scheduling of elections across these states and UTs suggest a lack of clear and consistent criteria in the ECI's decision-making process. It is essential for the Election Commission to consider not only the number of constituencies but also geographical, logistical, and security factors when determining the election phases. The current approach creates the impression that the election scheduling may not be entirely equitable or efficient. To ensure fairness and transparency, the Election Commission should provide more clarity on its methodology for determining election phases!

## XXIV

### WHY ECI must provide answers/explanations, has no right to demand “proof” from candidates or electors/citizens

#### Burden of Proof lies on the ECI: it is the duty of ECI to generate faith among citizens

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has a fundamental responsibility to uphold the integrity and transparency of the electoral process. However, there seems to be an obdurate tendency for the ECI—assisted by a pliant media—to shift the burden of proof onto candidates or electors when allegations of malpractice or manipulation arise, rather than proactively addressing these concerns itself.

#### This raises an important question:

*Why does the ECI, as the apex authority responsible for overseeing elections, often respond to such grievances by merely explaining the procedures in a generic manner instead of a) providing the data demanded, b) thoroughly investigating allegations, and c) [as happened previously] interacting openly with citizens and opposition parties and providing clear answers to the specific allegations?*

It is crucial to understand that the burden of proof should lie with the ECI, not with the citizens or candidates. The ECI is obliged to be proactive in addressing allegations, not merely offering procedural explanations or abstract justifications. By failing to act decisively, the Commission risks eroding the trust that citizens place in the election system. The integrity of the electoral process cannot be built on mere explanations or assumptions—it must be rooted in trust, transparency, and accountability, which are the essence of free & fair elections.

The ECI's role is not just to conduct elections but to generate faith among the electorate by ensuring that their concerns are taken seriously, and that any alleged irregularities are thoroughly investigated.

*How can the Commission claim to safeguard the democratic process if it consistently avoids taking responsibility for addressing complaints with tangible actions?*

*Instead of shifting the burden onto the citizens, shouldn't the ECI itself take the initiative to uphold the credibility of the election process by thoroughly examining every grievance raised, and providing genuine, transparent answers?*

## XXV

### **ECI Release of Data Irrational, counter to the Principle of Uniformity in Data Preservation**

#### **Lok Sabha 2024 7 Phases April –June 2024**

**Phase -1:** Voter turnout released in % ages that too only state-wise in the first release. Final % ages as a whole for all states and UTs taken together only thereafter released only on 25.05.2024 after 36 days. (PC wise percentage and absolute numbers given)

**Phase -2:** Voter turnout %age as a whole given for all states' and UTs taken together in-place of state wise data that was previously given in Phase -1. Second Press Release also gave percentage of voters of all states' and UTs taken together. Thereafter after a gap 29 days on 25.05.2024, PC wise percentage and absolute numbers given

**Phase-3:** Voter turnout given as percentages only, state wise in the initial three Press Releases. In the 4<sup>th</sup> Press Release, on 11.05.2024, Voter turnout %age provided state wise as well as PC wise was declared. However, the Parliamentary Constituency (PC)-wise Absolute number of voter turnout figures were made public only on 25.05.2024

**Phase- 4:** Phases 1, 2 3, Number of electors per Constituency figures was not released but the Phase 4 electors were declared PC-wise on 11.05.2024 for poll due to take place on 20.05.2024. PC wise percentage of votes polled and also the absolute number of votes polled in EVM was given constituency wise only on 25.05.2024

**Phase-5:** Initial two Press Releases of the ECI provided only state wise poll percentage while the PC-wise Voter turnout %age along with PC-wise absolute numbers of Voters was given only on 28.05.2024

**Phase-6:** State-wise % of voter data was given initially twice in press releases. However, PC-wise %age of Voting Figures and Absolute Numbers of Votes Cast were given only in the 3rd press release after 3 days.

**Phase -7:** Here again, in the two initial Press Releases of the ECI, the percentage of Votes polled state-wise was made public and the PC-wise Poll percentages of Votes Polled and Absolute Numbers of Votes Polled were provided only after 5 days.

#### **Haryana and J & K Assembly Election Poll Data by ECI (October 2024)**

There was a different formula followed of publishing Voter Turnout data in these states. In J&K, PC-wise %age of Votes Polled data was given as Percentage of Voter Turnout and this too in the Third Press Release by the ECI. The initial Two Press Releases had provided district-wise percentages of polling only. The Absolute Number of Votes Polled was never given. Only the votes recovered from EVM and postal ballots were given in Absolute Numbers.

### **Maharashtra Assembly Polls (November 2024)**

Only district-wise poll percentages were provided initially by the ECI (two press releases). Thereafter the Maharashtra CEO provided Absolute Numbers of Votes Polled, Constituency-wise on 22.11.2024.

As such data principles were followed more in their breach and arbitrarily.



## XXVI

### Questions on Electoral Transparency and Fairness

Why record Videos of Voting post-closing time if these are not provided to the public? If the ECI ultimately withholds videos of the voting process, what is the purpose of expending resources on their production? This raises doubts about accountability and oversight.

Why Use VVPATs if Slips Aren't Counted? The existence of VVPAT printers, designed for voter verification, becomes a wasteful exercise if the slips are not counted. This practice undermines the very intent of enhancing transparency and trust.

Why Have Electoral Rolls if Not Machine-Readable? Denying machine-readable electoral rolls (digital format, not PDF) impedes comprehensive analysis and verification. Critics argue that without accessible digital rolls, their utility diminishes, potentially allowing for manipulation and questioning the need for their existence at all.

Why Hold Elections if Outcomes are not Robust, the Process Muddled? A profound concern is whether elections serve their true democratic purpose if the ECI is perceived to facilitate the victory of a particular party in every contest. This leads to the fundamental question: why maintain the "sham" of elections if their outcome is believed to be pre-decided?

The ECI's recent manoeuvres—the drastic reduction in CCTV footage retention and the tightening of access through rule amendments—paint a concerning picture. The Commission's justification of "recent misuse" and the "internal management tool" argument fall short of addressing the fundamental concerns about transparency and accountability. This is particularly alarming given that the use of such videography was originally encouraged by the Supreme Court to bolster electoral fairness.

The timing of these changes, especially the December 2024 amendment after a High Court directive to release election papers, suggests a reactive rather than a proactive approach to transparency. It appears to be a move to circumvent judicial scrutiny and public demand for greater oversight.

## PART - III

### VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW AND PROCEDURE: ECI

#### ONE

#### Supreme Court and High Courts Orders on EVM/VVPAT, SLU C&V Verification Cost & Videography

##### A. High Cost of EVMs checking & Verification:

The ongoing case in *Association for Democratic Reforms vs Election Commission of India and Anr. (MA 40/2025 in W.P.(C) No. 434/2023)* brought to the forefront critical concerns regarding the high cost and transparency of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) verification. In a hearing on February 11, 2025, the Supreme Court questioned the ECI's verification process, prompting urgent calls for reform and clarification. Key issues raised during the proceedings include:

- **Verification Concerns:** ADR'S petition questioned the ECI's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), arguing that it did not align with the April 2024 judgment regarding EVM verification. ADR requested that the verification process be conducted without erasing or reloading data on EVMs, ensuring data integrity.
- **Chief Justice's Remarks:** Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna clarified that the 2024 judgment intended for EVM manufacturers' engineers to verify EVMs for tampering without altering any data. This ensured that the data remained intact and reliable throughout the verification process.
- **Cost Dispute:** The Supreme Court noted the excessive Rs 40,000 cost associated with the verification process and urged the ECI to reconsider the fee. This concern was echoed during the Maharashtra State Assembly Election 2024, where NCP candidate Fahad Zirar Ahmad highlighted the exorbitant ₹47,200 cost per booth for verification, which restricts the ability of candidates to ensure transparency across multiple booths.
- **Impact of High Fees:** The high cost of verification is seen as a significant barrier to transparency, limiting candidates' ability to audit EVMs in multiple booths. This financial obstacle raises questions about the accessibility of the audit process, undermining accountability in the electoral system. As a result, it is crucial to reduce these costs to make verification efforts more equitable and comprehensive.
- **Relief Sought by ADR:** ADR's petition calls for the following actions:
  1. The ECI should conduct Checking and Verification of burnt memory/microcontrollers in line with the April 2024 judgment.
  2. The ECI must include Symbol Loading Units (SLUs) in its verification process.

3. The ECI should refrain from deleting the contents of original burnt memory of EVMs when applications for verification are pending.
- **Next Steps:** The-ECI was required to file a short affidavit detailing its verification process and confirming that no data will be altered. The Supreme Court on May 7, 2025, clarified the procedure for EVM verification and mock polls requested by contesting candidates, building upon its April 2024 judgment in the EVM-VVPAT case. A bench of Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Dipankar Datta recorded the ECI's assurance not to delete data from EVM units subject to verification. The Court mandated that verification, including checking "burnt memory" and microcontrollers, be conducted by engineers from BEL and ECIL, who must issue non-tampering certificates. While allowing mock polls, the Court stipulated that engineers would first display recorded data to candidates before erasing for the mock poll, with downloaded data being certified. This aims to enhance transparency and voter satisfaction, addressing concerns raised by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

## **B. Legal Provisions & Instructions on EVMs and the VVPAT Issue**

- As per the manual on EVM 2023 edition, the Representation of the People Act, 1951, has been amended as under:
- In December, 1988 a new section 61 A was inserted in the Representation of the People Act, 1951, empowering the Election Commission of India to use Electronic Voting Machines in elections, which reads as under -
- *"61A. Voting machines at elections-Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or the rules made there under, the giving and recording of votes by voting machines in such manner as may be prescribed, may be adopted in such constituency or constituencies as the Election Commission may, having regard to the circumstances of each case, specify."*
- *Explanation. -For the purpose of this section, "voting machine" means any machine or apparatus whether operated electronically or otherwise used for giving or recording of votes and any reference to a ballot box or ballot paper in this Act or the rules made thereunder shall, save as otherwise provided, be construed as including a reference to such voting machine wherever such voting machine is used at any election.*
- The Supreme Court upheld the validity of the above provision in All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam v/s. Chief Election Commissioner and others [2002(UJ)(1)387]
- In view of the above the amendment got done to refuse electronic data to any one citizen is illegal in as much as electronic ballot has been treated as paper ballot and all documents as are supposed to be given in postal balloting cannot be denied in electronic voting and the amendment done recently in section 93(2) is either invalid , illegal or the electronic voting is set aside by law making authority as the said amendment does not treat electronic voting records equivalent to paper ballot records.

### C. SLU - LAW laid down by Supreme Court and instructions by ECI 29.04.2024

- The Supreme Court in CWP 434 of 2023 directed, on April 26, 2024, that SLUs should also be kept protected for 45 days after declaration of results and set aside the practice of handing over SLUs to BEL/ECIL the next day of the declaration of the results. ECI in compliance of the said order has instructed vide No. 51/8/INST/2024-EMS dated April 29, 2024 as under:
- ‘DEO will keep the SLUs ---- and return the same to them or the engineers authorised by BEL/ECIL on the next day after the poll i.e. p+1 day.’
- In pursuance of the judgment of the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India dated 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024, in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 434 of 2023 the above referred protocols of handling and storage of Symbol Loading Unit (SLU) are hereby modified. At the outset, considering the mandated storage of SLUs after commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs till the election petition period i.e. 45 days from the date of declaration of result, it is directed that the manufacturers i.e. M/s Bharat Electronic Limited and M/s Electronic Corporation of India Limited shall ensure the required number of Symbol Loading Units (SLUs) including their accessories...’

### D. SC orders ECI to preserve video clips of the polling

The Supreme Court of India, on January 31, 2025 directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure that video recordings of polling stations are preserved during the ongoing challenge to the ECI's decision to increase the number of electors per polling station from 1200 to 1500. The bench, led by Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar, granted ECI additional time to file its counter affidavit, requiring it within three weeks. The case was filed by Rajya Sabha MP Jairam Ramesh, challenging the ECI's communications from August 2024, which revised the elector limit, claiming the decision lacks data support and could lead to operational inefficiencies.

The petition argues that the increase in the number of voters per station could cause overcrowding, longer wait times, and voter fatigue, potentially disenfranchising marginalized groups, particularly low-income voters. The petition also points to the absence of new census data since 2011 and cites potential violations of Section 25 of the Representation of the People Act. The petitioner seeks a return to a 1200-voter limit per station, with a push for proportional expansion of infrastructure for future elections. The case is titled *Indu Prakash Singh vs. Election Commission of India*, Diary No. 49052-2024.

## TWO

### **December 2024: ECI Shields Itself from Public Scrutiny** **Election Conduct Rules amended in 48 hours bypassing Law officer's suggestions:** **Rule 93 Amendments**

This section of the report delves into a particularly alarming development in India's electoral landscape, the Election Commission of India's (ECI) unprecedented, lightning-fast amendment of Rule 93 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961. This swift legislative manoeuvre, executed within a mere two days despite significant objections from legal officers, has drastically curtailed public access to vital election-related documents and electronic recordings. This development, far from an administrative streamlining, appears to be a direct and concerning response to judicial directives for greater transparency, thereby raising serious questions about the ECI's commitment to accountability and its purported impartiality in what appears to be a comprehensive strategy of election manipulation.

#### **The alarming pace of legislative change**

The timeline of the Rule 93 amendment reveals an extraordinary haste that is deeply suspicious. On December 17, 2024, the ECI formally proposed the amendment to the Ministry of Law. The letter arrived on December 19, and by the very next day, December 20, the amendment had not only been discussed and modified but also cleared by the Law Secretary and the Union Law Minister, before being formally notified at 10:23 PM that same evening. This lightning speed, compressing a process that typically takes weeks or months, signals an urgent agenda that prioritised swift enactment over thorough deliberation or addressing concerns.

#### **A direct response to Judicial Directives**

The timing of this hasty amendment is not coincidental. Just a week prior, on December 9, 2024, the Punjab and Haryana High Court had issued a directive to the ECI, ordering it to provide video recordings and copies of documents related to polling in the Haryana assembly elections to advocate Mehmood Pracha. Pracha, citing Rule 93, had sought access to CCTV footage and Form 17C, a document crucial for cross-verifying votes polled. The High Court had upheld his plea. The subsequent amendment to Rule 93, by limiting public access to these very documents and recordings, effectively ensured that the ECI would no longer be legally obligated to make such disclosures. This reactive legislative action, aimed at circumventing a judicial order for transparency, severely undermines the principle of an independent and accountable election body.

#### **Objections overruled**

According to the Scroll<sup>43</sup> report, the internal documents reveal that the amendment was pushed through despite clear objections from law officers within the Ministry of Law. The ECI's initial

<sup>43</sup> [Election conduct rules amended at lightning speed, despite objection by law officers, documents show](#)

proposal sought to add the word "statutory" before "papers" in Rule 93(2A), which previously stated that "all other papers relating to the election shall be open to public inspection." Law officers sagely warned that inserting "statutory" would "impose further restrictions on the inspection of papers" and could lead to "ambiguity" due to the undefined nature of the term. They highlighted that such a change might contradict the long-standing intention of the Conduct of Election Rules, which have been in place for over six decades.

Despite these critical concerns, the ECI pressed for the amendment. While the final notified amendment replaced "statutory papers" with "all other papers specified in these rules," implying that some non-explicitly denied records might still be accessible, the initial intent and the speed of the amendment strongly suggest a desire for maximum restriction. This disregard for internal legal counsel, coupled with the swift notification, paints a picture of an institution determined to limit scrutiny, even at the cost of legal clarity and established norms.

### **ECI's Justifications: administrative burden or deliberate obfuscation?**

The ECI's stated rationale for this amendment – articulated in its letter to the Law Ministry – appears disingenuous in light of the circumstances. The ECI argued that "providing non-statutory papers and electronic recordings necessitates involvement of substantial manpower, which is impractical post-election." They further claimed that assigning such "additional workload" to returning officers would "overburden and cripple the administrative functioning." Finally, the ECI suggested that the term 'all other papers' is a wide term and can be interpreted to include all kinds of materials related to election, which may create confusion and unnecessary administrative burden, serving no legal purpose."

These justifications, while seemingly pragmatic, ring hollow when juxtaposed with the ECI's lightning-fast action immediately after a High Court order. The argument of "administrative burden" appears to be a pretext for avoiding transparency, particularly when the very materials being shielded – like CCTV footage and Form 17C – are crucial for verifying the integrity of the voting and counting process. The claim of "confusion" from a wide term like "all other papers" can also be interpreted as a desire to prevent thorough and independent scrutiny, which often relies on accessing a broad range of documents to piece together a comprehensive picture.

### **Leading Questions to the Election Commission:**

The ECI's conduct in this episode necessitates pointed questions that demand clear and transparent answers:

- *Why did the ECI initiate and push through this amendment with such unprecedented speed immediately following a High Court order directing the disclosure of similar electoral records? Does this not strongly indicate an intent to preempt and circumvent judicial oversight?*

- *How does the ECI reconcile its claims of administrative burden with the democratic imperative of complete transparency in the electoral process, particularly concerning crucial evidence like CCTV footage and Form 17C? Is the "burden" of transparency considered greater than the burden of public distrust?*
- *What specific "legal purpose" does the ECI believe is served by actively limiting public access to election-related documents, especially when these documents are essential for verifying the fairness of elections?*
- *Given the clear objections from law officers regarding the ambiguity and restrictive nature of the proposed amendment, why did the ECI insist on its rapid enactment? Was the ECI's primary goal to clarify rules or to restrict information?*
- *How does this amendment align with the spirit of previous judicial pronouncements that have emphasised the importance of transparency, including the Supreme Court's suggestions regarding videography to enhance fairness?*

This episode paints a disturbing picture of an Election Commission seemingly more focused on controlling information than on upholding the highest standards of transparency and accountability. In the context of a comprehensive election manipulation report, this swift, legally contested, and strategically timed amendment to Rule 93 stands as a pivotal event. It suggests a calculated move to create an institutional firewall against public and judicial scrutiny, thereby undermining the very democratic fabric it is sworn to protect. The ECI's actions, rather than fostering trust, deepen suspicions of a systemic effort to obfuscate the electoral process.



### THREE

#### ECI cuts storage time for election CCTV footage to 45 days

On May 30, 2025 –again with no public deliberations and unilaterally-- the ECI formally altered its established statutory directives for safeguarding election video and photographic records. The revised policy drastically cuts the retention period for such material to just 45 days following the announcement of results. After this brief window, should no election petition be officially lodged, the data becomes eligible for destruction. This represents a marked departure from previous norms, which mandated the preservation of pre-nomination footage for three months. Recordings from subsequent phases—including nominations, campaigning, polling activities (both inside and outside polling stations), and vote counting—were previously required to be held for durations ranging from 6 months to a full year, depending on the specific stage.

The Commission conveyed these new stipulations to Chief Electoral Officers across all states on May 30 this year, justifying the changes by citing "recent misuse" of the recorded material. The ECI has further clarified that while videography and photography of election proceedings are not legally mandated, they serve as an "internal management tool" for the commission.

#### **Drastic Cuts to CCTV Footage Retention: "Internal Tool" or Obstruction?**

- **Reduced Retention Period:** The new policy mandates a mere 45-day retention period for election video and photographic records following the announcement of results. If no election petition is officially lodged within this brief window, the data becomes eligible for destruction.
- **Departure from Previous Norms:** This is a stark departure from previous norms, which required pre-nomination footage to be kept for three months, and recordings from subsequent phases (nominations, campaigning, polling, counting) for 6 months to a full year.
- **Justification of "Misuse":** The ECI conveyed these new stipulations to Chief Electoral Officers, citing "recent misuse" of the recorded material as justification. However, the nature and specific examples of this "misuse" remain conveniently vague, leading to suspicions that this is a pretext for restricting access rather than a genuine concern for security.
- **"Internal Management Tool":** The ECI has further clarified that while videography and photography of election proceedings are not legally mandated, they serve as an "internal management tool" for the commission. This framing allows the ECI to dismiss demands for public access, despite the Supreme Court's historical suggestion for its use to enhance transparency.

#### **Critical questions for the ECI amidst growing allegations**



The ECI's recent actions compel several critical questions that demand transparent and public answers:

- **What constitutes "misuse" of video footage that necessitated such a drastic reduction in retention periods?** The ECI's lack of specificity fuels speculation that this is a convenient justification rather than a legitimate concern. Is the ECI implying that transparency facilitates malpractices, rather than deterring them?
- **How does reducing the retention period align with the ECI's stated goal of ensuring free and fair elections?** If footage is an "internal management tool" for upholding integrity, why limit its availability, especially when election petitions can take longer to be filed and adjudicated, potentially rendering crucial evidence unavailable?
- **Why was public access to election footage restricted through the amendment to Rule 93 (2) (a)?** The shift from "all other papers relating to the election shall be open to public inspection" to "All other papers as specified in these rules relating to the election shall be open to public inspection" appears to be a deliberate attempt to narrow the scope of public scrutiny.

What is the ECI's rationale for this increased opacity?

- **Given the Supreme Court's suggestion in Janak Singh vs Ram Das Rai & others regarding the use of videography as a tool for transparency, why is the ECI now limiting its accessibility and retention?** The ECI acknowledges that videography was initiated based on a Supreme Court suggestion. How does the current stance reconcile with the spirit of that judicial guidance aimed at enhancing election integrity?
- **How does the ECI plan to address the growing public perception of bias and partiality fueled by these restrictive measures?** Transparency is paramount for an independent body like the ECI. These moves seem to do the opposite, further eroding trust.

### Erosion of trust and accountability: Indian Democracy at the Crossroads

The ECI's controversial decisions carry significant repercussions that could undermine the very foundation of India's democratic process:

- **Erosion of public trust:** Limiting access to crucial election data, especially in the wake of widespread allegations, fosters suspicion and erodes public trust in the ECI's neutrality. When an independent body appears to be withholding information, it inevitably leads to questions about what it might be trying to hide.
- **Hindrance to election petitions and legal redressal:** The reduced retention period directly impacts the ability of aggrieved parties to gather evidence for election petitions. If footage is destroyed within 45 days, it becomes nearly impossible to challenge results based on visual

evidence of irregularities that might surface later. This effectively curtails the right to legal redressal.

- **Impediment to transparency and accountability:** The core of a fair election process lies in its transparency. By restricting public and contested access to CCTV footage, the ECI is making it harder to verify the integrity of the polling and counting processes, thus hindering accountability. The "internal management tool" argument rings hollow when the "management" seems to prioritise secrecy over public oversight.
- **Fuelling allegations of partiality:** These moves are perceived by many as a direct response to increasing calls for greater transparency and scrutiny, especially from opposition parties and activists. This perception reinforces the narrative of the ECI acting in a biased manner, further politicising an institution that is meant to be apolitical.
- **Undermining the spirit of judicial suggestions:** While the ECI claims videography is not "mandated by law," it conveniently overlooks that its use was initiated on the "suggestion of the Hon. Supreme Court" in Janak Singh (2005) to enhance fairness. The current actions contradict the spirit of judicial pronouncements aimed at strengthening electoral integrity.

### ECI's Webcasting Expansion:

The Election Commission of India (ECI), on June 16, 2025, announced expansion of webcasting to 100% of polling stations with internet connectivity, up from the previous 50%. While ostensibly a move towards increased monitoring and transparency, this decision is critically undermined by the ECI's prior actions to restrict public access to such electronic data. The webcasting, intended for "internal consumption" of the poll authority, will be first implemented in the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections. This paradoxical approach of increasing internal surveillance while simultaneously closing off public scrutiny raises serious concerns about the ECI's true commitment to a transparent electoral process, particularly in the context of broader allegations of election manipulation.

### A contradiction in terms: increased webcasting, decreased public access

However, this seemingly progressive step must be viewed in direct conjunction with the ECI's controversial actions from late 2024 to mid-2025:

- **The December 2024 Rule 93 Amendment:** Based on the ECI's recommendation, the Union Law Ministry swiftly amended Rule 93 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961. This amendment, pushed through despite objections from law officers, fundamentally restricted public inspection of electronic documents like CCTV footage, webcasting data, and video recordings. Previously, "all other papers relating to the election" were open to public inspection; now, only "all other papers *as specified in these rules* relating to the election" are accessible. This effectively created a legal barrier against public scrutiny of the very footage that webcasting generates.

- **Drastic Reduction in CCTV Footage Retention (May 2025):** Further exacerbating concerns, the ECI, on May 30, 2025, drastically cut the retention period for election video and photographic records to a mere 45 days after the announcement of results. This is a stark departure from previous norms that mandated preservation for durations ranging from 3 months to a full year. The ECI cited "recent misuse" of recorded material as justification, framing videography as an "internal management tool."

This sequence of events creates a profound contradiction. On one hand, the ECI is investing heavily in generating visual evidence of the polling process through 100% webcasting; on the other hand, it is simultaneously erecting legal barriers to prevent this very evidence from being independently scrutinized by the public, political parties, or even through Right to Information requests, unless specifically ordered by a court in the context of an election petition. The ECI is creating a vast archive of critical electoral evidence, only to then legally shield it from public view and dispose of it after a brief window, making independent post-election scrutiny incredibly difficult. This deeply problematic juxtaposition suggests a strategic move to control the narrative surrounding election integrity rather than to genuinely enhance it, contributing significantly to a climate of distrust in the electoral process.

The critical question that arises from this contradictory stance is: If the Election Commission is anyway not going to provide any videos of the voting, then why take the trouble of shooting those videos, and if it is so committed to transparency through 100% webcasting, why is it simultaneously restricting public access to this crucial data and reducing its retention period? This approach gives the appearance of transparency while effectively negating its substance, leading to concerns that the ECI prioritizes internal control over genuine public accountability.

## FOUR

### Preparation of Voter Count as per Election Rules & Law

**Rule 7.3.1 of Handbook for Presiding Officers, 2023:**

**(i) After the close of poll, you are required to prepare in duplicate, under Rule 49S of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, an account of votes recorded in the voting machine. Such account shall be prepared by you in Part I of Form 17C.**

**Para 7.3.2 of the hand book lays down as under:**

Under the said Rule 49S, you are also required to furnish to every polling agent, who is present at the close of the poll, a true attested copy of the account of votes recorded as prepared by you in Form 17C, after obtaining a receipt from those Polling Agents. Copies of the accounts should be furnished to every polling agent present even without his asking for it. The original Form 17C has to be deposited at the Collection Centre (Polled EVM Strong Room) along with the voting machine. The duplicate copy of Form 17C will also be deposited at the collection Centre.

Many a time copy of 17-C is not supplied and ECI does not implement its own procedure and as laid down in Rule 49S of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, reproduced here as under again:

After the close of the poll, you are required to prepare in duplicate, under Rule 49S of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, an account of votes recorded in the voting machine. Such account shall be prepared by you in Part I of Form 17C. Copies of the accounts should be furnished to every polling agent present even without his asking for it.

Further that the account of votes includes:

- the number of voters who after entry in 17-A refused to vote
- who were not allowed to vote and
- test votes status.

The Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) in Supreme Court in demanded uploading of 17-C, (in April 2024) as under:

‘The ADR has filed an interim application in its 2019 PIL, seeking directions to the poll panel that “scanned legible copies of Form 17C Part-I (Account of Votes Recorded)” of all polling stations be uploaded immediately after the polls. (PTI)’

**ECI has filed false and misleading statement in the Supreme Court in ADR Case about 17-C uploading as under:**

“At the moment, the original Form 17C is only available in the strong room and a copy only with the polling agents whose signature it bears” it said.

**This statement is patently false in face of facts on records of ECI, wherein it is mandate to ECI under Rule 49 S of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 and the instructions issued by ECI itself in compliance of the said rule. It is crystal clear that a duplicate copy of 17-C is always in the custody of the Returning Officer (RO), at the Collection Centre under the RO, as under which stands reproduced in para 7.3.2 of the Hand Book for Presiding Officers and is reproduced here as;**

The duplicate copy of Form 17C will also be deposited at the collection Centre.

ECI has tried its level best to make the entire election process a blurred, coloured and doctored exercise by taking shelter under the claim that there is no legal mandate to provide 17-C to Public. As such the ECI wants to keep whole exercise under a veil, being coloured and doctored and as such does not hesitate from making false submissions contrary to law, the procedure and the official records, before the Supreme Court.

## FIVE

### New Voter Registration Law

Under the Representation of the People Act, 1950, the cut – off date for registration of new voters as per qualifying date under section 14 clause (b) was the 1st day of January, of the year of preparation or Revision of the Electoral Role.

**The same was changed to 1st day of April in 1989**

However, the said section was amended by brute majority by introducing a Bill No. 162 of 2021 on December 15, 2021 by KIRN RIJJU and amendment is as under:

*In the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (hereinafter, in this Chapter referred to as the 1950 Act) in section 14 clause (b), for the words, figure and letters “the 1st day of January, the words, figure and letters “he 1st day of January, the 1st day of April, the 1st day of July and the 1st day of October” shall be substituted.*

#### **Comments:**

Passed without due discussion or consultation in Parliament, the amendment appears to be ill-thought out without giving any explanation for amendment made in 1989, in as much as the phrase 1st day of January, had already been deleted and replaced by **1st day of April in 1989, as such the 1950 Act deemed to be not having been amended by Mr. Kiran Rijju in December 2021**

#### **Why was this illegal amendment carried out in a hurry?**

1. Was done to change the electoral rolls just before elections by inclusion of fake voters and deletion of genuine voters

**Voter Application Form for Objection for Proposed Inclusion/ Deletion of Name in Existing Electoral Roll, under Rules 13(2) and (26) of the Registration of Electors Rules-1960) by way of form 6 and form 7**

The complainant has to make a self-declaration as is given below

**“I HEREBY DECLARE that to the best of my knowledge and belief that I am aware that making a statement or declaration which is false and which I know or believe to be false or do not believe to be true, is punishable under Section 31 of Representation of the People Act, 1950 (43 of 1950) with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both”**

Form No. 7 given in Registration of Electors rules 1960 has part II where in the objector has to give his full name address and other particulars as under besides that along with shall submit above cited declaration too:

**Registration of Electors Rules, 1960**  
**(Statutory Rules and Order)**  
**FORM 7**

**#II. Details of objector Name Surname (if any)**

Sex (male/female): Part number of electoral roll in which objector's name is included:

His/her serial number in that part:

\*Father's                      Mother's Name

Husband's                      Name Surname (if any)

**III. Particulars of the place of ordinary residence of @objector/@person seeking deletion.**

(Full address):

House / Door number:                      Street/Area/Locality/Mohalla/Road:

Town / Village:                      Post Office: Pin Code:

Tehsil/Taluka/Mandal/Thana:                      District:

**# Part-II not to be filled where applicant seeks deletion of entry relating to himself.**

**MANDATORY INSTRUCTIONS OF THE STEPS FOR ACTION ON THE 'OBJECTION' RAISED**

The ECI has issued detailed procedural mandatory guidelines under the subject matter of guidelines for filling up the application FORM-7 and under item No. 2 it is laid down that the burden of proof is on the objector for his claim as under:

**The onus of proof to substantiate the reason given for objection or removal of name lies with the applicant.**

Further vide order No. 23/INST/2023-ERS dated 11<sup>th</sup> August 2023, ECI has laid down procedure for removal of names of electors from electoral roles where in it has been mandated that:

3 It is hereby clarified that presently on ERO -Net there is no option available for deletion of name of elector without Form -7

Processing of all forms 7 is done by following the due procedure of by giving notice and putting the same for mandatory 7 days period

**FOR INCLUSION OF NAME**

(b) Self-attested copy of address proof either in the name of applicant or any one of parents/spouse/adult child, if already enrolled as elector at the same address (*Attach anyone of them*)

## IMPACT

a. There is an increase of votes in the electoral rolls of Maharashtra during the period April 1 to October 1, 2024, Between the Lok Sabha polls (April-June 2024) to the Assembly polls (November), Voters increased from **9, 30, 61, 660** to **9, 70, 25, 119** an addition of **39, 63, 459** votes in this relatively brief period of 6 months.

b. The elector’s number is hiked even after notification of the elections

As in Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly notification was issued vide NO. ECI/PN/149/2024 dated OCTOBER 15, 2024, at which time the number of electors in Maharashtra was notified to be 9,64,85,765 on page 3 of the 71-page notification. However, thereafter the ECI stated that the same (number of eligible voters) rose to 9,70,25,119 in just a fortnight on October 30, 2024! Thus, there was an addition of 5, 39, 354 votes after notification of the state polls.

Is this a manipulation or questionable injection of votes? While voter registration drives are needed and welcome, comparative enrolment in various states may indicate an answer. While in Maharashtra we saw the significant state-wide rise of 5, 39, 354 voters in a fortnight in Jharkand where also the elections were held in two phases in November 2024, the rise is significantly lower. In that state, the number of Electors notified on page 3 of October 15, 2024 notification by the ECI was 2,60,87,698 which then rose –with subsequent registrations -- to 2,61,01,384 electors. This means that barely 13,686 voters were added in a fortnight. Similarly, here in Jharkand, between the Lok Sabha Polls (April-June 2024) when the Electors were 2, 58, 77, 892, this figure rose to 2,62,01,384 for the Vidhan Sabha elections. Hence the difference in number of voters there was 2, 23, 492 Voters.

### Conclusion:

#### **Maharashtra**

Oct 15-30, 2024                      **FIVE LAKH (5,39,354)** increase in Voters

#### **Jharkand**

Oct 15-30, 2024                      **THIRTEEN THOUSAND (13,686)** increase in Voters

#### **Maharashtra**

LS 2024-VS 2024                      39, 63, 459 Voters Increased in Maharashtra

#### **Jharkand**

LS 2024-VS 2024                      2, 23, 492 Voter Increased in Jharkand



### **Haryana**

Increase in Electors was 1, 63, 686, from 2,03,00255 on day of notification to 2,04,63842 on polling day.

### **NCT Delhi**

Between Notification dated 07.01.2025 and Voting on 17.01.2025, the increase of electors is 76, 366 Voters. Ten Days saw and Increase from 1, 55, 37, 634 Voters to 1, 56, 14,000 Voters.

This raises questions behind the hasty non-consultative amendment to the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Voter inclusion/deletion has been effected quite callously with no record or documentation of the process (complete address and particulars of the applicant).

## SIX

### Videography of Electors who were in the Queue after Closure of Polling Hours

During the Maharashtra Assembly Election of 2024, a significant and unexplained surge in voter turnout after the official closing time of polling stations which was 6 p.m. has raised serious concerns about the integrity of the electoral process. **The Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines dictate that only voters in the queue at the time of closing—before the scheduled polling end time—are allowed to cast their vote thereafter.** However, an unexpected increase in voter participation after this time, particularly in districts like Nanded and Raigad, casts doubt on whether these protocols of recording the voter presence were adequately followed. Rules, law and procedure dictate that queues of voters in place after close of polls need to be videographed and those voters in the queues be provided with numbered slips beginning with the last person in line up to the front to ensure that *only those in the queue are given a chance to vote.*

The ECI's Handbook for Presiding Officers 2023 specifies that serial-numbered slips must be issued to voters waiting in line just before the polling stations close, serving as a safeguard against unauthorised voting. After the controversies around the Maharashtra elections, the ECI must now clarify how many such slips, constituency-wise, were distributed to voters after the scheduled closure, *and* whether these slips were issued in compliance with the established protocol. Given the significant surge in turnout after polling closed, it is vital for the ECI to investigate whether these slips were properly distributed, and whether they corresponded to the individuals who voted post-closing.

Further scrutiny through video evidence is crucial to ensure transparency and uphold the fairness of the election process. ECI's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the last 72 hours of polling mandate the use of CCTV cameras to capture all activities at polling stations, including voters in the queue. The Handbook for Presiding Officers also directs the videography of key moments, such as the last voter in line, and mandates real-time webcasting at polling stations. These protocols are essential for documenting the process and detecting any procedural lapses or discrepancies. In this context, video evidence can be critical in verifying the integrity of the voting process, particularly regarding the sudden surge in voter turnout after the official polling time.

In light of these concerns, the ECI must be held accountable for ensuring comprehensive documentation and transparency of the voting process. This includes the distribution of serial-numbered slips, the maintenance of queues, and proper video recording of all events. The ECI should clarify how many slips were given out after the scheduled closing time and whether these voters were properly accounted for in terms of the slips issued and their votes cast.

The importance of video evidence in safeguarding the integrity of the election cannot be overstated. The Supreme Court's ruling in *Janak Singh v. Ram Das Rai (2005)* emphasised the **need for electronic recordings during polling and vote-counting to verify election fairness.** Video footage serves as a critical tool in identifying and rectifying any attempts to manipulate the election

process. As per the Supreme Court's guidelines, the ECI must provide access to such video recordings upon request, ensuring all stakeholders can scrutinise the process. This underscores the vital role of technology in maintaining a fair and transparent election.

In addition, the surge in voter turnout itself raises further questions. According to the ECI's Voter Turnout Data released on November 20, 2024 at 11:30 p.m., Voter turnout in Maharashtra had reached 65.02%, a significant rise from 58.22% at 5 p.m. that day, just an hour before polling officially closed. This increase of 6.8%, or approximately 6.6 million votes, occurred between 5 p.m. and 11:30 p.m., with an additional 1.03% turnout (approximately 1 million votes) reported on November 21.

**Specific districts such as Nanded and Raigad saw notable increases, with Nanded rising by 4.53% (126,294 votes) and Raigad by 3.24% (79,143 votes).** These surges had a direct impact on the final election results, helping the NDA secure around 100 additional seats. Many of these wins were narrow, with 46 seats decided by less than 10,000 votes and 23 by fewer than 5,000 votes. This raises concerns about the potential influence of the unexplained surge on the election's fairness, particularly in constituencies where margins were as thin as a few thousand votes.

Given the importance of upholding democratic principles, the ECI must thoroughly explain the allegations of malpractice and provide a detailed factual and realistic explanation regarding the surge in voter turnout post-6 p.m. and clarify whether proper protocols, including the distribution of serial-numbered slips and videography, were followed. Transparency and accountability are critical to maintaining public trust in the electoral process, and video evidence can be an essential tool in ensuring that every vote cast is legitimate and free from manipulation.

### **Videography and Photography of the events:**

- **The events for videography should include;**
  - Filing of nomination papers and
  - Scrutiny thereof,
  - Allotment of symbols,
  - First Level Checking, preparations and storage of Electronic Voting Machines,
  - Important public meetings, processions etc. during election campaign,
  - Process of dispatching of postal ballot papers,
  - Polling process in identified vulnerable polling stations,
  - Storage of polled EVMs and VVPATs, and SLUs
  - Taking out EVMs for counting and counting of votes etc.
  - Additionally, CCTVs will be installed at important Border Check Posts and Static Check Points for effective monitoring and surveillance.

### **Videography and Photography at the Polling Stations:**

- Use of digital photography/videography in the Polling Station was initiated on the suggestion of the Hon. Supreme Court (Judgment dated 11.01.2005 in Civil Appeal No. 9228 of 2003-

*Janak Singh vs Ram Das Rai & others*). The Commission directs that photography may be carried inside the Polling Stations to photograph electors and cover poll proceedings. The Commission has also directed that all critical events during the entire course of election shall be videographed.

- Camera person has to capture the following: In such Polling Stations, all electors coming to cast votes not having EPIC /other ECI approved photo identity card to be captured in the same sequence as they are entered in Form 17A, photography/videography to be taken immediately after entry. Presiding Officer has to ensure that there shall be no photography/ videography in the Voting Compartment area
- Mock poll and sealing of EVM and VVPAT before start of poll
- Positioning of Voting Compartment. This should be taken before commencement of poll.
- Photo showing presence of Polling Agents.
- Photos of electors in case of Challenged / Tendered Votes/Missing voters as per ASD 11st;
- Announcement by the Presiding officer a few minutes before the close of the hour of poll that those standing in the queue shall be allowed to vote.
- **The process of distribution of slips to such electors bearing signatures of the Presiding Officer, serially numbered.**
- **The announcement of the last number of the slip distributed should be clearly recorded.**
- **Voters waiting outside at the close of scheduled hours of poll and the last voter in the queue.**
- Visits of Sector Officers, Observers, and other electoral functionaries or any important person including the Candidates.

## 2.18 (Hand Book for Presiding Officers)

### ➤ Use of Webcasting at Polling Station:

During webcasting in Polling Stations, the camera should be placed in such a manner that it captures clear visibility of the following:

- Voters in queue
- Process of Identification of voters by Polling Officer.
- Application of indelible ink on finger
- Initialisation of Control Unit by Presiding Officer after satisfactory identification of voter.

**However, it is clear here that all electors standing in queue at the end of the scheduled poll time have to be identified by videography and web casting, their face should be clearly recognisable so as to know how many were still to cast vote.**

➤ **Closing of the Polls:**

1. The poll should be closed at the hour fixed for the purpose, even if it had commenced somewhat later than the hour appointed for the commencement
2. A few minutes before the hour appointed for closing the poll, announce to all those within the limits of the Polling Station who are waiting to vote that they will be allowed to record their votes in turn.
3. Distribute to all such electors, slips signed by you in full, which should be serially numbered from serial No. 1 onwards according to the number of electors standing in the queue at that hour
4. The last elector should be given slip no.1 and next voter in front of him/her shall get slip no.2 and so on
5. Continue the poll even beyond the closing hour until all these electors have cast their votes.
6. Depute police or other staff to watch that no one is allowed to join the queue after the appointed closing hour.
7. After all the electors who may be present at the Polling Station at the appointed hour for closing the poll have voted as provided in the preceding para, P O should formally declare the poll as closed, should not permit any person to vote thereafter under any circumstances.
8. **All Presiding Officers shall close the EVM by pressing 'CLOSE' button at the end of poll in the presence of Polling Agents as may be present.**
9. When the 'Close' button is pressed the display panels on the Control Unit will show the total number of votes recorded in the voting machine till the end of the poll (This should be videographed and photographed).
10. The total number of votes recorded in the machine should be immediately noted in Item 6 of **Part I of Form 17C (Annexure – 8)**
11. The rubber cap should be replaced after the 'Close' button has been pressed and the poll closed.
12. **'Close'** button will function only when the 'Busy' lamp on the Control Unit is not ON
13. At the time of closure of poll, the Presiding Officer shall make a note of the Poll end date and time displayed on the CU in the Presiding Officer's diary.
14. **The Presiding Officer shall draw a line at the end of Poll after the last entry in Form 17A and shall record the signed statement thereafter "the serial number of last entry in form 17A is ....." and obtain the signatures of all Polling Agents as may be present, below this statement.**
15. **The Presiding Officer will remove Power Pack (Battery) from VVPAT in the presence of Polling Agents. Only after removal of Power Pack (VVPAT), seal the carrying case of VVPAT in the presence of Polling Agents.**

## SEVEN

### Instruction on Form 17-A, Live Register of Voters Voting

#### 7.3.1. Preparation of Account of Votes Recorded

(iii) You must not forget that the total number of **votes recorded in the voting machine must be equal to the total number of voters registered as per column (I) of the Register of Voters (Form 17A) minus the number of voters who decided not to vote** (as per the remarks column of that register) and also minus the number of voters not allowed by you to vote for violating the secrecy of voting/procedure of voting (as per the remarks column of the said Register). The test votes recorded, if any, under rule 49 MA (2) are required to be mentioned at serial **No. 5 of part-I of form 17-C.**

#### Page 17 of Hand book ibid further clarifies action for Form 17A

An Elector after his details are recorded in Form 17A and he has put his signature/thumb impression decides not to record his/her voter, he/she shall not be forced or compelled to record the vote **in the Register of Voters, put a remark, 'Refused to vote and Presiding Officer to sign below that remark.**

#### At Close of Polls:

The Hand book prescribes for the Presiding Officer under para 7.2.7 that at the close of polls Presiding Officer has to draw a line after last entry, record the last serial number after that and sign the same, also get the signatures of the polling agents present at that time as under

- **7.2.7 The Presiding Officer shall draw a line at the end of Poll after the last entry in Form 17A and**
- **Shall record the signed statement thereafter “the serial number of last entry in form 17A is .....” and**
- **Obtain the signatures of all Polling Agents as may be present, below this statement.**

#### Scrutiny of Form 17A and other Documents, its Purpose and Procedure:

Keeping in view the significance of the correctness and sanctity of the live register of voters signing to exercise their right to franchise, the ECI vide its instruction No. 464.INST-17A/2023-EPS Dated June 10, 2023 has laid reiterated the instructions issued from time to time for scrutiny of form 17A and other documents. It mandates that for this scrutiny all the contesting candidates have to be intimated by way of a formal notice so they or their representative may remain present for scrutiny of Form 17A the live register of electors, Presiding officer's diary, other officers reports, still photography, videography recordings, CCTV and Webcasting footage.

### 1. Purpose of scrutiny of Form 17A and other documents:

Effective and thorough scrutiny of critical documents created during the poll process will be necessary to identify cases of poll vitiation at any polling station. This exercise shall be carried out under close

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supervision of Observers and Returning Officers. The Commission desires to ensure that even subtle and concealed electoral malpractices at the polling station shall be detected through this document scrutiny process.

### 2. Intimation to all the contesting candidates:

All contesting candidates shall be given an advance notice in writing under proper acknowledgement so that they or their election agent/authorized representatives remain present. Candidates can authorize as many representatives as places fixed for scrutiny by the Returning Officer and Observer to watch the proceedings of scrutiny. In such notice, it shall be mentioned that either the candidate himself or his election agent or one representative duly authorized by the candidate in writing may be present to watch, **repeat only to watch**, the proceedings of scrutiny.

### 3. Documents to be Scrutinized:

Following documents should be scrutinized by Observer and Returning Officer in the presence of contesting candidates or their election agents:

- (a) Presiding Officers' diary
- (b) Form 17-A (Register of Voters)
- (c) Other related documents which include but not restricted to Micro Observers Reports, visitor sheets, reports of zonal magistrates or sector officers, report of Presiding Officer, still photography, videography recordings, CCTV and Webcasting footages
- (d) If the number of blind/infirm voters voting at a Polling Station (*Rule 40, Conduct of Election Rules 1961*) is more than 1% of the total no. of electors in that polling station, scrutiny of Form 14A (list of blind/infirm voters).

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## EIGHT

### **Form 7 Guideline: The onus of proof to substantiate the reason given for objection or removal of name lies with the applicant**

Form 7 serves as a critical tool for electors to raise objections or request deletions concerning entries in the electoral roll. In accordance with the prescribed guidelines, the application must be filed by an elector already registered in the constituency's existing electoral roll. The applicant has the option to object to the inclusion of a name, seek the deletion of their own name, or challenge a registered elector's details. The form requires the applicant to provide their name, EPIC number, and mobile number (either their own or that of a relative, such as a parent, spouse, or legal guardian). The applicant must also select one of the provided options and specify the reason for the objection, such as death, underage status, permanent relocation, duplicate enrolment, or non-citizenship.

The onus of proof to substantiate the objection lies with the applicant. Furthermore, the applicant must complete the details of the person in question, including their name, surname, EPIC number, and address.

The form concludes with a declaration, where *“The applicant must give a 'DECLARATION' that the facts and particulars mentioned in the application are true to the best of his/her knowledge and belief. Please note that giving any false statement made in the DECLARATION portion is a punishable offence under Section 31 of the Representation of People Act, 1950 with imprisonment with a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.”*




### **GUIDELINES FOR FILLING UP THE APPLICATION** **FORM-7**

1. **General Instruction:-**
  - (a) The application can be made by an elector registered in the existing electoral roll of the constituency.
  - (b) The application can be an objection in respect of a registered elector/ an objection to the proposed inclusion of an entry in the electoral roll of the constituency, in which the applicant himself is registered **OR** a request for deletion of the applicant's own name from electoral roll.
2. **Item No. 1 (Name of the applicant)**-The applicant shall mention his name, EPIC no. and mobile number of self 'or' relative (father/mother/husband/legal guardian).
3. **Item No. 2 (Option of objection/application of deletion)**:-The applicant has to tick any one option for which he intends to make the application. He must also tick any one of the reasons mentioned below the option, as to why according to him, the person against whom the objection has been made, is not qualified for inclusion in the electoral roll viz. due to death, under age, absent/permanently shifted, already enrolled in the electoral roll at the same place or some other place, not an Indian citizen etc. The onus of proof to substantiate the reason given for objection or removal of name lies with the applicant.
4. **Item No. 3 (Details of the person in respect of whom objection has been made)**:-The applicant has to fill up the name, surname, EPIC number and address of the person whose entry is objected to for inclusion or sought to be deleted.
5. **DECLARATION**:-The applicant must give a 'DECLARATION' that the facts and particulars mentioned in the application are true to the best of his/her knowledge and belief. **Please note that giving any false statement made in the DECLARATION portion is a punishable offence under Section 31 of the Representation of People Act, 1950 with imprisonment with a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.**

**Why these Provisions are Important:** Curbing arbitrary and fake additions and deletions from the electoral rolls is vital for ensuring the integrity of the electoral process. Unchecked voter manipulation can lead to the disenfranchisement of legitimate voters and distort election outcomes. By adhering to guidelines such as those outlined in Form 7, the process allows electors to challenge improper enrolments or deletions, ensuring that only eligible individuals are included. Additionally, the requirement for proof and the legal consequences for submitting false statements, as outlined in the Representation of People Act, 1950, important for accountability and transparency, helping to maintain trust in the democratic process.

## FORM 7

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA									
	<b>Form-7</b>								
FORM No. _____ (To be filled by office)									
<b>Voter Application Form for Objection for Proposed Inclusion/ Deletion of Name in Existing Electoral Roll</b> (See Rules 13(2) and (26) of the Registration of Electors Rules-1960)									
To, The Electoral Registration Officer, No. & Name of Assembly Constituency No. <input type="text"/> Name _____ Or No. & Name of Parliamentary Constituency@ No. <input type="text"/> Name _____ (@ only for Union Territories not having Legislative Assembly) I submit application for objection for proposed inclusion/deletion of name in existing electoral roll.									
(1) Name of the applicant <input type="text"/> EPIC No. _____ Mobile No. of Self <input type="text"/> 'or' Mobile No. of Relative <input type="text"/>									
(2) Option of application/objection:- (Tick the appropriate option) (Any one) <input type="checkbox"/> (i) I request to delete name of the person mentioned below already included in the current roll due to any one of the following reasons:- (tick any one) <input type="checkbox"/> Death <input type="checkbox"/> Under Age <input type="checkbox"/> Absent / Permanently shifted <input type="checkbox"/> Already enrolled <input type="checkbox"/> Not Indian Citizen <input type="checkbox"/> (ii) I object to proposed inclusion of name of the person mentioned below due to any one of the following reasons - (tick any one) <input type="checkbox"/> Death <input type="checkbox"/> Under Age <input type="checkbox"/> Absent / Permanently shifted <input type="checkbox"/> Already enrolled <input type="checkbox"/> Not Indian Citizen <input type="checkbox"/> (iii) I request to delete my name from electoral roll due to any one of the following reasons-(tick any one) <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently shifted <input type="checkbox"/> Already enrolled <input type="checkbox"/> Not Indian Citizen Death Certificate attached (Tick the appropriate option) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No									
(3) The details of the person in respect of whom objection has been raised, are as below:- Name _____ Surname _____ EPIC No.(if available) _____									
Address	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">House/Building/ Apartment No.</td> <td style="width: 70%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Town/Village</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PIN Code</td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>District</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	House/Building/ Apartment No.		Town/Village		PIN Code	<input type="text"/>	District	
House/Building/ Apartment No.									
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	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Street/Area/Locality/ Mohalla/Road</td> <td style="width: 70%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Post Office</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tehsil/Taluqa/Mandal</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>State/UT</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Street/Area/Locality/ Mohalla/Road		Post Office		Tehsil/Taluqa/Mandal		State/UT	
Street/Area/Locality/ Mohalla/Road									
Post Office									
Tehsil/Taluqa/Mandal									
State/UT									
<b>DECLARATION</b>									
I HEREBY DECLARE that to the best of my knowledge and belief that I am aware that making a statement or declaration which is false and which I know or believe to be false or do not believe to be true, is punishable under Section 31 of Representation of the People Act, 1950 (43 of 1950) with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.									
Date: _____ Place: _____ Signature of Applicant/Thumb Impression _____									
<b>Accessibility Instructions:-</b> In the light of provisions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017, in case of persons with intellectual disability, autism, cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities etc., signature or left hand thumb impression of person with disability, or signature or left hand thumb impression of his/her legal guardian will be required.									
<b>Acknowledgement/Receipt for application</b>									
Acknowledgment Number _____ Date _____ Received the application in Form 7 of Shri/Smt./Ms. _____ [Applicant can refer the Acknowledgement No. to check the status of application.]									
Name/Signature of ERO/AERO/BLO _____									

## Indian Democracy at the Crossroads

In a vibrant democracy like India, where the integrity of elections is paramount, the ECI's role as an impartial arbiter is non-negotiable. When the very institution entrusted with safeguarding democratic processes becomes shrouded in controversy and appears to be actively curtailing transparency, it shakes the faith of citizens in the system. The current trajectory risks transforming a crucial tool for ensuring free and fair elections into an instrument of obfuscation. The ECI must introspect and prioritise restoring public trust by embracing genuine transparency, rather than retreating behind legalistic interpretations that contradict the spirit of democratic accountability. The future of India's electoral integrity hinges on the ECI's willingness to be truly open and answerable to its citizens.

## PART - IV

# BIHAR ‘SPECIAL INTENSIVE RIVISION’ OF ELECTORAL ROLLS - 2025

## Chapter - I

### Special Intensive Revision in Bihar

#### BACKGROUND JUNE 2025 ONWARDS

#### BIHAR ‘SPECIAL INTENSIVE RIVISION’ OF ELECTORAL ROLLS -2025

#### Special Intensive Revision (SIR), Bihar 2025: Unanswered questions?

Beyond the storm brewing around the alleged manipulation in Maharashtra's 2024 Assembly Elections, a disturbing echo resonates from Bihar where Vidhan Sabha elections are scheduled for October-November 2025. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has conducted a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, pursuant to its sudden order dated June 24, 2025<sup>44</sup>. This directive, issued while exercising its power under Article 324 of the Constitution and Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, mandates a House-to-House (H2H) enumeration process. The stated objective is to ensure an accurate electoral roll by including all eligible citizens and excluding ineligible persons.

It's important to note that the Supreme Court, in *Mobinder Singh Gill vs. Chief Election Comr.* (1978) 1 SCC 405, clarified the limits of this broad authority. The Court ruled that while the ECI can issue instructions and orders in areas not covered by legislation, **this power must not be exercised in a malicious, arbitrary, or biased manner, nor without due consideration.**

However, the methodology adopted for the Bihar June 2025 SIR, particularly its pre-conditions for stringent documentation requirements and compressed timelines, raises profound concerns. The process appears to fundamentally shift the burden of proof for voter eligibility from the state to the citizen, potentially leading to widespread disenfranchisement. The ECI's own directive states that "Names of other electors, from whom Enumeration Forms are not received will not be included in the draft roll". This procedural design automatically omits eligible citizens from the draft roll if they fail to submit forms, irrespective of their actual eligibility. This mechanism directly contradicts with the stated goal of inclusivity and places an unreasonable onus on citizens to prove their right to vote under challenging conditions.

This intensive revision, the first since 2003, is being conducted in an arbitrary and hasty manner, just a few months before the scheduled state assembly elections. The decision was announced on June 24 and the exercise launched from June 25 to be continued until July 26, 2025. The period between July 27-31 was earmarked for the task of updating the control table and the preparation of the draft electoral roll. The draft role would (was

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNIJP1KivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzIv7%2FZQ09etPKoyJV5h%2FcTpSBY2rLSWcB8ZqM9aI5KyrxL4EAnNdah6vWMkIUyW8NsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

supposed to) contain the names of all existing voters/electors who submitted the duly filled Enumeration Form from July 27 to 31, 2025. With the draft electoral roll scheduled for August 1<sup>45</sup>, 2025 and the final voter rolls slated for publication on September 30, 2025 – a mere few months before the state elections, the concerns were justified. A hurried and arbitrary timeline, coupled with the ECI's initial unilateral announcement on June 24, 2025<sup>46</sup>, has generated immense confusion and suspicion.

Just weeks before, on May 29, 2025, the ECI had listed 21 initiatives to “improve voter access” and to “streamline poll management.” However, the SIR of electoral rolls was not mentioned in the said 21 initiative nor has there been a mention of any plans for such a mammoth exercise in close proximity to elections in any meeting with any of the stakeholders including in meetings held by ECI with heads of various national parties held in May-June 2025.

### **Contradiction with law and bypass of due process:**

The most critical contradiction lies in the SIR's own instruction dated June 24, 2025 that “Names of other electors, from whom Enumeration Forms are not received will not be included in the draft roll.” This directly violates Rule 21A of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. Rule 21A explicitly requires that before a name is deleted from the electoral roll, the registration officer must “make every endeavour to give him a reasonable opportunity to show cause why the action proposed should not be taken.”

The well-laid out process involves a *suo moto* inquiry and proper notice. The SIR, by automatically omitting non-responding existing electors from the draft roll, effectively implements a mass deletion without affording individual due process or opportunity to be heard. It shifts the onus entirely from the state (ECI/ERO) to prove ineligibility to the citizen to proactively re-prove their existing eligibility, creating a “guilty until proven innocent” scenario for previously registered voters.

### **The “Proof of Citizenship” as an insurmountable hurdle**

The ECI's mandate for electors to submit one of eleven specific documents to prove eligibility is an “insurmountable hurdle” in a “document-scarce” state like Bihar. While seemingly administrative, this requirement overlooks the socio-economic realities of the state. A significant portion of Bihar's population, particularly the poor, less educated, and marginalised communities (Muslims, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and migrant workers), lack access to these conventional official documents such as birth certificates, matriculation certificates, or government-issued IDs pre-dating specific dates. The puzzling exclusion of widely available and accessible documents like Aadhaar cards and current Ration Cards from the acceptable list exacerbates this challenge. This stringent documentation, coupled with the threat of automatic exclusion, transforms a routine administrative process into a de facto citizenship test, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations who may be legitimate citizens but lack the specific formal documentation. This could lead to a systemic “cleansing” of the electoral roll based on socio-economic status and document access rather than actual citizenship.

<sup>45</sup> [Bihar draft electoral rolls to be published on August 1; final list to be out on September 30 - The Hindu](#)

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFfOirFxbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNIJP1KivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzIv7%2FZQ09etPKoyJV5h%2FcTpSBY2rLSWcB8ZqM9a15KyrxL4EAnNdah6vWMkIUyW8NsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

### **Impact on the affected population and flawed ECI projections**

The SIR targets a staggering number of Bihar's voting-age population. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare estimates Bihar's current voting-age population at 8.08 crore, with approximately 4.76 crore individuals aged 40 and under. While the ECI stated that 4.96 crore individuals from the 2003 electoral roll would not need to submit fresh documents, this figure is based on an oversight. Calculations factoring in deaths (estimated 1.1 crore) and permanent out-migration (estimated 94 lakh voters, leading to about 70 lakhs no longer being electors in Bihar) from the 2003 list reduce the actual number of livings, resident electors from that list to approximately 3.16 crore.

Consequently, the actual number of individuals required to submit fresh eligibility documents within the month-long window is closer to 4.74 crore, a figure strikingly similar to the population projection of those aged 40 and under. This magnitude, coupled with the stringent document requirements, creates an immense and unrealistic burden on a vast segment of the electorate. Estimates suggest that over 3 crore voters, particularly from marginalised communities, could be excluded due to these stringent requirements.

### **Problematic timeline and unreasonable burden**

As mentioned at the start of this section, the timeline for the SIR process is extremely constricted, which places an unreasonable burden on both the ECI machinery and the voters. From June 25 to July 26, 2025, BLOs were tasked with distributing and collecting pre-filled Enumeration Forms, along with required documents, through house-to-house visits, while simultaneously uploading these daily. This tight window is insufficient for comprehensive household outreach, especially considering challenges like locked houses, multiple visits, and assisting illiterate, elderly, or disabled voters. The one-month period for claims and objections (August 1 to September 1, 2025) is equally problematic. Given the potential scale of exclusions, a month is insufficient for individuals, especially those in rural and marginalised areas, to become aware of their exclusion, obtain necessary documents (many of which are difficult to procure quickly), and successfully navigate the appeal mechanism. The rapid subsequent steps (stages of the SIR), leading to final publication on September 30, 2025, further reveals the hasty nature of the process. This timeline, combined with the stringent documentation and automatic exclusion, violates principles of natural justice and fair opportunity.

### **ECI's overreach and constitutional breach**

The ECI's June 24, 2025 notification itself, while stating that EROs must ensure "no eligible citizen is left out while no ineligible person is included," directly contradicts this stated objective through its own operational guidelines. By inventing a mechanism that automatically excludes existing electors for non-submission of forms, and by demanding proof of citizenship in a manner that disproportionately impacts a vast segment of the population, the ECI is perceived as venturing into an area that is arguably beyond its conventional domain and jurisdiction, potentially leading to a serious constitutional breach of the fundamental right to vote. The overall approach seems to prioritise "cleansing" at the expense of inclusivity, especially when considering the significant, often contradictory, increases in voter data seen in other states like Maharashtra, suggesting a broader need for a cautious and phased approach across all states before a general election.

The press release of the Press Information Bureau (PIB)<sup>47</sup> of the Government of India gives the ECI justification/reasoning behind the suddenly announced exercise: "*Various reasons such as rapid urbanization, frequent*

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2139342>:



*migration, young citizens becoming eligible to vote, non-reporting of deaths and **inclusion of the names of foreign illegal immigrants** have necessitated the conduct of an intensive revision so as to ensure integrity and preparation of error-free electoral rolls. The Booth Level Officers (BLOs) shall be conducting house-to-house survey for verification during the process of this intensive revision.”*

The SIR exercise by ECI is aimed at scrutinising voters *within* the existing voter base and citizens *within* the general populace to prevent the inclusion of ineligible individuals in the ER just months before the Bihar State Assembly Elections. This amounts to a hasty and ill-thought-out attempt to prepare the state’s electoral roll afresh entirely without the thoroughness of a door-to-door exercise *by the ECI*, allowing for responses and inclusions by ‘inadvertently’ excluded citizens. Further, this new move—currently under serious challenge in the Supreme Court—is both dubious and is contentious because the ECI’s notified supporting documents for SIR are aligned with *citizenship proofs*. This has fuelled concerns of whether or not this “SIR” is a surreptitious exercise aimed at large-scale disenfranchisement of voters and bringing in the contentious National Register of Citizens (NRC) by the backdoor.

The Indian electoral process is governed by a robust framework of constitutional articles and statutory provisions, primarily aimed at ensuring free, fair, and inclusive elections. Article 324 of the Constitution vests the superintendence, direction, and control of elections for Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of President and Vice-President in the Election Commission of India (ECI). This grants the ECI broad powers to manage the entire electoral process.

To guarantee universal suffrage and prevent discrimination, Article 325 explicitly prohibits denying anyone the right to be included in an electoral roll based on religion, race, caste, or sex, mandating a single general electoral roll for every constituency.

The Representation of the People Act, 1950, further details the practical aspects. Section 21 empowers the ECI to prepare and revise electoral rolls, allowing for general revisions before elections and special revisions at any time for recorded reasons. Section 16 outlines disqualifications for registration, such as not being an Indian citizen, being of unsound mind, or being disqualified under laws related to corrupt practices.

The Representation of the People Act, 1951, specifically Section 62, establishes the right to vote for those on the electoral roll, while also detailing disqualifications, including voting in more than one constituency of the same class or more than once in the same constituency, or being imprisoned (with an exception for preventive detention).

The Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, provides the procedural machinery. Rule 19 outlines the process for hearing claims and objections to voter registration, ensuring due notice to all parties. Crucially, Rule 21A sets out the due process for the deletion of names from the electoral roll, requiring the preparation and exhibition of a list of names, public notice of the deletion, and consideration of objections, with an endeavour to provide the affected person a reasonable opportunity to show cause. Rule 25 further specifies how electoral rolls are to be revised, either intensively or summarily, as directed by the Election Commission. These provisions collectively aim to maintain accurate electoral rolls and uphold the integrity of the democratic process.

**Bypassing these above-mentioned provisions of the law and rules, this entire unilaterally mandated exercise being currently conducted raises serious concerns about the ECI overstepping its mandate and potentially disenfranchising legitimate voters under the guise of electoral roll purification.**

A primary point of contention was the ECI's initial mandate requiring existing voters not on the 2003 rolls to furnish proof of their and their parents' citizenship. While this was relaxed on June 30, 2025, following a public outcry --allowing the 2003 roll to serve as presumptive evidence of eligibility for those enrolled post-2003— individuals whose names are entirely absent from the 2003 roll still face the burden of producing their own documents. Those enrolled pre-2003 rolls still need to submit an enumeration form, however.

### Allegations of political motivation and disparity

While the ECI uses "Battery Rickshaws" and photo capturing, these initiatives are viewed by critics as superficial PR efforts rather than effective voter assistance. Concerns are heightened by alleged disproportionate ECI activity, with reports of 80% more work in the Simanchal region – a stronghold for opposition parties (RJD, Congress, CPI(ML)) – compared to BJP and JDU strongholds. This raises suspicions of targeted voter list adjustments to sway electoral outcomes. The low voter turnout in the last Bihar Assembly Election (only 4.21 crore votes cast out of 7.36 crore registered voters, leaving 3.14 crore uncast) has further fuelled concerns about potential manipulation during such a revision.

### Why the 'Special Internal Revision' in Bihar is concerning

- **Logistical challenges in rural Bihar:** The process is difficult in rural Bihar due to low literacy and computer literacy, unreliable electricity, and limited access to equipment needed to download or submit forms online.
- The ECI's SIR guideline is problematic due to its stringent documentation requirements and later the unilateral exclusion of existing electors from the draft roll if Enumeration Forms are not submitted along with acceptable documents, effectively bypassing established due process for deletion (Rule 21A). Crucially, the (initial) exclusion of common identity proofs like Aadhaar, Ration Card, and EPIC from the list of eleven acceptable documents (which instead prioritise passports, birth certificates, matriculation certificates, and government-issued documents pre-dating July 1987) creates a significant barrier to voter inclusion.
- This SIR guideline disproportionately impacts various segments of the population, leading to potential disenfranchisement on a massive scale. According to the Hindu (July 1, 2025) report<sup>48</sup>, only a negligible proportion of Bihar domicile (2.8% born between 2001-2005) possess birth certificates, and less than 2% of the 18-40 age group hold government jobs, making their identity/pension cards largely irrelevant. While passports are held by merely 2.4% of the population, matriculation certificates, effectively becoming the main proof for 18–40-year-olds, exclude 45-50% of this age group, particularly women who face a 10%-point gap in matriculation rates. Furthermore, only around 16% of Biharis possessed caste certificates as of 2011-12. The absence of applicable documents like the National Register of Citizens (for Bihar) and family registers further constrains options.
- This effectively shifts the electoral system from universal adult franchise to one favouring only matriculates, potentially disenfranchising 2.4-2.6 crore people who left school due to poverty. The aggregate effect, including older individuals not on the 2003 voter list or those with name discrepancies,

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/data/voter-verification-drive-in-bihar-too-little-time-too-many-hurdles/article69756972.ece>



could lead to hundreds of lakhs losing their constitutional right to vote, penalising citizens for the state's historical shortcomings in documentation and basic service provision.

- This initial stringent requirement raised concerns about potential discrimination. While individuals in certain societal positions (e.g., government servants, landholders) might more easily produce documents, others, particularly those born in the 1970s and 1980s for whom birth certificates are often scarce, were left heavily reliant on this single, often unavailable, document.
- Furthermore, the provision exempting those on the 2003 voter list from producing documents was criticised as discriminatory, as it bypassed the very verification process being applied to others.
- **Massive migration impact:** Bihar has high rates of out-migration for work. Migrant workers are unlikely to be home for door-to-door verification or have the means to participate from distant worksites, risking widespread disenfranchisement<sup>49</sup>. Many are left out because they are registered in their home cities/towns/villages while residing elsewhere, mostly for work reasons. Returning to their constituencies to cast their ballot can, indeed, be an issue<sup>50</sup>.
- The issue becomes more complicated with long-term migrants. The enormity of the task, the short duration, and the strict criteria for verification could result in the wrongful exclusion of lakhs of voters. The ECI's statement that only ordinary residents would qualify for inclusion in the electoral roll has raised concerns.
- **Impractical timeline:** The Election Commission of India's (ECI) schedule for this "Special Intensive Revision" (SIR) is too short and unrealistic given the on-ground realities. Even, The Supreme Court of India concluded its July 10, 2025 hearing with a caution that *"we have serious doubt on whether you can follow this timeline. Remember, you have to follow the procedure. It is something that is not practical."*<sup>51</sup>
- Risk of disenfranchising close to 2-3 crore voters in the state? The stringent requirements and tight deadlines could lead to a significant number of genuine Bihar electors being removed from the voter list, especially the poor and marginalised who may lack required documents<sup>52</sup>. This estimate is solely based on the issues that plague Bihar like migration etc. As per this report in *The Hindu*<sup>53</sup> it quotes ECI's own statistics that state that 20 percent people from Bihar migrate from the state (Footnote 35) herein.
- Bihar, a state grappling with poverty and high migration, poses a significant challenge to the ECI's Special Intensive Revision (SIR). Many marginalized citizens, including SCs, STs, and migrant workers, lack essential documents. Estimates suggest over 3 crore (30 million) voters in Bihar could be excluded due to SIR's strict requirements. Reports from Bihar, where SIR is underway, confirm that lakhs of these vulnerable voters lack the demanded documents, creating a critical disconnect that threatens to disenfranchise legitimate citizens.

<sup>49</sup> [Careful curation: On Bihar's Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls - The Hindu](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Place of Voting: The other voter's choice - The Economic Times](#)

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/supreme-court-hearing-bihar-voter-list-revision-case-election-commission-of-india-297123?from-login=559334&token=RDWEBWN6RFEEJ2384XNWKZ0DPFC5S80DQNLWV>

<sup>52</sup> [Bihar roll revision will disenfranchise over 2 crore voters: INDIA bloc to Election Commission](#)

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/elections/bihar-assembly/two-crore-bihar-voters-will-be-disenfranchised-because-of-sir-india-bloc-claims/article69765321.ece>

- **Legal & procedural concerns:** The revision procedure is perceived by some as circumventing or violating existing legal provisions and established ECI practices, potentially leading to legal challenges. This includes the requirement for proof of citizenship for not just the elector but also their parents in some cases, and the exclusion of commonly held documents like Aadhaar and Ration cards. Most village electors lack the 11 EC-notified documents required to prove their citizenship<sup>54</sup>.
- This is especially true with documents like Aadhaar, EPIC Card and Ration Card –widely available--not on the list.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> [In village after village in Bihar, a chorus: ‘We only have Aadhaar... how do we get the papers EC asking for?’](#)

<sup>55</sup> [EC’s Directive to Update Voter Lists in Bihar Risks Mass Exclusion. Here’s Why - The Wire](#)

## Chapter – II

### SIR Challenged in Supreme Court

#### **Petitions before the Supreme Court seeking striking down and stay on ECI's SIR Notification dated June 24, 2025**

Several petitions in the Supreme Court of India, including by representatives of major Opposition Parties were filed to challenge the SIR process<sup>56</sup>. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)<sup>57</sup>, Rashtriya Janata Dal, MP Dr. Manoj Jha<sup>58</sup>, Trinamool Congress (TMC), MP Mahua Moitra<sup>59</sup> among others<sup>60</sup> filed petitions before the Supreme Court seeking striking down the SIR notification of ECI dated June 24, 2025 as violative<sup>61</sup> of Articles 14, 19, 21, 325 and 326 of the Constitution of India as well as provisions of Representation of People's Act, 1950 and Rule 21A of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960."

The petition<sup>62</sup> filed by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) contends that the ECI order is arbitrary and can disenfranchise millions of voters. ADR mentioned in its petition that "the SIR order dated 24.06.2025 if not set aside, can arbitrarily and without due process disenfranchise lakhs of voters from electing their representatives, thereby disrupting free and fair elections and democracy in the country, which are part of basic structure of the Constitution. That the documentation requirements of the directive, lack of due process as well as the unreasonably short timeline for the said Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Roll in Bihar further make this exercise bound to result in removal of names of lakhs of genuine voters from electoral rolls leading to their disenfranchisement."

#### **ECI has shifted the onus of being on the voters' list from the State to citizens**

The petitioners also contend in its petition that the ECI's June 24, 2025 SIR order unjustly shifts the burden of electoral roll inclusion from the State to individual citizens. By excluding common identification like Aadhaar and ration cards, and demanding proof of not only the voter's but also their parents' citizenship, the order disproportionately targets marginalized communities. This requirement, they argue, violates Article 326 of the Constitution.

Furthermore, petitioners asserts that the ECI's directive lacks the "recorded reasons" and supporting evidence mandated by Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, making it arbitrary. Given the upcoming state elections and the short timeframe, this "drastic exercise" is deemed unjustified and threatens to disenfranchise lakhs of legitimate voters.

<sup>56</sup> [INDIA bloc to explore legal options to challenge voter list special revision in Bihar - The Hindu](#)

<sup>57</sup> [PUCL Approaches Supreme Court Challenging ECI's Electoral Roll Revision In Bihar](#)

<sup>58</sup> [RJD MP Manoj Jha joins force in Supreme Court to challenge special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar - The Hindu](#)

<sup>59</sup> [Mahua Moitra on X: "Bihar SIR petition allowed in SC. Notice issued. Hearing on Thursday. Satyameva Jayate." / X](#)

<sup>60</sup> [Yogendra Yadav Moves Supreme Court Against Bihar's Voter Roll Revision Ahead Of Assembly Elections, Stay Sought On Voters Deletion](#)

<sup>61</sup> [NGO moves Supreme Court challenging ECI's Special Intensive Revision of rolls in Bihar - The Hindu](#)

<sup>62</sup> 'Arbitrary, Impractical, Disenfranchises Lakhs' : Plea In Supreme Court Challenges ECI's Bihar Voter Roll Revision

### **First Hearing: 10.07.2025**

The first hearing begins on July 10, 2025 and during the hearing the division bench of **Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia** and **Joymalya Bagchi** refused to any stay on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar and issued notice in the petitions, posted hearings on 28.07.2025 and directed Counter affidavit be filed by the Election Commission of India on or before 21.07.2025. Rejoinder affidavit, if any, be filed before 28.07.2025.

**The Court, while allowing the ECI to proceed with the SIR, cautioned that no names should be deleted from the electoral roll without adhering to due process of law. During the hearing the Court also expressed surprise that the ECI's own document, the EPIC card nor the Aadhar was being considered in the exercise as a means of identification of the voter.**

The petitions argued that the SIR violates fundamental rights under Articles 14, 21, 324, 325, and 326 of the Constitution, along with the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (specifically Section 21(3) on revisions) and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960. Petitioners contested the ECI's authority for such a revision, the procedure adopted, and the timing, especially with Bihar Assembly elections due in November 2025.

A central point of contention was the ECI's prescribed list of 11 documents for proving voter eligibility. Petitioners highlighted that this list excluded widely held documents like **Aadhaar cards, Electors Photo Identity Cards (EPIC) (issued by the ECI itself), and Ration Cards**, which could disenfranchise many genuine voters, particularly in a "document-scarce" state like Bihar.

### **Consideration of Aadhar, EPIC and Ration Cards would be in the interests of justice: SC**

During the July 10 hearing, acknowledging the stringent requirement of 11 acceptable documents, the bench further observed that it would be in the interests of justice if the Election Commission of India also considers the following three documents such as **1) Aadhar Card; 2) Electors Photo Identify Card (EPIC)**, which is issued by Election Commission of India itself, **and 3) the Ration Card**, as these documents would satisfy most of the voters. Therefore, in our prima facie view, **it would be in the interest of justice if the Election Commission will also consider these documents**. The ECI countered that the revision was a necessary and lawful exercise, as Bihar's last intensive revision was in 2003, and the list of 11 documents was not exhaustive.

### **Counter Affidavit Filed by the ECI: 21.07.2025**

In its counter affidavit, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has doubled down on its position on what SC expected that Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC/Voter ID) cannot be not be considered a primary document for fresh entries during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). On the Aadhaar card too, the ECI reiterated its previous stand that the identity card in law, is not recognised as a standalone valid document for electoral roll inclusion though it can “supplement other documents to prove eligibility,” acknowledging its utility for identification purposes during the SIR process. These assertions, made in a counter-affidavit filed on July 21, 2025, by Deputy Election Commissioner Sanjay Kumar, reveal the ECI's categorisation of the SIR as a “de novo revision process” under Rule 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

The ECI's counter affidavit is filed by Sanjay Kumar, Deputy Election Commissioner on **21.07.2025**.

### **ECI's Preliminary Objections to the petitions**

1. Reliance on newspaper articles unfounded
2. Petitioners approached with unclean hands

3. PIL on mere suspicions cannot be entertained
4. Petitions are pre-mature

### **ECI's Submission on SIR in Bihar**

1. Necessity and authority of SIR
2. Processual details of SIR
3. Publication of draft roll and claims/objections
4. Submission of eligibility documents
5. Timelines for completion of SIR

### **Submissions on Law**

1. The jurisdiction of ECI to conduct SIR under Article 324, 326 of the Constitution and Section Sections 16 and 19 of the RP Act, 1950.
2. Power to scrutinise citizenship
  - The ECI refutes the petitioners' argument that only the Central Government can scrutinize citizenship under Section 9 of the Citizenship Act, 1955. Section 9 is limited to cases of voluntary acquisition of foreign citizenship. Other aspects of citizenship can be inquired into by relevant authorities, including the ECI. The ECI cites *Sarbananda Sonowal v. Union of India (2005) 5 SCC 665* and *State of U.P. v. Shah Mohammed (1969) 1 SCC 771* to support its interpretation of Section 9.
  - The burden to prove citizenship rests with the individual, as the necessary documents are within their personal knowledge.
3. Scrutiny of citizenship in absence of challenge/objection
4. Opposes inclusion of Aadhaar, EPIC and Ration Cards as proof of eligibility
  - In its counter-affidavit, the Election Commission of India (ECI) defended its authority to verify citizenship during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The ECI contended that its power to scrutinise citizenship is a statutory obligation derived from Article 326 of the Constitution and Sections 16 and 19 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and that it is mandated to ensure only Indian citizens are registered as voters.
  - The ECI's affidavit dismissed the argument that only the central government has the power to adjudicate citizenship. It stated that while the central government has exclusive jurisdiction under Section 9 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 for cases of voluntary acquisition of foreign citizenship, "other aspects related to citizenship can be inquired into by other relevant authorities," including the ECI. The commission clarified that it is not independently "determining or adjudicating" citizenship, but rather discharging its duty to prevent non-citizens from being included in the electoral roll, a process distinct from that under the Citizenship Act, 1955.
  - Furthermore, the ECI rejected the idea that requiring proof of citizenship shifts the burden of proof. It explained that under the electoral registration scheme, an applicant must establish their eligibility by submitting Form 6. For existing names, removal only occurs after a detailed inquiry and when the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) is satisfied of the person's ineligibility, without implying a termination of citizenship. The affidavit also opposed the use of Aadhaar, Electoral Photo Identity Cards (EPIC), and Ration Cards as proof of eligibility.
5. Denies violation of Article 14, 19, 21, 325 and 326

### **25.07.2025: Rejoinder filed by the ADR**

The Petitioner at the outset rejects all the contentions with regards to the Counter-affidavit filed by ECI on **21.07.2025**. The petitioner submitted;

1. ECI has failed to establish why SIR of Electoral Roll must be completed before imminent elections in Bihar and why electoral roll as on January 2025 cannot be used.
2. SIR order does not prescribe any procedure regarding the scrutiny of enumeration forms or the verification of documents, thereby conferring upon EROs arbitrary, unbridled and excessive discretionary powers, which can disenfranchise a huge percentage of population in Bihar
3. SIR of Electoral Rolls in Bihar, is being conducted in a manner that constitutes a grave fraud on the voters of Bihar
  - a) Enumeration forms are being signed by BLOs themselves at various booths in absence of voters.
  - b) Voters who have not even filled the forms are getting messages on their phones that their forms have been filled.
  - c) Individuals who are dead are being shown to have filled the form
  - d) ECI posted false claims about voters having received acknowledgment of having filled enumeration form.
4. ECI statistics on ground coverage are meaningless since inclusion in draft roll holds no meaning without submission of documents.
5. ECI has given no valid reason for exclusion of Aadhaar, EPIC and Ration Card from the list of documents which can be submitted during SIR.
6. ECI's statistics with regard to document coverage is misleading.
7. ECI's argument that it has power to determine citizenship is untenable and in teeth of judgments of this Hon'ble Court.

### **28.07.2025: Second Hearing**

On July 28, 2025, the bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi refused to stop the Election Commission of India from publishing the draft electoral rolls for Bihar on August 1, 2025 as per the schedule notified for the Special Intensive Revision.

The bench –again-- verbally told the ECI to consider at least the statutory documents of Aadhaar and EPIC.

- *"There's presumption of correctness with official documents, you proceed with these 2 documents. You will include these two documents (Aadhaar and EPIC). Wherever you find forgery, that's on case-to-case basis. Any document on the earth can be forged..", Justice Kant orally told the ECI's counsel.*

**Justice Kant further impressed upon the ECI that instead of "en masse exclusion", there should be, "en masse inclusion."**

Justice Bagchi expressed, *"Jan 2025 list is the starting point if there was no SIR. Draft list will be published by ECI. Your apprehension is 65 lakh odd voters will not feature...they (ECI) are seeking correction vis-a-vis 2025 entry. We are overruling the thing as a judicial authority. If there is mass exclusion, we will immediately step in. Bring 15 people saying they are alive."*

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, for RJD MP Manoj Jha, said, *"They know who the 65-lakh people...If they mention the names in draft list, we have no problem."*

### **06.08.2025: Third Hearing**

#### **Mass Exclusion of 65 Lakh Voters: SC seeks reply from the ECI**

On August 6, 2025, the Supreme Court directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to respond by August 9 to allegations of irregularities concerning Bihar's draft electoral rolls. The central concern, raised in an application filed by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), is the deletion of 65 lakh voters from the draft roll published on August 1 following the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process.

The court sought the clarification on two main points that whether the draft list was shared with political parties before publication and specific details regarding the names and reasons for the omissions.

ADR's counsel, Prashant Bhushan, contended that the ECI failed to disclose the identities of the removed voters and whether they were deceased or had migrated. He also alleged a lack of transparency, claiming that political parties were not given the lists at the block level and that there was a lack of clarity regarding the recommendations of the **Booth Level Officers (BLOs)**. Bhushan also claimed that many of the included voters were not recommended by BLOs and had not submitted the required documents.

In its defense, the ECI's counsel refuted these claims, asserting that the draft list had been shared with political parties. The court, a bench of Justices Surya Kant, Ujjal Bhuyan, and NK Singh, instructed the ECI to file a formal reply with a list of the political parties that received the draft roll. Justice Kant noted that the detailed reasons for deletions would be provided with the final list.

**The division bench listed the petitions challenging the Bihar SIR for hearing on August 12 and 13, 2025.**



## Chapter – III

### How the SIR Process was conducted

#### SIR Bihar: Ground Report

In a worrying echo of past electoral integrity concerns, ground reports from Bihar's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls revealed a critical procedural deviation that mirror troubling patterns observed during the Maharashtra Assembly Elections. *These have emerged in the week of July 13, 2025.* These have been particularly exposed by senior journalist, Ajit Anjum on his YouTube channel.

Senior Journalist Ajit Anjum, whose relentless ground reporting from Bihar has meticulously peeled back the layers of discrepancy between the Election Commission of India's (ECI) grand pronouncements and the harsh realities faced by citizens and frontline workers. Anjum's investigative work has been instrumental in illuminating the operational flaws within the ECI's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, exposing a systemic pattern where clear guidelines are routinely circumvented.<sup>63</sup>

Through his substantial focus on the ground, Anjum has brought to light the perplexing situation where voters are denied the mandated acknowledgment receipts, a fundamental safeguard, and where Booth Level Officers (BLOs) are themselves supplied with only single copies of forms, forcing an absurd and impractical burden of self-photocopying onto the very citizens they serve. His reporting from various corners of Bihar has captured the voices of villagers struggling to meet arbitrary documentary demands, showcasing the profound disconnect between policy formulation in Delhi and its challenging implementation in the state. Instead of appreciating this constructive criticism, Monday, July 14 saw Ajit Anjum's exercise as an independent journalist being criminalised and a First Information Report (FIR) was filed against him in Begusarai, Bihar. <sup>64</sup>

This further casted doubts on the evident highhandedness of the ECI's conduct in the state.

#### Violations on the Ground

Despite explicit Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines mandating the provision of acknowledgement receipts and the collection of complete documentation, this crucial exercise is reportedly marred by the distribution of single forms and the acceptance of incomplete voter applications. This creates an immediate burden on citizens and fuels scepticism about the process's transparency.

The expedited, one-month timeline for this massive revision across Bihar's 7.9 crore electorate inherently pressures Booth Level Officers (BLOs) into a "hasty process," compromising thorough verification.

#### Maharashtra state elections flaws reflected in Bihar

This mirrors *Newslandry's* findings in Maharashtra, where BLOs, under similar time constraints, relied on forms provided by higher authorities (??) rather than conducting mandated ground verification, leading to unverified

<sup>63</sup> [बिहार में SIR पर झूठे दावे करते पकड़े गए IAS अधिकारी, वोटर्स ने खुद कर दिया एक्सपोज || Ajit Anjum](#)

<sup>64</sup> <https://sabrangindia.in/journalist-ajit-anjum-booked-for-exposing-bihars-sir-flaws/>



voter additions. The ECI's dismissal of legitimate concerns as "misleading" further exacerbates a growing crisis of confidence, demanding urgent and transparent intervention to safeguard the foundational accuracy of India's electoral rolls.<sup>65</sup>

The Election Commission of India's (ECI) "*Detailed Guidelines for Special Intensive Revision [Annexure B]*"<sup>66</sup>, specifically Para 3(f) on House-to-House (H2H) Enumeration, clearly outlines the procedure for Booth Level Officers (BLOs). These guidelines, issued on June 24, 2025 mandate that BLOs must retain one copy of the Enumeration Form along with the necessary documents, and provide an acknowledgment receipt on the second copy of the Enumeration Form to be kept by the applicant.

बिहार में SIR  
सवाल आपके,  
जवाब हमारे

SIR (विशेष गहन पुनरीक्षण) के दौरान, यदि  
आपका नाम **24/06/2025** की तारीख तक  
निर्वाचक नामावली में दर्ज है, तो आपकी  
योग्यता की पुष्टि के लिए गणना प्रपत्र भरा  
जाता है।

यह प्रपत्र की दो प्रतियां आपको बीएलओ द्वारा  
आपके घर पर दी जाएंगी

या फिर आप इसे ऑनलाइन  
**<https://voters.eci.gov.in>** या  
**ECINET** ऐप से भी डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं।



<sup>65</sup> <https://www.newslandry.com/2025/06/23/in-6-months-fadnavis-seat-added-29219-voters-poll-staff-claim-lapses>

<sup>66</sup> [Special Intensive Revision w.r.t. 01.07.2025 as the qualifying date](#)

**Public awareness posters confirm voter entitlement:** further emphasising the stated procedure, awareness posters displayed outside Election offices plainly detail the roles and responsibilities. Under the heading "What will the BLO do?" these posters explicitly state:

"BLOs will visit your home after June 25. They will provide you with pre-filled enumeration forms in two copies, guide you in filling out the forms, collect the completed enumeration forms along with self-attested documents, and issue you an acknowledgment."



**Clear instructions for voters:** moreover, the posters also include instructions for voters under the heading "What should you (voters) do?" These instructions clearly advise voters to:

- "Fill out both copies of the form (with pre-filled information)."
- "Affix your latest photo to the enumeration form."
- "Attach self-attested copies of necessary documents."
- "Contact the BLO for any additional assistance related to the form."
- And most importantly, "Return the form to the BLO and ensure you receive a receipt."

Source: <https://x.com/ajitanjum/status/1944626458749809021>

## A collision of lofty directives and harsh realities on the ground

The Election Commission of India's (ECI) Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, mandated by clear guidelines, is encountering severe operational discrepancies on the ground. This intensive exercise, designed to update voter lists, is instead creating a chaotic and potentially disenfranchising situation for citizens, while simultaneously placing BLOs under immense pressure due to an unreasonably short timeline. This disconnect between explicit ECI mandates and the practical execution reveals systemic flaws that threaten the integrity of the electoral process.

## 1. The acknowledgement receipt fiasco: guidelines ignored, burden shifted to electors

- **ECI's clear mandate:** As per ECI's "Detailed Guidelines for Special Intensive Revision [Annexure B]" <sup>67</sup>of June 24, Para 3(f) on House-to-House (H2H) Enumeration unequivocally states that BLOs "shall keep one copy of Enumeration Form... and give an acknowledgement of receipt... on the other copy... to be retained by the applicant." This is a fundamental safeguard for voters.
- **Ground reality & electors' plight:**
  - **Single Form distribution:** Reports from Kishanganj Municipal Council confirm a disturbing trend, all BLOs were supplied with only one form, not the mandated two.
  - **Absence of acknowledgment slips:** Furthermore, BLOs were not provided with any acknowledgment slips to hand over to voters.<sup>68</sup>
  - **Impractical Burden on Voters:** This systemic failure forces BLOs to instruct electors to "Xerox the form for acknowledgement by itself." For a significant portion of Bihar's population, particularly in rural villages where access to photocopying facilities is scarce and affordability is an issue, this is "impractical and unrealistic." It places an undue financial and logistical burden on citizens whose "validation of their voting rights hinged on the documents asked by the Election Commission."<sup>69</sup>
  - **Loss of proof, risk of exclusion:** Without an official acknowledgment, electors lack tangible proof of form submission. This leaves them vulnerable to potential exclusion from the electoral roll with no recourse, as their claim cannot be substantiated later, casting a shadow of doubt over the entire process.

## 2. The hurried collection of incomplete documents: a precursor to mass disenfranchisement

- **ECI's explicit document requirements:** BLOs are strictly "instructed to collect the enumeration forms along with acceptable documents i.e. 11 documents [3 more Aadhaar, EPIC and Ration Card by SC on June 10 Hearing]." The ECI mandate "clearly stated that each elector must submit this form along with requisite information and self-attested documents to the BLO."
- **Ground reality & its perilous implications:**
  - **Acceptance without documents:** Alarming, "most of the forms collected by BLOs are without the supporting documents," with BLOs reportedly telling citizens to "submit the supporting documents later." This is a blatant disregard for ECI protocol and creates a colossal administrative backlog.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> [Special Intensive Revision w.r.t. 01.07.2025 as the qualifying date](#)

<sup>68</sup> <https://x.com/ajitanjum/status/1944426851817922596>

<sup>69</sup> <https://x.com/ajitanjum/status/1944626458749809021>

<sup>70</sup> <https://x.com/rajuparulekar/status/1944571043693429196/video/1>

- **Incomplete form acceptance:** Even more concerning is the acceptance of forms where "names of the electors also not mentioned along with other requisite details." This indicates a superficial, figure-driven collection rather than a diligent verification process.<sup>71</sup>
- **BLOs under pressure:** The "hasty process" suggests that BLOs, operating under severe time constraints, are prioritising quantity over quality. They are likely under immense pressure to meet targets, leading them to bypass essential verification steps.
- **Shifting the burden to later stages (and electors):** This "poor manner" of initial data collection "burdens again shift on the people to proof their identification later." The ECI guidelines (Para 5.b.) state that ERO/AERO will initiate a *suo moto inquiry* and "issue notice to such proposed Elector" if eligibility is doubted due to non-submission of documents. This implies that later, potentially close to elections, citizens will again have to scramble to provide documents, respond to notices, and attend hearings – a difficult task for many, especially migrant labourers or those with limited literacy, as later submission of documents as claimed by BLOs is contradictory with process.
- **Risk of arbitrary deletions:** Incomplete forms and missing documents inherently lead to "cases with suspected eligibility." While EROs are meant to "start scrutinising Enumeration Forms, as and when they are received," the sheer volume of incomplete data due to the "hasty process" could overwhelm the system, potentially leading to arbitrary deletions if electors cannot respond to notices in time or produce documents that were not collected initially. The mandate for ERO/AERO to "pass a speaking order" for each disputed case becomes practically impossible to enforce at scale. [June 24, 2025 guidelines]

### 3. Short timeframe: the underlying cause of compromised quality

- **The unrealistic timeline:** The Special Intensive Revision began on June 25, with the deadline for submitting forms set for July 25. This provides only one month for a massive, house-to-house enumeration process across Bihar's 7.9 crore electorate. This "unreasonably short timeline" has been flagged even by the Supreme Court.
  - *(Contextual Note: As of July 14, 2025, the deadline is just 11 days away, exacerbating the pressure.)*
- **Consequences for BLOs:** BLOs, the frontline workers, are directly impacted.
  - **Insufficient training/resources:** The rapid deployment likely means insufficient training on new guidelines (like dual forms/acknowledgements) and inadequate provision of necessary materials. The lack of double forms and acknowledgment slips directly stems from this rushed setup.
  - **Pressure to meet targets:** The tight deadline inevitably leads to immense pressure on BLOs to collect forms quickly, often at the expense of thoroughness and adherence to procedural norms (e.g., accepting forms without documents). Their evasive responses and sudden disappearances when questioned reflect this untenable pressure.

<sup>71</sup> <https://x.com/gajabhaux/status/1944217649908416900?s=46&t=fekwC-V70QTQVIRvKdFdDw>

- **Compromised process:** The short window fundamentally compromises the quality of the H2H enumeration, turning it into a mere data collection exercise rather than a meticulous verification process.
- **Consequences for electors:**
  - **Limited Time for Document Collection:** Many electors, especially those in rural areas or migrant workers, require time to arrange the specific documents (which excludes Aadhaar/Ration Card/MGNREGA cards unless explicitly directed by SC) required by the ECI. The short deadline makes it "harder for electors to produce the supportable documents and completion of documents."
  - **Risk of Exclusion for Genuine Voters:** The combination of BLOs accepting incomplete forms and the subsequent scrutiny at ERO/AERO levels with strict eligibility criteria means many genuine voters who submitted forms in good faith, but without complete documentation, could face deletion without sufficient opportunity to rectify their records within the tight post-draft publication claim and objection period.

#### 4. Credibility crisis: official claims and undeniable ground truths

- **Official disconnect:** The claim by Naugachhia SDO/ERO Rituraj Singh that "we are providing two forms" is directly contradicted by widespread reports and the admissions of BLOs themselves. This highlights a concerning disconnect between the stated policy from higher authorities and the reality on the ground.<sup>72</sup>
- **Lack of transparency and accountability:** The evasion by a BDO regarding acknowledgement receipts further reveals a lack of transparency and an unwillingness to address the operational failures directly.<sup>73</sup>

The ECI's Special Intensive Revision in Bihar, while ostensibly aimed at electoral roll purification, is critically affected by systemic operational failures and an aggressive, unrealistic timeline. The failure to provide dual forms and acknowledgement receipts, coupled with the acceptance of incomplete voter applications, places an unfair burden on electors and creates a fertile ground for future disenfranchisement. The pressure on BLOs due to the short window leads to compromised data collection, raising serious questions about the accuracy and integrity of the final electoral roll. This situation demands immediate and transparent intervention from the ECI to reconcile its directives with ground realities, extend deadlines if necessary, and ensure that no eligible voter is inadvertently excluded due to administrative shortcomings.

<sup>72</sup> <https://x.com/ajitanjum/status/1944363665349628075>

<sup>73</sup> <https://x.com/ajitanjum/status/1944426851817922596>

## Chapter – IV

### VFD’s Post-SIR Analysis

#### Part - I

### VFD’s Post-SIR Analysis: Opacity with 65 Lakh Deletion of Electors

#### VFD’s Post-SIR Analysis: Issues of Transparency and Exclusion in the Deletion of 65 Lakh Electors

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls, which concluded its enumeration phase on July 26, 2025, has resulted in the identification of approximately 65 lakh (6.5 million) voters for potential deletion from the draft roll published on August 1. This figure represents 8.31% of Bihar's total electorate of 7.89 crore (78.9 million) as of June 24, 2025. The magnitude of this proposed exclusion has prompted significant legal scrutiny, with the Supreme Court refusing to stay the draft publication but signalling its intent to intervene if evidence of "mass exclusion" is presented.

Table 19 – Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar’s Electoral Rolls

Table: Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's Electoral Rolls

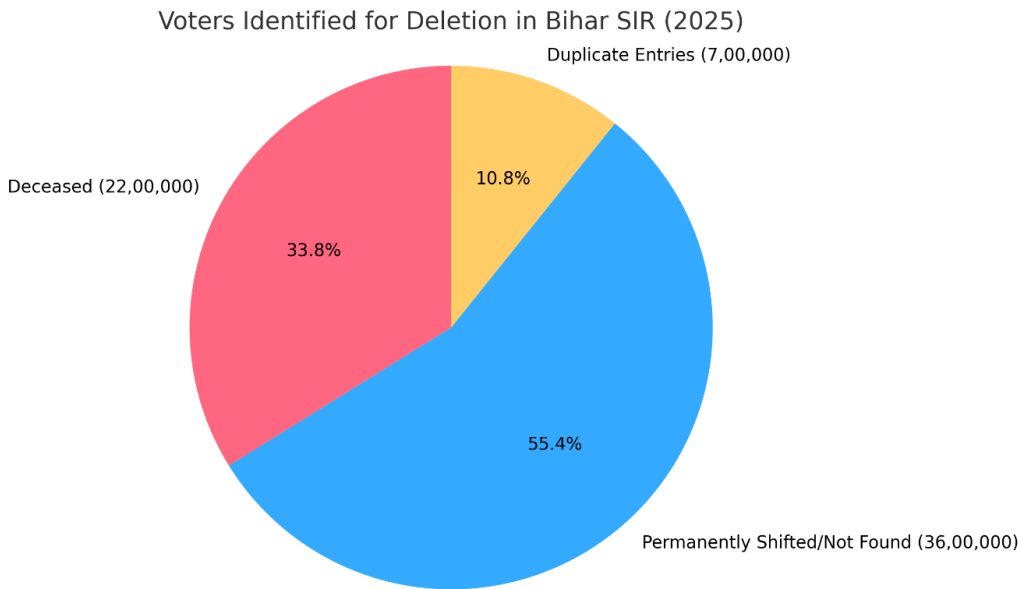
Category	Details
Total Electorate	7.89 crore (78.9 million) as of June 24, 2025
Voters Identified for Deletion	~65 lakh (6.5 million)
Percentage of Electorate	8.31%
Draft Roll Published	August 1, 2025
Enumeration Phase Concluded	July 26, 2025
Reasons for Deletion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deceased: 22 lakh (2.2 million)</li> <li>- Permanently Shifted/Not Found: 36 lakh (3.6 million)</li> <li>- Duplicate Entries: 7 lakh (0.7 million)</li> </ul>
Supreme Court Hearing	July 29, 2025
Petitioner Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of transparency</li> <li>- Non-disclosure of flagged voters' names</li> <li>- Risk of mass disenfranchisement</li> </ul>
Key Petitioner	Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), represented by Prashant Bhushan
Supreme Court Stance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Refused to stay draft publication</li> <li>- Will intervene if evidence of "mass exclusion" presented</li> </ul>
ECI Press Note	Issued on July 27, 2025, categorizing reasons for deletion



The Supreme Court's position, articulated in a July 29 hearing, was a direct response to concerns raised by petitioners, including the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), regarding the process's lack of transparency. The ECI's own press note on July 27 categorised the 65 lakh individuals flagged for deletion as deceased (22 lakh), permanently shifted or not found (36 lakh), and duplicate entries (7 lakh). However, petitioners, represented by Counsel Prashant Bhushan, have argued that the ECI has not disclosed the specific names of these individuals, nor the reasons for exclusions, making it difficult for voters to rectify their status and potentially leading to mass disenfranchisement.

### Opacity with 65 Lakh Deletion of Electors

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's electoral rolls, conducted from June 25 to July 26, 2025, culminated in the draft publication on August 1, 2025. This large-scale exercise has raised significant concerns as analysed by Vote for Democracy (VFD), the analysis aligns with critical issues emerging from the process. With approximately 65 lakh (6.5 million) voters identified for deletion from an initial base of 7.89 crore (78.9 million) electors, representing 8.31% of the electorate, the sheer magnitude of this revision necessitates rigorous scrutiny to ensure the integrity of the democratic process. Bihar currently has 7,89, 69,844 total electors as of June 24, 2025, across 243 Assembly Constituencies and 90,712 polling booths.



Graph 17 – Voter Identified for Deletion in Bihar (2025)

#### VFD's Analysis: Opacity in deletion categories

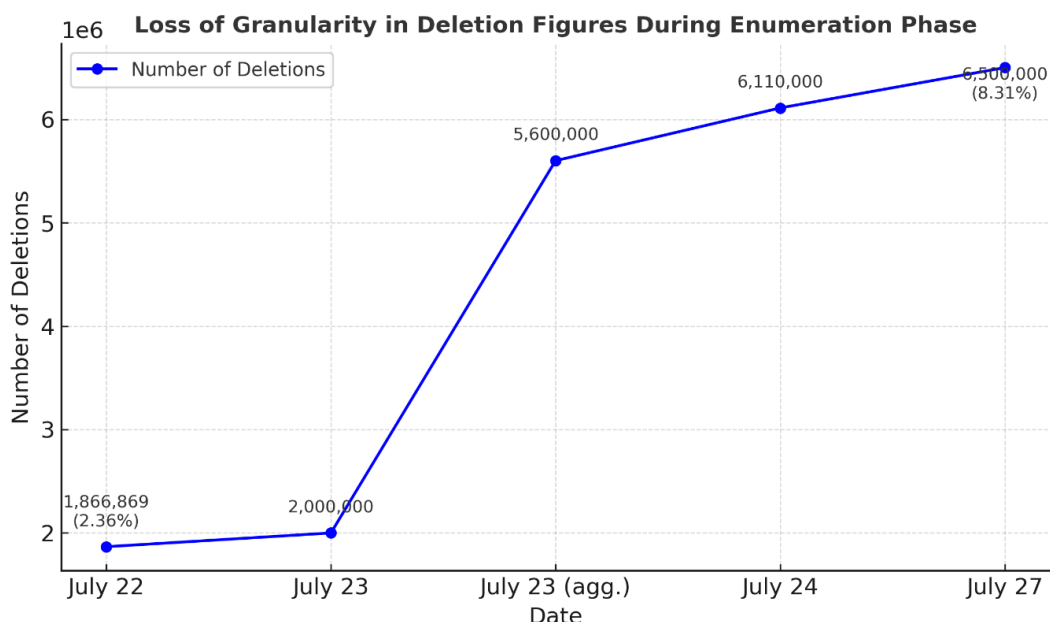
The ECI's daily data reporting from July 14 to July 27, 2025 reveals a lack of uniformity in reporting, particularly concerning deletion categories, that warrants closer examination.

#### 1. The curtain of "Merged Data" (Post-July 22, 2025)

A notable change in ECI's reporting methodology occurred on July 23. Detailed breakdowns for "Deceased electors," "Permanently Shifted," "Enrolled at Multiple places," and "Electors not traceable" were replaced by a single "Merged Data" entry for "Electors not found at their addresses (Deletion Category)."

- Loss of granularity:** This transition from precise figures (e.g., 18,66,869 deceased on July 22, representing 2.36% of the initial electorate) to rounded estimates (20 Lakh on July 23) and then aggregated totals (56 Lakh on July 23, 61.1 Lakh on July 24, and 65 Lakh by July 27, constituting 8.31% of the initial electorate) significantly obscures the specific drivers of deletions during the critical final days of the enumeration phase.

Graph 18 – Loss of Granularity in Deletion Figures during Enumeration Phase



- Data aggregation timing:** The abrupt change in reporting methodology, coinciding with a period of rapid increases in deletion figures, could suggest a shift in data aggregation logic that prioritised consolidated reporting over detailed public transparency.



Table 20 - ECI's SIR Comprehensive Data

Date	EF Received	EF Digitised	Electors not found at their addresses (Deletion Category)					Remaining EF to be received
			Deceased electors	Permanently Shifted	Enrolled at Multiple places	Electors not traceable	Total	
14.07.2025 <sup>74</sup>	6,60,67,208  (83.66%)	5.74 Crore	1.59%	2.2%	0.73%	NIL		11.82%
15.07.2025 <sup>75</sup>	6,81,67,861  (86.32%)	Merged					4.5%	9.16%
16.07.2025 <sup>76</sup>	6,99,92,926  (88.65%)	6,47,24,300  (81.96%)	12,55,620  (1.59%)	17,37,336  (2.2%)	5,76,479  (0.73%)	NIL	35,69,435  (4.5%)	54,07,483  (6.85%)
17.07.2025 <sup>77</sup>	7,08,18,162  (89.7%)	6,70,59,222  (84.9%)	12,55,620  (1.59%)	17,37,336  (2.2%)	5,76,479  (0.73%)	NIL	35,69,435  (4.5%)	45,82,247  (5.8%)

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516riZKC6QZO6gLSygWGSdadvAsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516riGuEalHNtPKR13tSOAS8%2BPsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516riEjF01FBbdcVsl%2BKpArGHHsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516rjWBPCajXor9oFmAWGs18WUsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

18.07.2025 <sup>78</sup>	7,11,72,660 (90.12%)	6,85,34,743 (86.79%)	12,71,414 (1.61%)	18,16,306 (2.3%)	5,92,273 (0.75%)	6,978 (0.01%)	36,86,971 (4.67%)	41,10,213 (5.2%)
19.07.2025 <sup>79</sup>	7,15,82,007 (90.64%)	6,96,93,844 (88.25%)	14,29,354 (1.81%)	19,74,246 (2.5%)	7,50,213 (0.95%)	11,000 (0.01%)	41,64,814 (5.27%)	32,23,023 (4.08%)
21.07.2025 <sup>80</sup>	7,16,03,218 (90.67%)	7,08,59,670 (89.73%)	16,55,407 (2.1%)	19,75,231 (2.5%)	7,50,742 (0.95%)	11,484 (0.01%)	43,92,864 (5.56%)	29,62,762 (3.77%)
22.07.2025 <sup>81</sup>	7,16,04,102 (90.67%)	7,13,65,460 (90.37%)	18,66,869 (2.36%)	26,01,031 (3.29%)	7,50,742 (0.95%)	11,484 (0.01%)	52,30,126 (6.62%)	21,35,616 (2.70%)
23.07.2025 <sup>82</sup>	7.17 crore (90.89%)  Merged Data		20 Lakh	28 Lakh	7 Lakh	1 Lakh	56 Lakh	15 Lakh

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516riZHsyaiNLNoIsIUyLzLh9HsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516rgVZ31W4W%2BRiBtHHugCgaTosXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>80</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516rhelvlaEa%2B%2FB2qf0hHkdJzmsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516ripv0I1GEZfswJfyzsbFjc8sXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN516rhkG0VazC03KD6RRaUey41UsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

24.07.2025 <sup>83</sup>	7.21 crore  (91.32%)	21.6 Lakh	31.5 Lakh	7 Lakh	1 Lakh	61.1 Lakh	7 Lakh
25.07.2025 <sup>84</sup>	7.23 crore  Merged Data	22 Lakh	35 Lakh	7 Lakh	Merged	65 Lakh	1.2 Lakh
27.07.2025 <sup>85</sup>	7.24 Crore  (91.69%)  Merged Data	22 Lakh  (2.83%)	36 Lakh  (4.59%)	7 Lakh  (0.89%)	Merged	65 Lakh  (8.31%)	NA

## 2. The enigmatic emergence and explosive surge of "Electors Not Traceable"

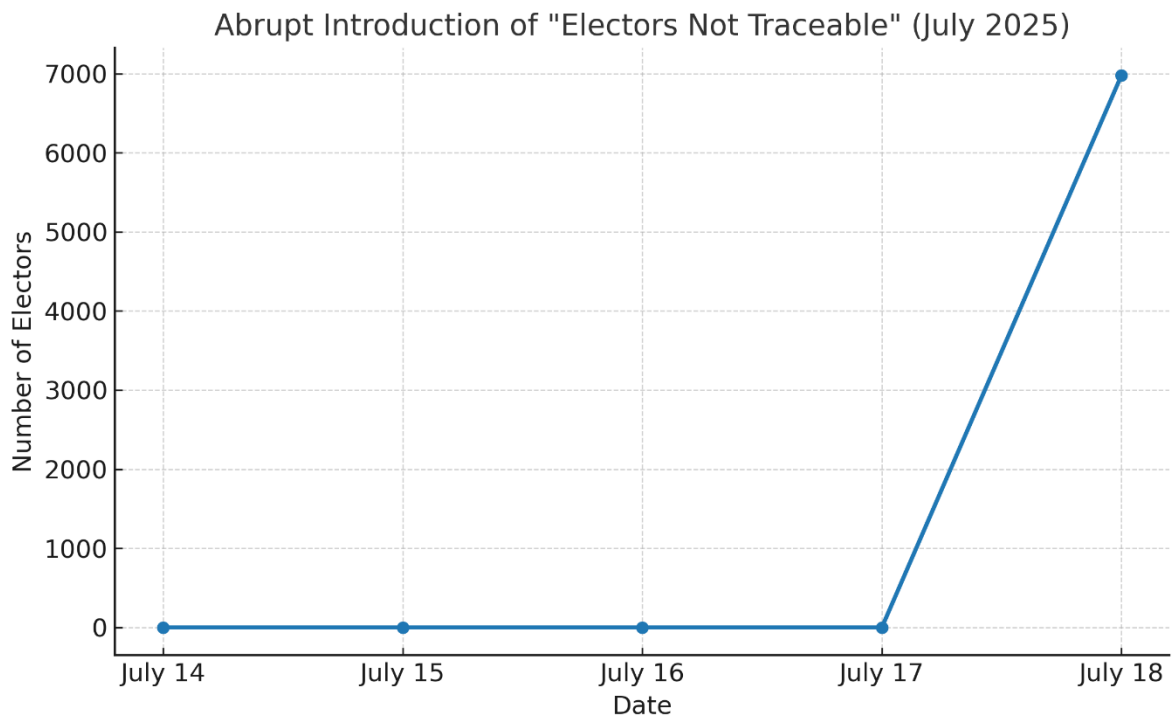
This category presents significant "red flags" and necessitates a detailed analysis by VFD and other observers. Abrupt introduction (July 18, 2025): The category "Electors not traceable" was conspicuously "NIL" on July 14, 15, 16, and 17. On July 18, 6,978 electors (0.01%) suddenly appeared under this head. This is not a gradual increase but an instantaneous introduction of a new, substantial deletion reason.

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN5l6rhizNEPtjYwcmfCpVjNCn4sXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN5l6rhMATHOgJCj49OALsN3dvfgsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

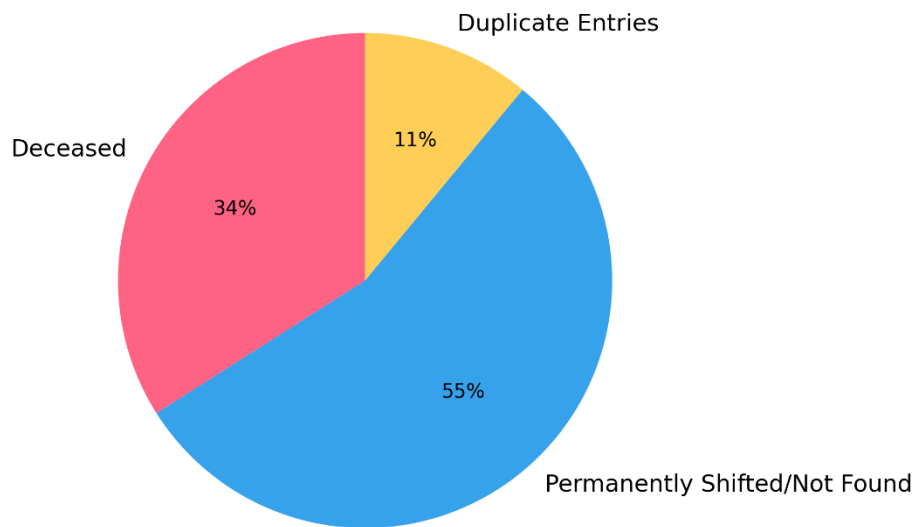
<sup>85</sup> <https://www.eci.gov.in/eci-backend/public/api/download?url=LMAhAK6sOPBp%2FNFF0iRfXbEB1EVSLT41NNLRjYNJJPIKivrUxbfqkDatmHy12e%2FzcyjgeFPh4LtAbjL4Y7X74fA2DX8Gg37OsZNwQN5l6riQEmeL%2B3uHZswwDni92D9OsXQUwCbGU493NshNTgs7UQ%3D%3D>

Graph 19 – Abrupt Introduction of “Electors No Traceable” (July 2025)



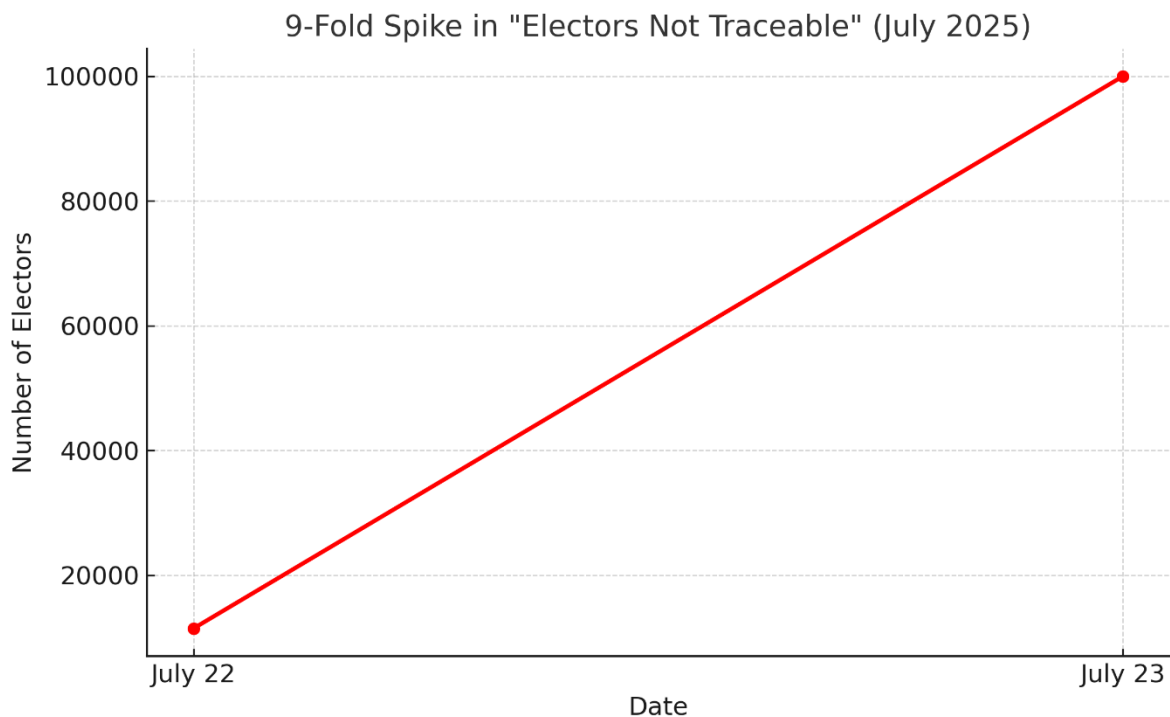
Graph 20 – Reason for Deletion of 65 Lakh Voters (8.31% of the total 7,89,69,844 Electorate in Bihar: SIR (2025)

Reasons for Deletion of 65 Lakh Voters (8.31% of 7,89,69,844 Total Electorate) in Bihar's SIR (2025)



The concerning 9-fold spike (July 22 to July 23): The most statistically anomalous event is the jump from 11,484 (0.01%) "Electors not traceable" on July 22 to approximately 1 Lakh (0.13%) on July 23. This shows an increase of over 88,516 additional untraceable voters within a mere 24 hours.

Graph 21 – Electors Not Traceable



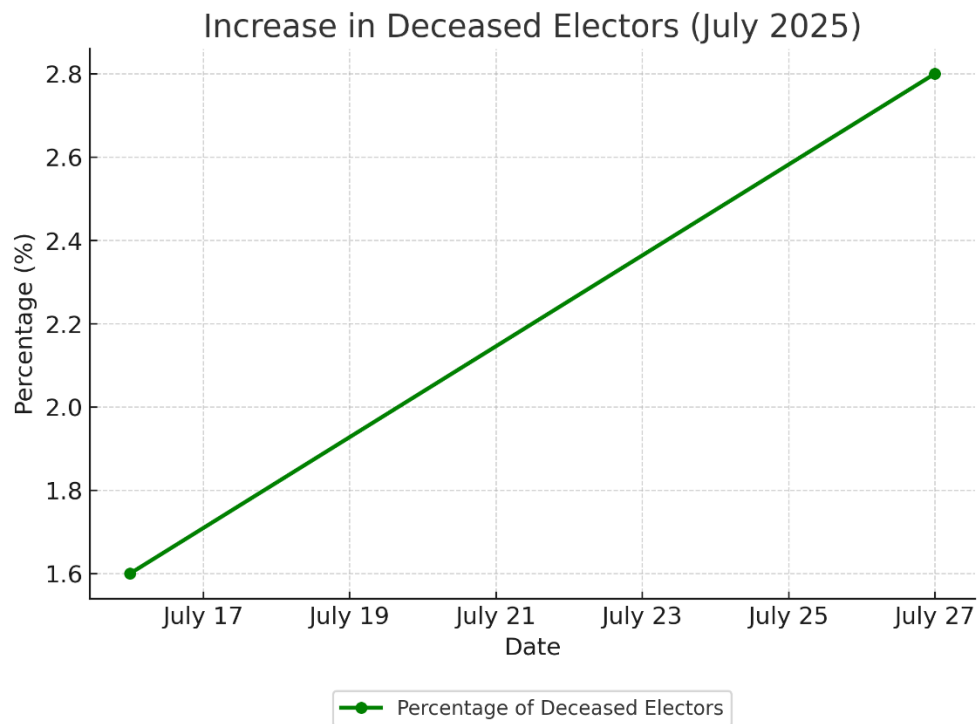
**Subsequent Disappearance of Voters (Post-July 24):** After July 24, the "Electors not traceable" category again ceased to be specifically reported, being subsumed under the "Merged Data." This compounds the lack of transparency surrounding this highly sensitive deletion reason, making its further evolution impossible to track.

3. Scale of electors not found at their addresses category

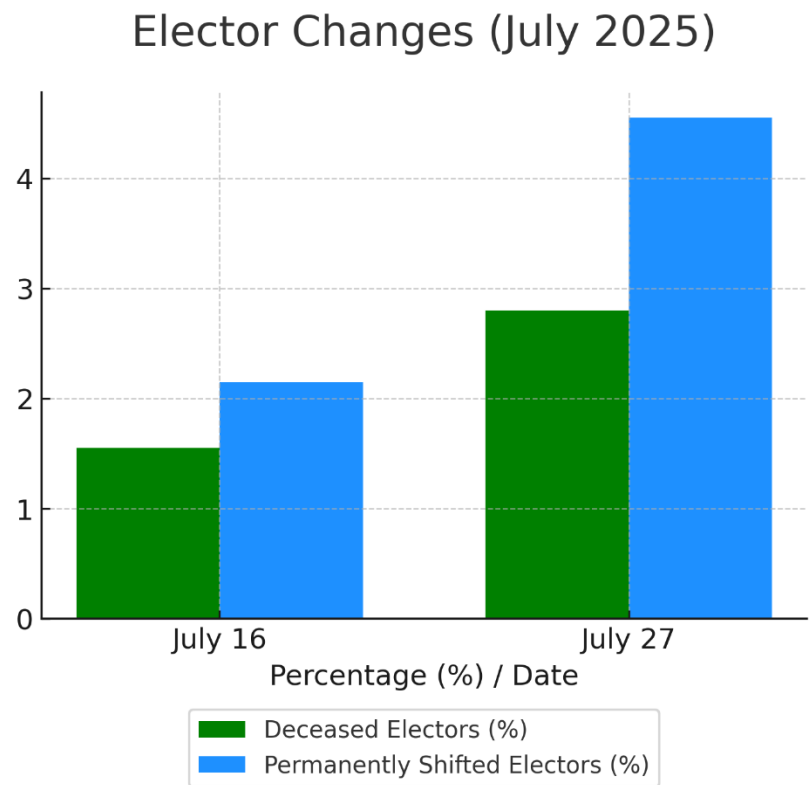
While less dramatic than "untraceable," the volume in other deletion categories also warrants attention.

- Deceased electors:** This category saw an increase from 12, 55, 620 (1.59%) on July 16 to 22 Lakh (2.83%) by July 27. The identification of nearly 10 lakh (1 million) deceased electors in just 11 days, including a 2.11 lakh increase from July 21 to 22, raises questions about the thoroughness of the January 2025 electoral roll, which the ECI had indicated as "robust."

Graph 22 – Increase in Deceased Electors (July 2025)

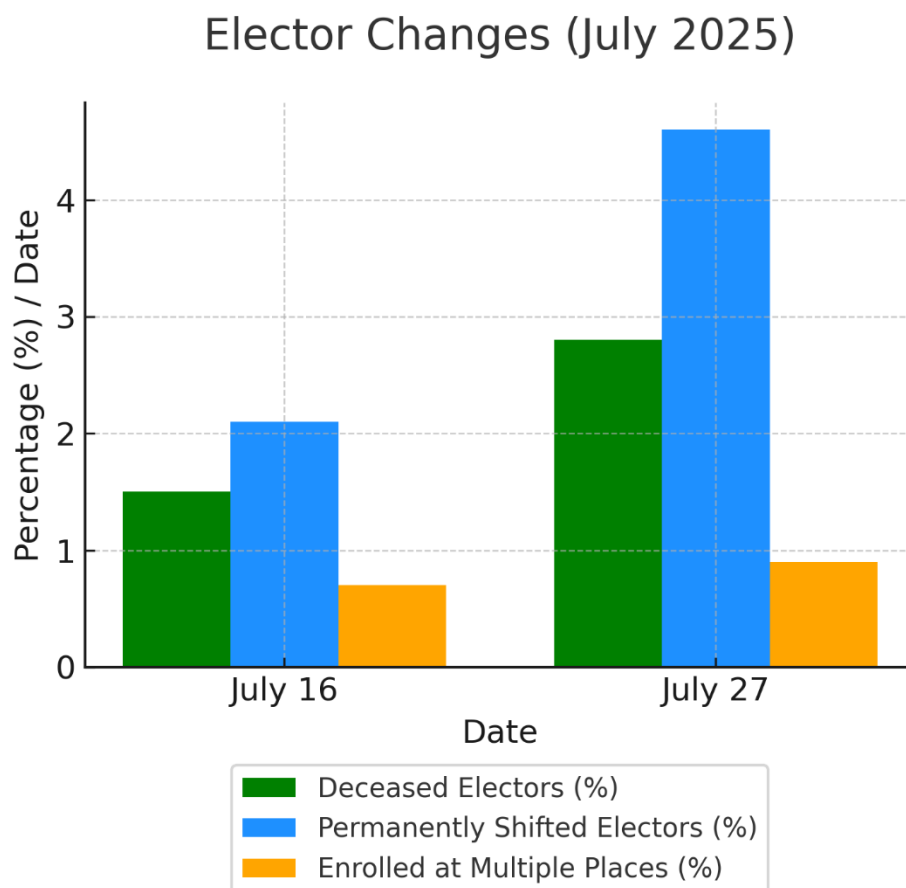


Graph 23 – Elector Changes (July 2025)



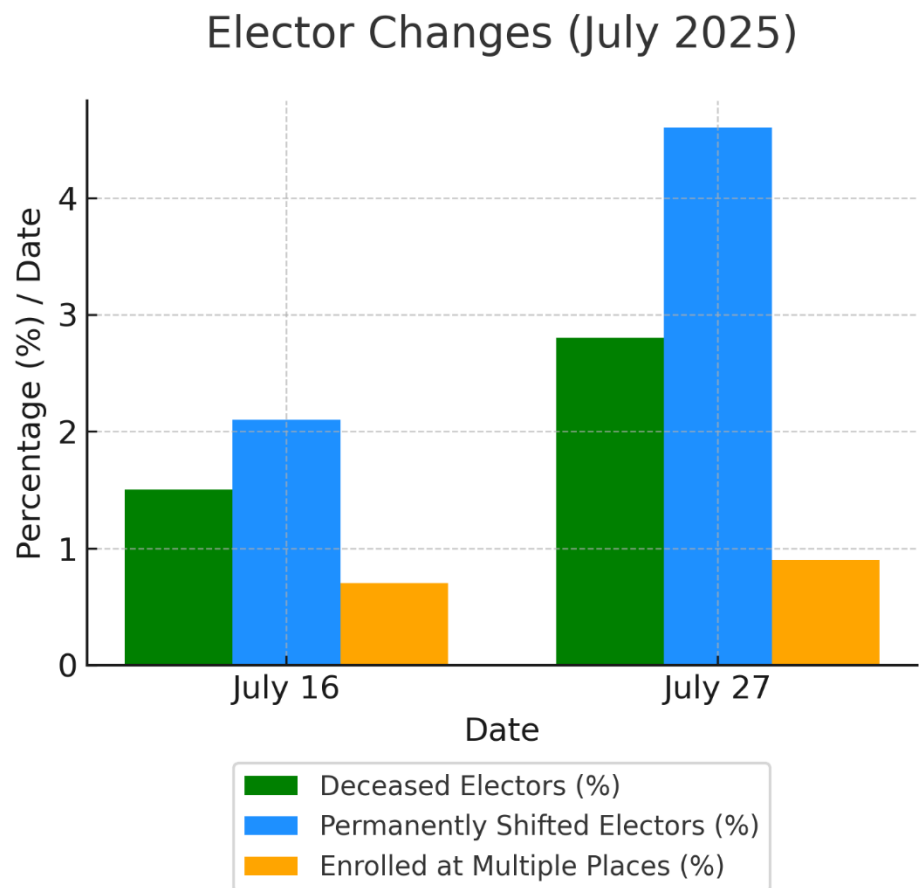
- Permanently shifted:** This category more than doubled, from 17, 37, 336 (2.2%) on July 16 to 36 Lakh (4.59%) by July 27. A significant increase of 6.26 lakh occurred from July 21 to 22, 2025.

Graph 24 – Electors Changes (July 2025)



- Enrolled at multiple places:** This category grew from 5, 76, 479 (0.73%) on July 16 to 7 Lakh (0.89%) by July 27, 2025.

Graph 25 – Elector Changes (July 2025)



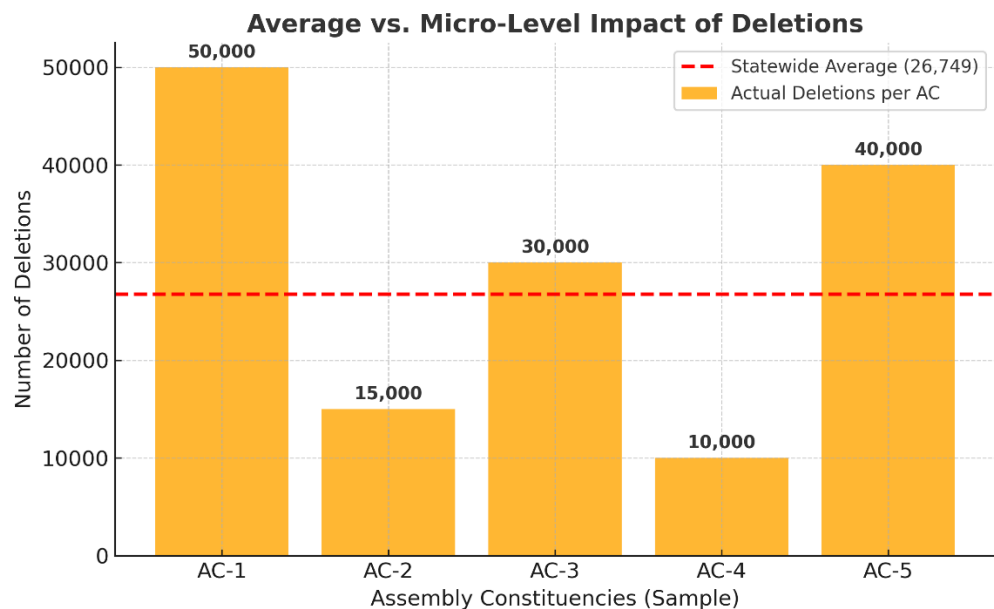
**The seismic impact (potential): 65 lakh deletions across 243 assembly constituencies**

The deletion of approximately 65 lakh (6.5 million) voters, representing 8.31% of the initial electorate, fundamentally reshapes the demographic across Bihar's 243 Assembly Constituencies.

- Average vs. micro-level impact:** the state-wide average of about 26,748 deletions per constituency (6,500,000/243 ACs) masks highly uneven impacts at the local level.



Graph 26 - Average vs. micro-level impact of Deletions

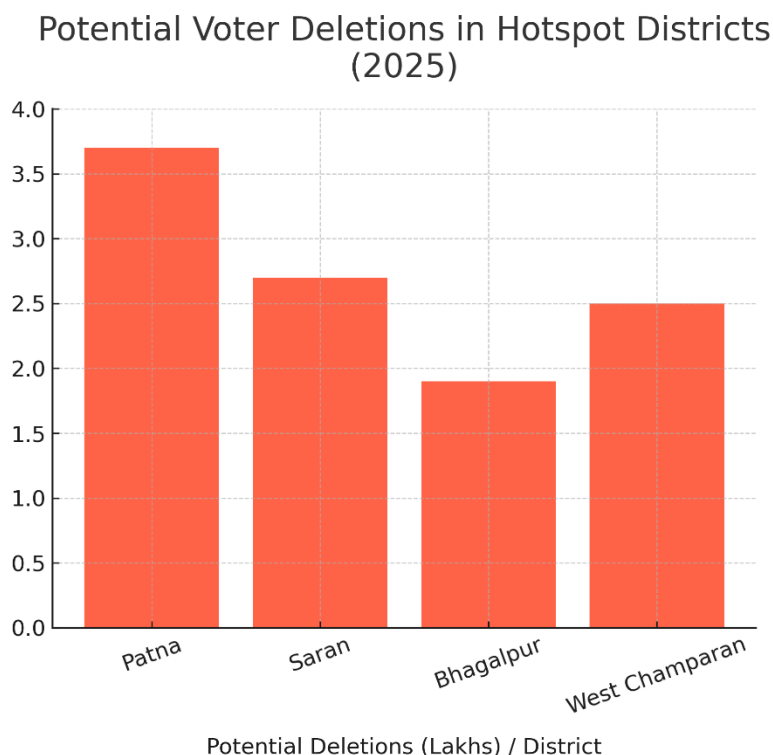


- **Hotspot districts:** Patna district having 14 ACs alone accounts for 3.74 lakh potential deletions. Other districts with exceptionally high numbers include Saran (2.73 lakh), Bhagalpur (1.87 lakh), and West Champaran (2.41 lakh). These concentrated deletions imply that specific constituencies within these districts will experience disproportionately large reductions in their voter base.

Table 21 – Data from Hotspot Districts

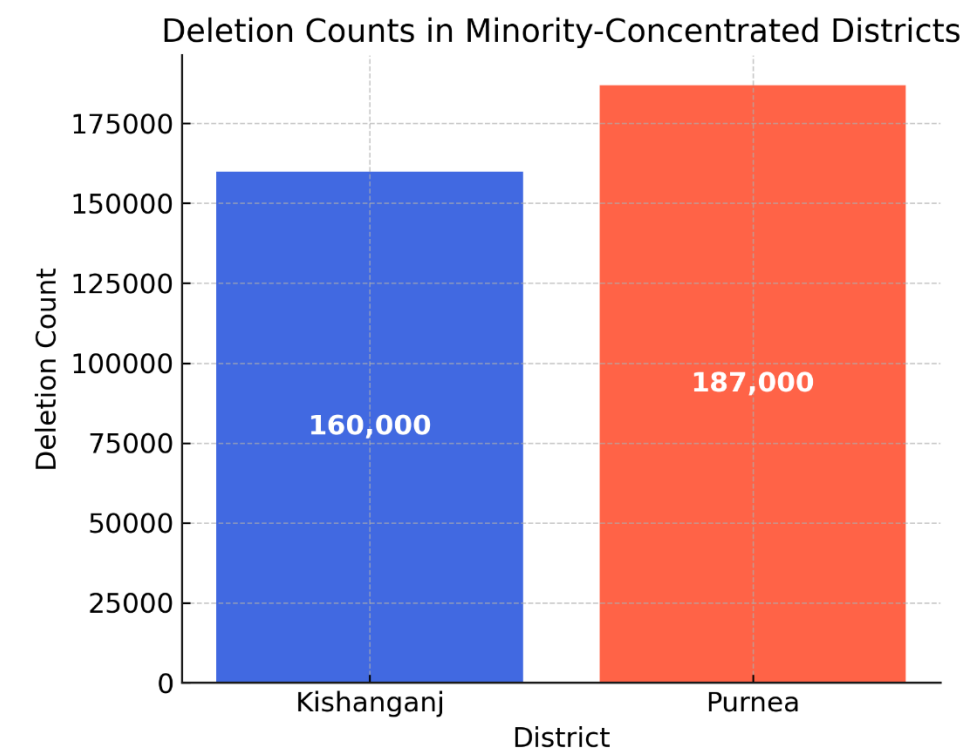
Table: Hotspot Districts Data		
District	Potential Deletions (Lakhs)	Potential Deletions (Absolute)
Patna	3.74	374,000
Saran	2.73	273,000
Bhagalpur	1.87	187,000
West Champaran	2.41	241,000

Graph 27 – Potential Voter Deletions in Hotspot Districts (2025)

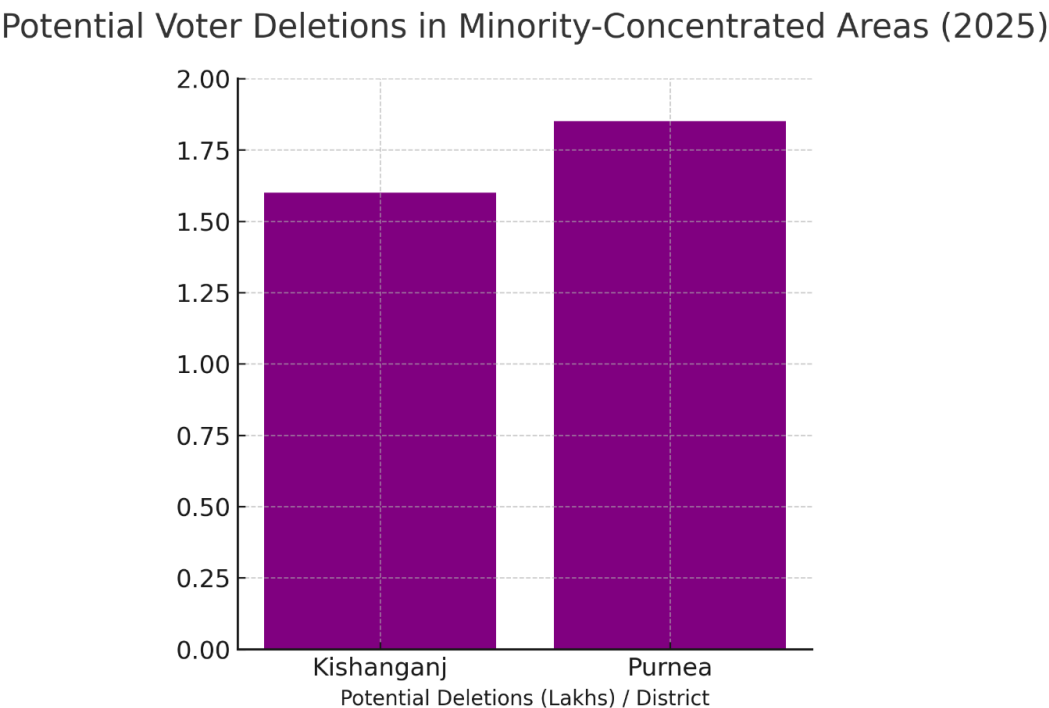


- **Targeting and demographic shifts (potential):** concerns persist that the SIR disproportionately affects certain demographic groups.
  - **Migrant labourers:** Bihar is a significant source of migrant labour. These individuals, often away from their registered addresses, are highly susceptible to being marked as "untraceable" or "permanently shifted." Their transient nature, coupled with potential lack of awareness or difficulty in acquiring required documents (birth certificates, formal address proofs), makes them vulnerable to unintended disenfranchisement.
  - **Marginalised communities:** Stringent documentation requirements (11 types, often excluding Aadhaar/EPIC as primary proof) could disproportionately affect marginalised and vulnerable communities who may traditionally lack formal identification or awareness of the process.
  - **Minority-concentrated areas:** Districts in the Seemanchal region, particularly Kishanganj (a Muslim-majority district with 1.60 lakh deletions) and Purnea (1.87 lakh deletions) have shown notably higher deletion rates. This concentration of deletions in specific areas, especially those with significant minority populations.

Graph 28 – Deletion Counts in Minority-Concentrated Districts



Graph 29 – Potential Voter Deletion in Minority-Concentrated Areas (2025)



### The human element and unanswered realities: VFD's perspective

Beyond the numbers, critical procedural and systemic questions remain, impacting the fundamental right to vote.

1. **The "Notice and Hearing" paradox:** The ECI's assurance that no name is deleted without prior notice and a "speaking order" after a hearing faces immense logistical challenges with 65 lakh deletions. The practicality of conducting millions of individual hearings within the SIR time-frame raises questions about the thoroughness and fairness of this process for every deletion. The reported "Zero" claims or objections filed by political parties in the initial days (August 1-2) could suggest either a lack of public awareness, or the sheer inability of the affected populace to navigate the redressal system effectively due to its scale and complexity.
2. **Burden of proof:** The shift in the burden of proof from the state (ECI) to the individual citizen, particularly those identified for deletion, is a significant concern. It now falls upon potentially disenfranchised voters to proactively prove their eligibility, often requiring documents they may not possess or can easily acquire, especially among the poor, illiterate, or elderly.
3. **BLO's ground truth:** The role of the 90,712 BLOs is pivotal. Questions arise regarding their adequate training, resources, and monitoring for such a complex and sensitive exercise. Concerns persist about potential pressure to meet numerical targets for deletions, which could lead to hasty or inaccurate classifications at the ground level.
4. **The January 2025 anomaly:** The ECI's prior assertion of a "robust" electoral roll from January 2025 appears to be irreconcilable with the 65 lakh (8.31%) deletions identified in just six months.
5. **Accessibility of redressal:** While the ECI highlights special camps and online platforms for claims and objections, their effectiveness is constrained by Bihar's digital divide, varying literacy rates, and geographical accessibility challenges in rural areas.
6. **Supreme Court on "mass exclusion":** The Supreme Court's remark against apprehension of "mass exclusion" in Bihar SIR and its oral observation to intervene if discrepancies are found shows the gravity of the situation. Its upcoming hearings (August 12 and 13, 2025) will be crucial in scrutinising the ECI's data and ensuring due process, which will significantly influence the perceived fairness of this election.

Moreover, the Bihar SIR 2025, while framed as a drive for electoral purity, is characterised by statistical anomalies, particularly the unprecedented surge in "untraceable voters" and the opacity introduced by "merged data." The sheer volume of deletions and their potential disproportionate impact on specific regions and communities suggest an exercise executed with extreme haste. The true measure of this SIR will not be the number of names removed, but rather the transparent, fair, and accessible resolution of objections, ensuring that every eligible citizen's right to franchise is preserved and that public confidence in the democratic process is maintained.

## Part - II

### Special Intensive Revision (SIR)

#### AN ANALYSIS OF ECI's SIR COLLECTION DATA

##### Special Intensive Revision (SIR) or Special Intensive Removal (SIR)?

Will the Election Commission of India come before the public and explain the jugglery of figures resorted to in the recently, hurriedly conducted Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar?

Fundamentally, the method, process and timing has been flawed. This has made the actions of the ECI appear unlawful and arbitrary, violating the letter and spirit of the Constitution of India (Article 324, 326, 327 and 328) and the laws related to elections and the right to universal adult franchise. These are the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, the Conduct of Elections Rules 1961.

In which ways were the process fundamentally flawed?

##### Chronology of Process Exposed

- The exercise itself is clearly beyond the ECI's mandate apart from being flawed. The term Special Intensive Revision (SIR), amounts to applying a nomenclature outside of statutory limits and powers: under Election Rules and Laws, only an **Intensive Revision, or a Summary Revision and Partial intensive/Partial Summary revision** are provided for.
- Rule 8 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 prescribes that the BLO shall issue a form at the time of revision to the elector 'head of the family', which is Form No. 4 in revision process, mandated under this rule. However, the ECI, in violation of the Rule 8 of the 1960 Rule has designed and self-styled a form that falls outside the legally outlined criteria.
- **Failure to provide two copies of forms to each voter:** All reports indicate that the ECI's initial claim of distributing *two copies of the form per elector* has been silently abandoned without any formal notification. In doing this, the ECI has committed a breach of its own procedure.
- The ECI failed to meet its printing and distribution obligations for the voter enumeration process. The commission was required to print 15.8 crore enumeration forms to supply two copies to each elector, but as of July 10, it had only printed half that amount, with 7.9 crore forms. Additionally, the ECI lagged behind in distribution, having only supplied 7.71 crore forms (98% of the printed batch) by the same date i.e. July 10.
- Besides, until July 10, 2025, that was the mid of the SIR process—by ECI's own admission-- only half of the forms had been printed! The distribution of these was even slower as only 98% of forms (7.71 Crore) distributed. Besides instead of forms in duplicate, only a single copy of the form had been supplied to each elector by July 10 as per claims of the ECI.
- **Failure to provide receipts:** The ECI also failed to provide any receipt to the elector/voter that the form has been received by the commission which is another serious violation of the said rules and provisions of Form No. 4 procedure prescribed therein.
- The ECI took 18 days to distribute the first lot of forms to electors and the fact of the matter is that there is no information about the second lot of the forms which were to be retained by the electors as receipt of the forms submitted to the ECI available.

- With these widely accepted and established anomalies and gaps, it is difficult to imagine that a) the number of forms printed in the appropriate/proper manner and b) were fully utilised to reach each voter without loss and destruction.
- The Election Commission's mandate to supply two forms per elector—one for the BLO and one as a receipt—was rendered impossible by the limited printing of only 7.9 crore forms. This process raised serious doubts about the integrity of the preservation of Enumeration Forms. Even no spare forms were available with BLOs as revealed from ground reports by sections of the independent media.
- **The gross discrepancies in the claim of the ECI are manifest from the fact that 58 lakh (deceased, permanently shifted and untraceable) electors have not even been located by the ECI at all. Then how has the ECI erroneously claimed 100% distribution of EFs to all Bihar's electors?**
- This flawed methodology also raises questions about to whom exactly the ECI has distributed the inadequate numbers of available forms?

#### Vote for Democracy's presentation of ECI's SIR Data

THE ECI has placed some 'startling figures' in the public domain as shown in the following tables and accompanying analysis:

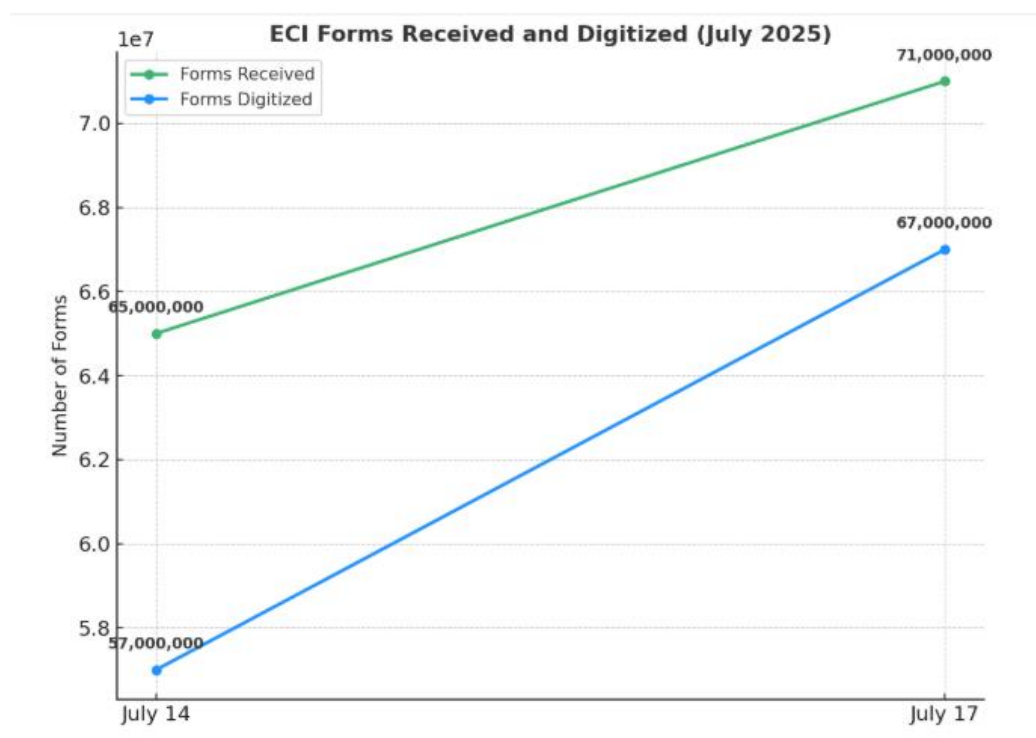
Table 22 - Bihar SIR data between July 14, 2025 and July 17, 2025

Date	EF received	Digitalised	Probably Deceased	Probably Permanently Shifted	Registered More places	Untraceable
14.07.25	6,60,67,208 (83.66%)*	5.74 crore (72.66%)*	12,55,620** (1.59%)	17,37,336** (2.2%)	5,76,479** (0.73%)	-
16.07.25	6,99,92,926 (88.65%)	6,47,24,300 (81.96%)	12,55,620 (1.59%)	17,37,336 (2.2%)	5,76,479 (0.73%)	
17.07.25	7,08,18,162 (89.7%)	6,70,59,222 (84.9%)	12,55,620 (1.59%)	17,37,336 (2.2%)	5,76,479 (0.73%)	

The table above table makes it clear that the exercise of the conduct of the Bihar SIR is not only grossly defective at the grass root level but is also an utter failure at the central level, that is at the level of the ECI, making the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Mr. Gyanesh Kumar, himself culpable/responsible.

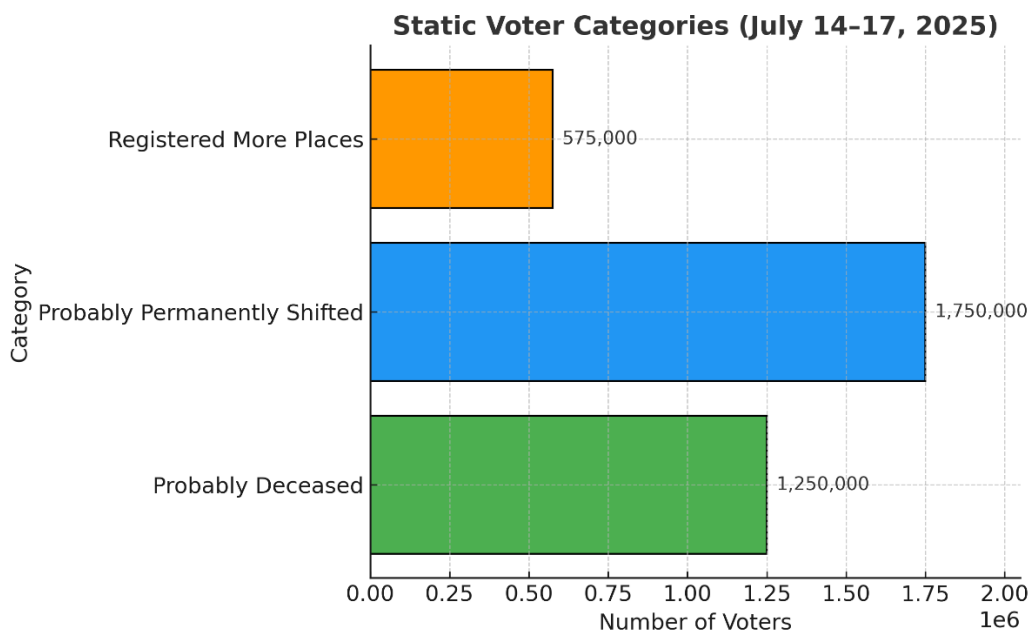
- (1) The table above shows that on July 14, 2025, the number of forms received by the ECI is/was 6,60, 67,208 and that this number rose to 7,08,18,162 *three days later*, that is, by July 17. Thus 47,50, 254 more forms have been collected by the Field workers *in this period, that is*, from July 14 to July 17. However, digitalisation of forms done during same period rose from 5.74 crore on July 14 to 6, 70, 59, 222!

Graph 30 – ECI Forms Received and Digitised (July 2025)



- (2) Initially, a substantial difference was found between the number of Enumeration Forms (EFs) collected and those digitalised by the ECI. This discrepancy was likely due to different teams working on the job and a backlog in digitisation. The ECI however later claimed to have reconciled the numbers, reporting a total of 7.23 crore forms (through digitisation as well).
- (3) A visible and strange fact that emerges from a perusal of ECI data is that the figures for "Probably Deceased" and "Probably Permanently Shifted" have remained unchanged between July 14 and July 17. This suggests that while a large number of forms were collected and digitised, the data was not being processed or updated in real time or properly, revealing a major breakdown in the data processing by the ECI.

Graph 31 – Static Voter Categories (July 14-17, 2025)



- (4) The number of 'probably dead' remains the same i.e. at 12, 55, 620, the 'probably permanently shifted' also remains unaltered at 17, 37, 336 while those registered at 'more than one place too remains unchanged' at 5, 76, 479 voters/electors.

**Analysis/Observation:**

This revelation of process of digitisation in numbers is something unknown in data science. In data science, it's highly unusual for a subset of a dynamic dataset to show zero change over a period where the main dataset is actively being updated. The fact that these numbers are identical across **243 Assembly Constituencies (ACs)** further deepens the suspicion. This raises an obvious and huge question mark on the correctness of the SIR exercise and the sanctity and truthfulness of the figures rolled out.

The core issue is the inconsistency in the charges in electors' data from July 14 to July 17 (ECI figures). While the number of collected and digitised Electoral Forms (EFs) significantly increased, the figures for "Probably Deceased," "Probably Permanently Shifted," and "Registered More places" categories remained static. This raises, again, serious questions about the integrity and accuracy of the data collection process.

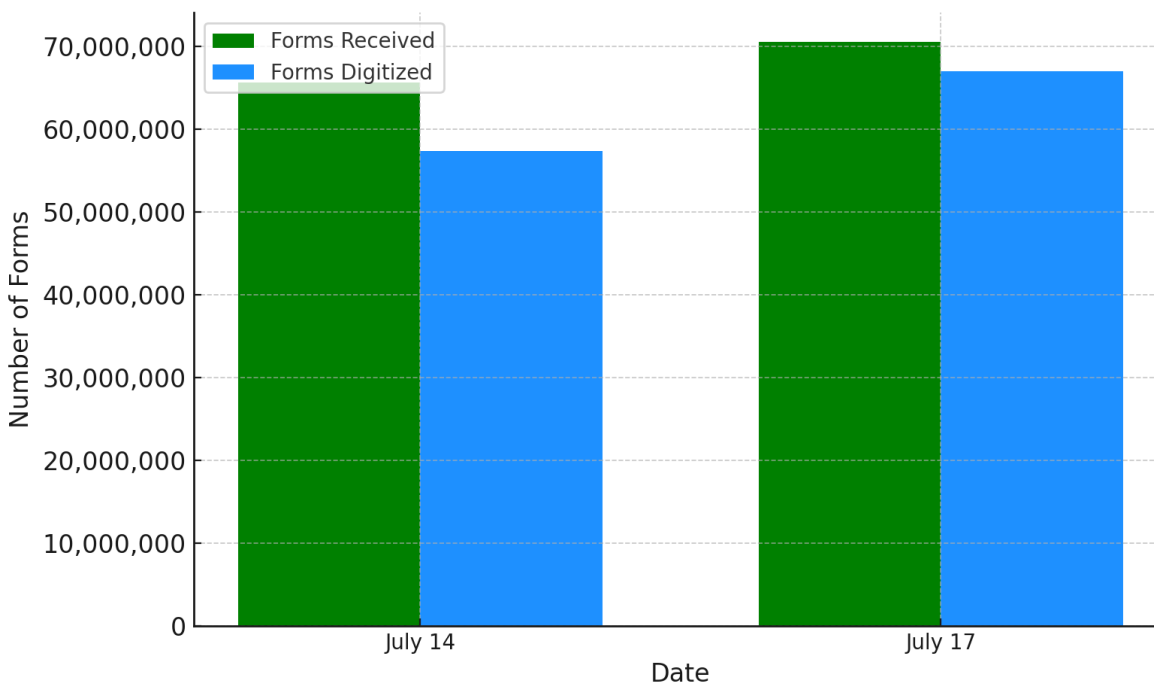


## The Inconsistency in Data Reporting

The provided data shows a stark contrast between two sets of numbers.

- Dynamic Data:** The numbers for received and digitised EFs showed a substantial increase over the three-day period. On July 14, received EFs were 6, 60, 67,208, which rose to 7, 08, 18, 162 by July 17. Similarly, digitised EFs went from 5.74 crore to 6, 70, 59,222. This demonstrates an active data collection and processing effort.

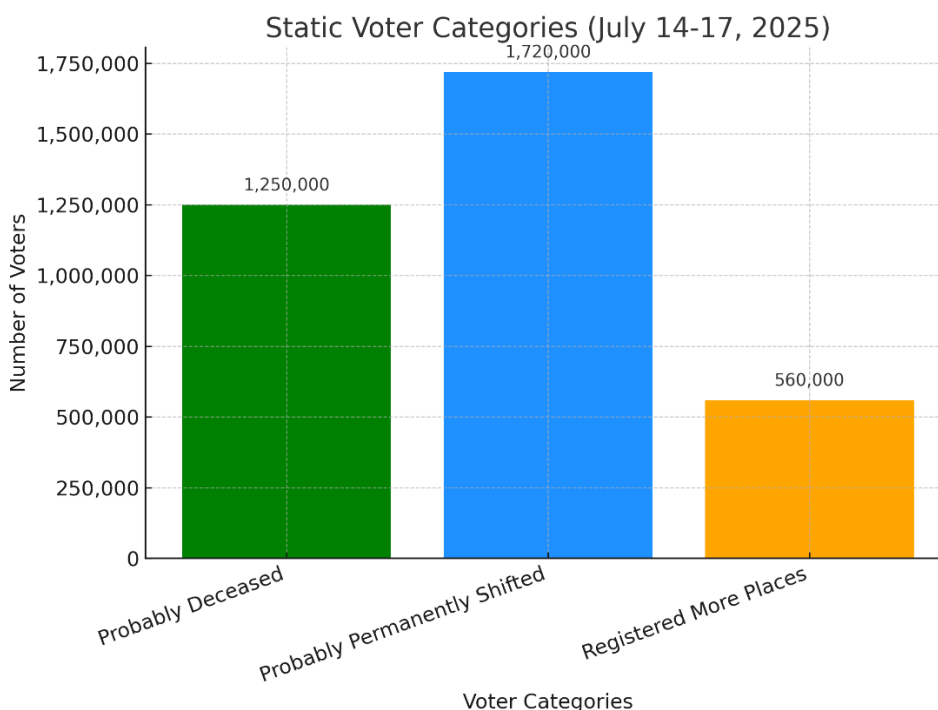
Graph 32 – ECI Forms Received and Digitised (July 2025)



- Static Data:** In contrast, the numbers for "**Probably Deceased,**" "**Probably Permanently Shifted,**" and "**Registered More places**" voters remained unchanged. From July 14 to July 17, the figures for these categories were:
  - Probably Deceased:** 12, 55, 620 (1.59%)
  - Probably Permanently Shifted:** 17, 37,336 (2.2%)
  - Registered More places:** 5, 76, 479 (0.73%)

This lack of change is highly improbable, especially given the active data updates in other categories.

Graph 33 – Static Voter Categories (July 14-17, 2025)



- (5) However, the probably deceased and probably permanently shifted are changed to deceased and permanently shifted of course without any change in earlier figures. This is a step by the ECI to consciously defy the principles of data science and the principle of uniformity has been breached unhesitatingly and that too without any plausible explanation for such a significant alteration in nomenclature.

Table 23 - Bihar SIR data between July 18, 2025 and July 21, 2025

Date	EF received	Digitalised	Prob. De./ Deceased	Permanently Shifted	Registered More places	Untraceable
18.07.25	7,11,72,660 (90.12%)	6,85,34,743 (86.79%)	12,71,414 (1.61%)	18,16,306 (2.3%)	5,92,273 0.75%	6978 (0.01%)
19.07.25	7,15,82,007 (90.64%)	6,96,93,844 (88.25%)	14,29,354 (1.81%)	19,74,246 (2.5%)	7,50,213 (0.95%)	11,000 (0.01%)
21.07.25	7,16,03,218 (90.67%)	7,08,59,670 (89.73%)	16,55,407 (2.1%)	19,75,231 (2.5%)	7,50,742 (0.95%)	11,484 (0.01%)

- (6) When we look carefully at the data in *Table 23 above*, over *the next* three days disclosed by the ECI, we find that the new forms received between July 18 and July 21 are only 4,30,558. The number of the forms digitalised during this period, however, is almost 5 times more than the forms received and the same stands at 23, 24, 927.

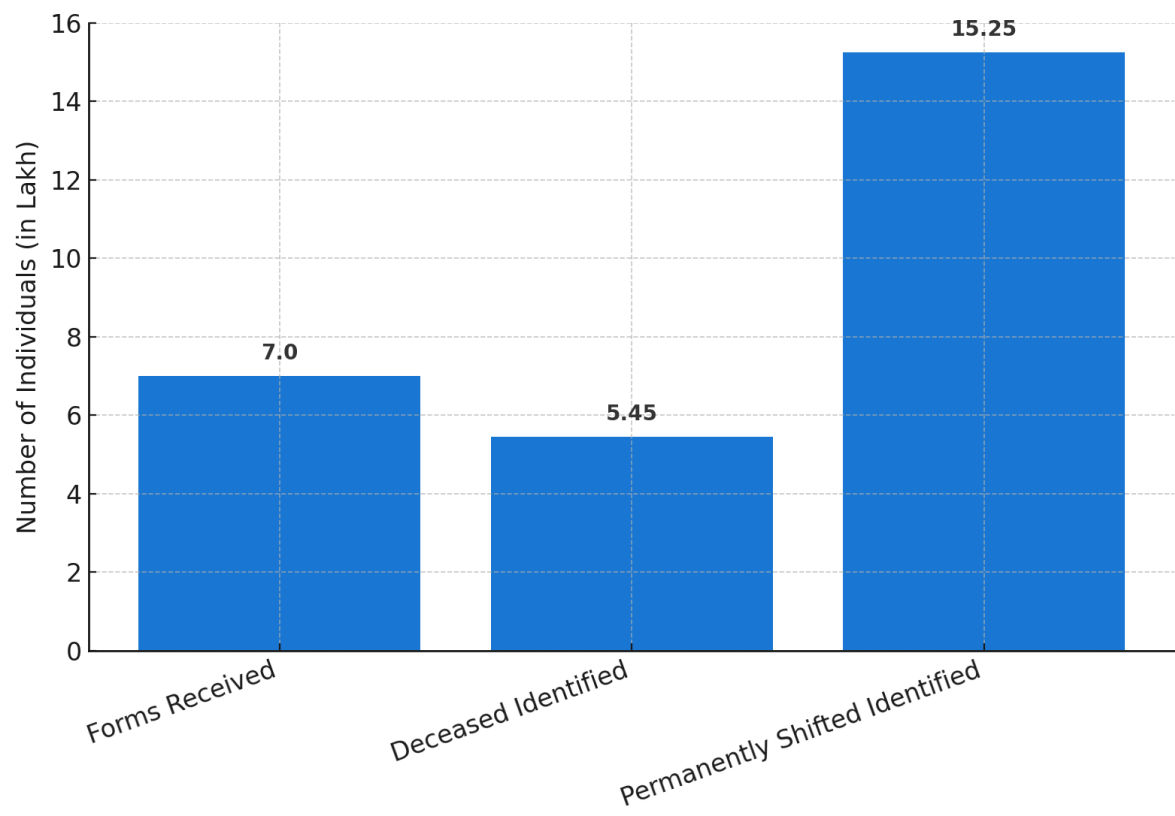
**Table 24 - Bihar SIR data between July 21, 2025 and July 25, 2025**

Date	EF received	Digitalised	Deceased	Permanently Shifted	Registered Multiple places	Untraceable
21.07.25	7,16,03,218 (90.67%)	7,08,59,670 (89.73%)	16,55,407 (2.1%)	19,75,231 (2.5%)	7,50,742 (0.95%)	11,484 (0.01%)
22.07.25	7,16,04,102 (90.67%)	7,13,65,460 (90.37%)	18,66,869 (2.36%)	26,01,031 (3.29%)	7,50,742 (0.95%)	11,484 (0.01%)
23.07.25	7.17 crore (90.89%)	7.17 crore (90.89%)	20 LAKH (2.53%)*	28 LAKH (3.54%)*	7 LAKH (0.89%)*	1 LAKH (0.13%)*
25.07.25	7.23 Crore (91.52%)*	7.23 crore (91.52%)*	22 Lakh (2.78%)*	35 lakh*** (4.43%)*	7 lakh (0.89%)*	Merged in 35 lakh

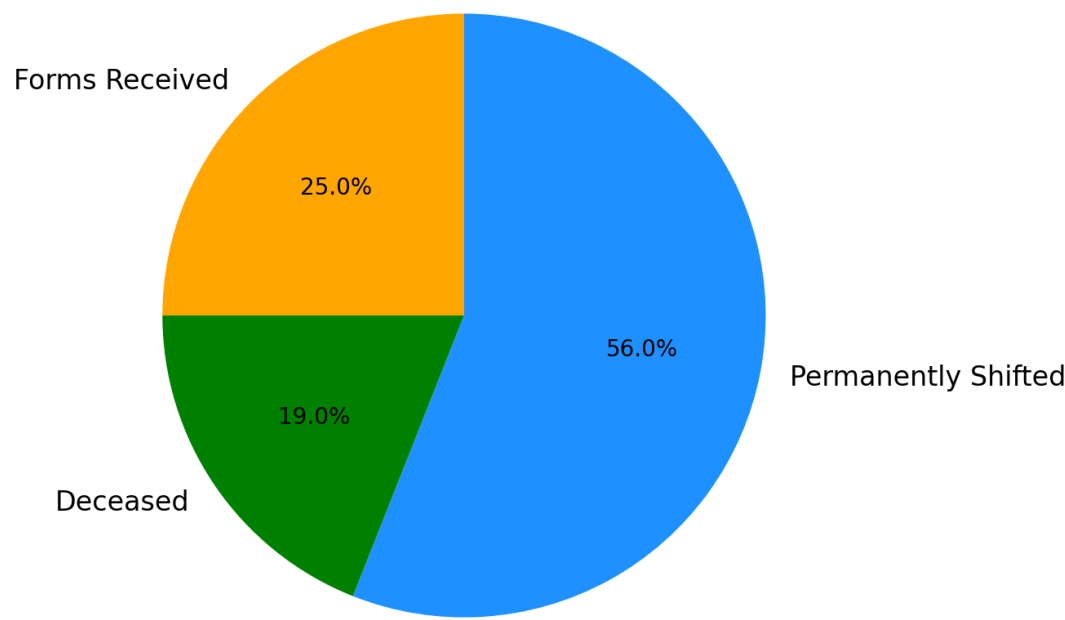
**Analysis/Observation:**

After July 21, the ECI received only 7 lakh forms in three days. However, it's difficult to understand how the ECI identified a total of 20.7 lakh individuals as either deceased (5.45 lakh) or permanently shifted (15.25 lakh) *in just three days that is* during this same period. This again seems illogical, given that the number of new forms received from electors was significantly lower.

Graph 34 – ECI Data Processing (July 21-25, 2025)



Graph 35 – ECI Voter Identification and Forms Received (July 21 – 25, 2025)



Adding to this puzzle, the number of voters registered at multiple locations dropped from 7.5 lakh on July 21 to just 7 lakh three days later. This decrease is baffling, as one would expect the number of duplicate registrations to either remain stable or increase as more forms are processed, not decrease.

This is mind-boggling apparent exaggeration (read fudging) of the figures rolled out by the ECI. The question that remains is *whether to meet a* predetermined task of mass deletions the ECI has *incrementally* accentuated the rate of deletions by exaggerating the figures of the names removed on account of death, on account of permanently shifted and on account of being untraceable?

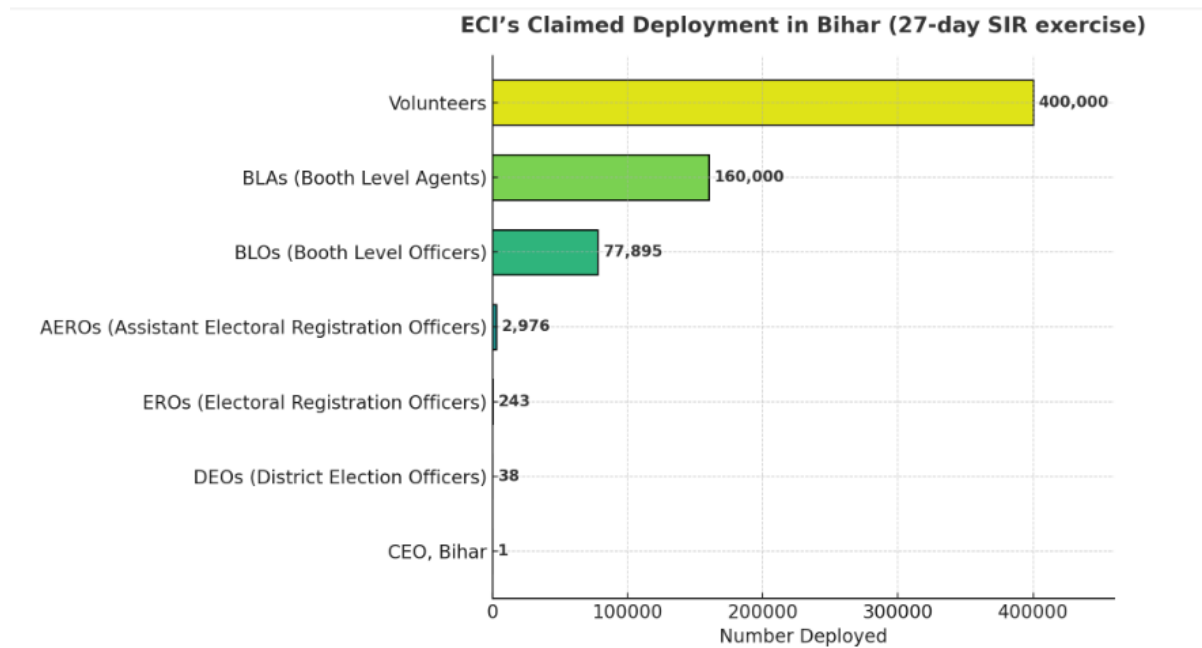
In the 27 days period that the SIR exercise was conducted in Bihar one CEO Bihar, 38 DEOs, 243 EROs, 2976 AEROs, 77895 BLOs, 1.60 Lakh BLAs and 4 lakh Volunteers were (according to the ECI's own claims) deployed by the ECI. Demons and ghosts appear to have introduced by the ECI to exaggerate the figures of permanently shifted and deceased voters between Bihar July 21 2025 to July 25, 2025 of the SIR Bihar process.

**Table 25 – ECI's Claimed Deployment in Bihar (27-day SIR exercise)**

**ECI's Claimed Deployment in Bihar (27-day SIR exercise)**

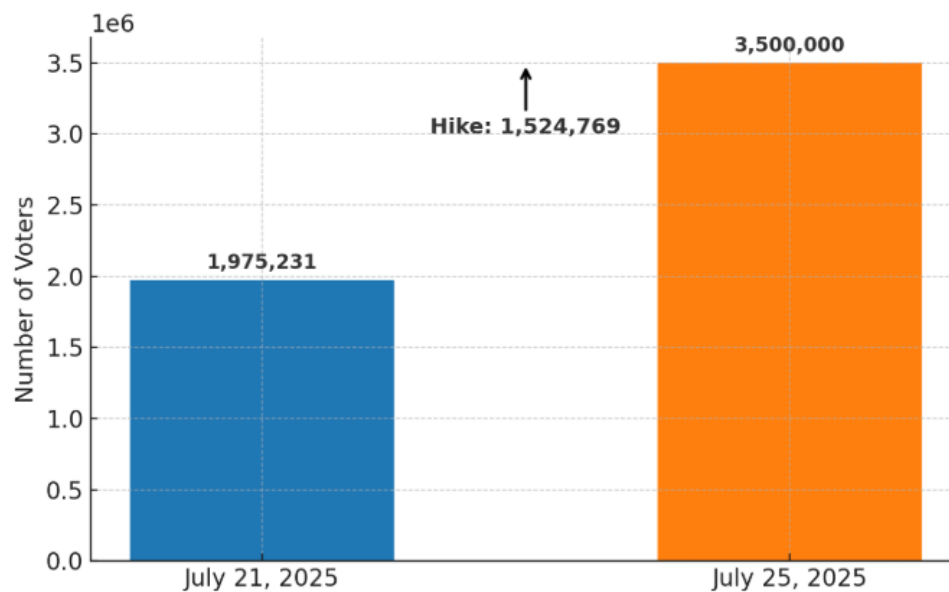
Role	Number Deployed
CEO, Bihar	1
DEOs (District Election Officers)	38
EROs (Electoral Registration Officers)	243
AEROs (Assistant Electoral Registration Officers)	2,976
BLOs (Booth Level Officers)	77,895
BLAs (Booth Level Agents)	1,60,000
Volunteers	4,00,000

Graph 36 – ECI's Claimed Deployment in Bihar (27-day SIR exercise)



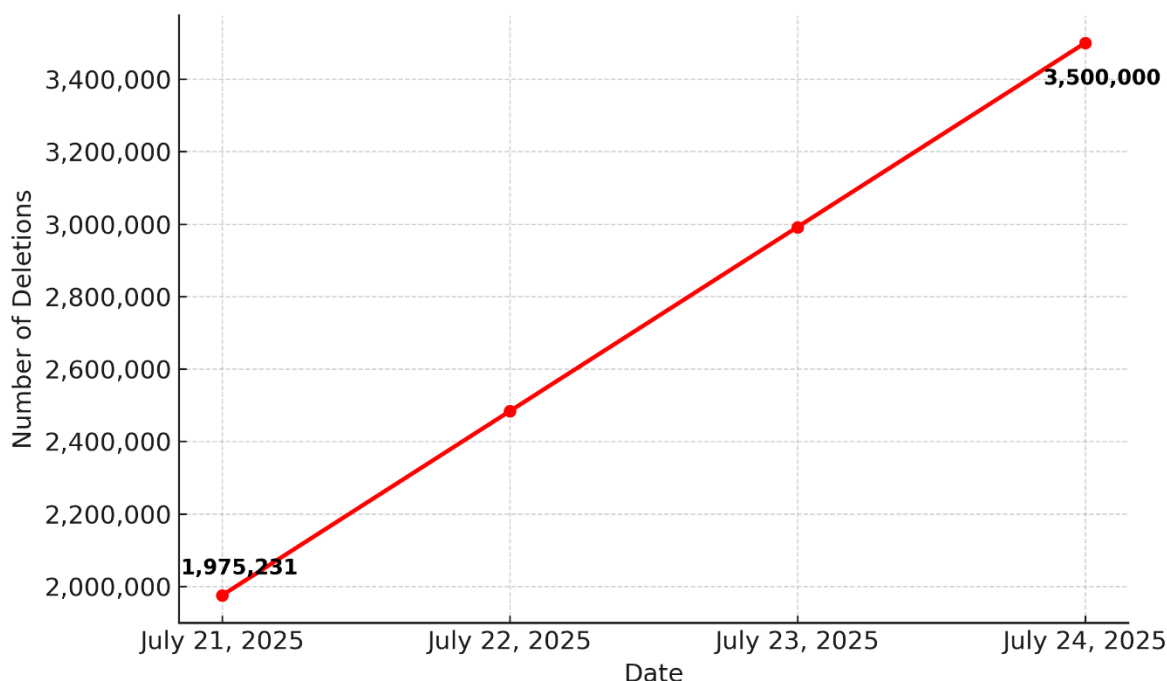
- (7) This vast army of officials could detect only 16,55,407 electors who are dead between July 14 and 21, 2025 (eight days), but in the last four days between July 22, 23 and 25 the number of deceased detected surged to a staggering 22 lakh i.e. the hike was by 5,44,593!

Graph 37 – Surge in 'Permanently Shifted' Voter Deletions (July 21-25, 2025)



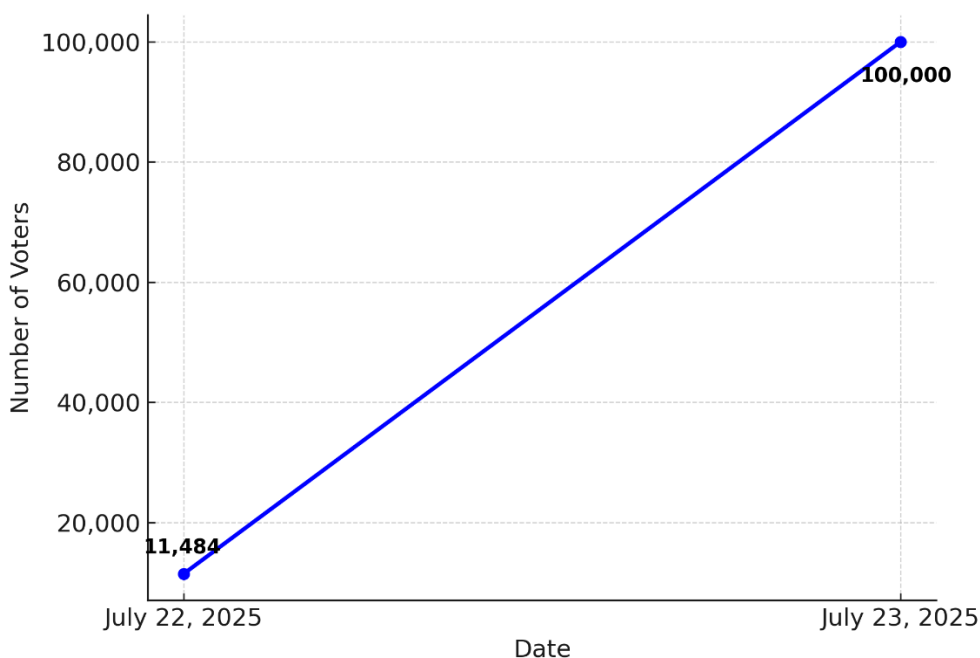
- (8) The number of ‘permanently shifted’ almost doubled in three days and from the figure of 19,75,231 (‘permanently shifted’) on July 21, 2025, over the next four days it galloped to a staggering high figure of 35 lakhs which is a hike of 15,24,769 *in deletions on this count*.

Graph 38 – Sharp Rise in ‘Permanently Shifted’ Deletions (July 21-24, 2025)



- (8) Similarly, in just one day, the Bihar SIR process saw a miraculous increase in ‘untraceable voters’ from 11, 484 on July 22, 2025 to 1 lakh on July 23, 2025, surpassing all common sense and defying logic or the human imagination! This hike of 88,516 in ‘untraceable voters’ amounts to a 771 % surge in this category in just one day --statistically unexplained as a phenomena.

Graph 39 – One-Day Surge in ‘Untraceable Voters’ – Bihar SIR Process

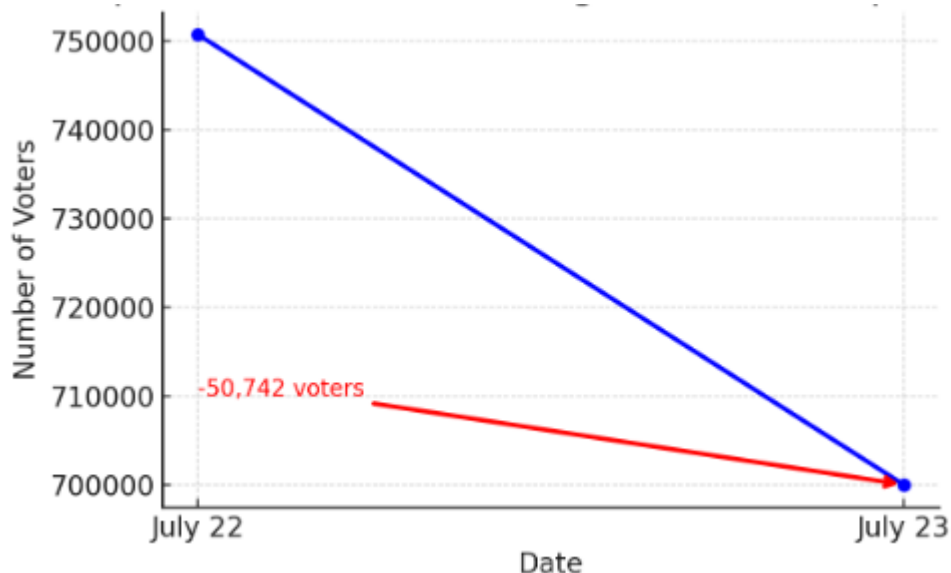


- (9) The number of registered at more than one place has however come down from 7, 50, 742 to 7 lakh which is also a rather unusual data point.

**Analysis:** The sharp drop in the number of voters registered at multiple places, from a precise figure of 7, 50, 742 on July 22 to a generalised "7 lakh" by July 23, is highly unusual (even suspicious). This abrupt disappearance of 50,742 voters without a detailed explanation/update creates a vacuum of information and raises legitimate concerns about the transparency and integrity of the SIR process. The shift from a precise figure to a generalised, aggregate number is highly irregular and raises the suspicion that this data may have been altered or simply rounded for an undisclosed reason.



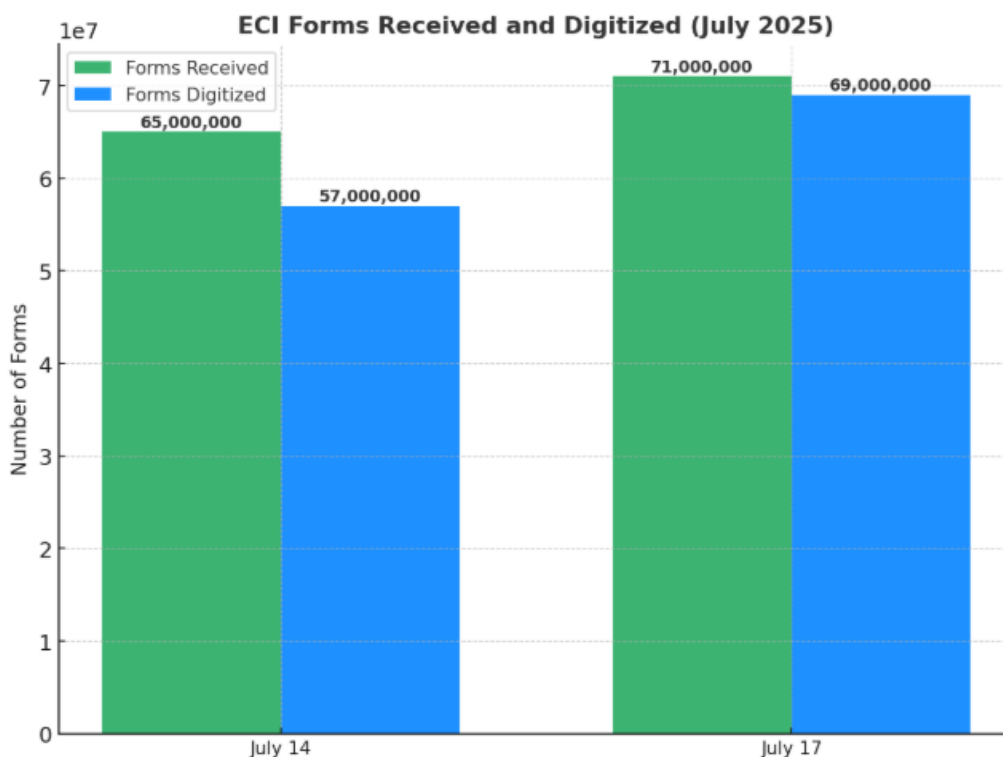
Graph 40 – Drop in Number of Voters Registered at Multiple Places



- (10) Strangely enough, between July 21 and July 22, 2025, the figure of newly digitalised forms is at a total 5, 05, 790, whereas the data numbers of voters who have ‘permanently shifted’ is shown at 6, 25, 800. The ECI's data for July 21 and 22, 2025, presents a severe and illogical inconsistency, while the numbers for "permanently shifted" voters remained mysteriously constant between July 14 and 17, they suddenly surged by an astronomical 6,25,800 within a single 24-hour period (from 19,75,231 ‘permanently shifted’ voters to 26,01,031!! This is an increase in actual numbers of 6,25, 800 ‘permanently shifted’ voters in one day (July 21-22, 2025)! [On July 21 – 19,75,231 electors reported and on July 22, 26,01,031 electors reported [26,01,031-19,75,231 = 6,25,800] This jump is not only disproportionate but also exceeds the total number of newly digitised forms for the same period, which was a mere 5, 05, 790 (from 7,08,59,670 to 7,13,65,460).

**The juxtaposition of a period of zero change followed by a statistically impossible spike raises a critical question about the data's integrity.**

Graph 41 – ECI Forms Received and Digitised (July 2025)



- (11) This leads to a strong suspicion of pre-determined, targeted deletions, as such large numerical discrepancies cannot be attributed to human error.
- (12) An average 2575 voters/electors per assembly constituency have been disenfranchised unlawfully and discriminately within a period of three days in the so called Special Intensive Revision (SIR) undertaken by the ECI. This amounts to a staggering 6, 25, 725 voters since Bihar has 243 assembly constituencies!

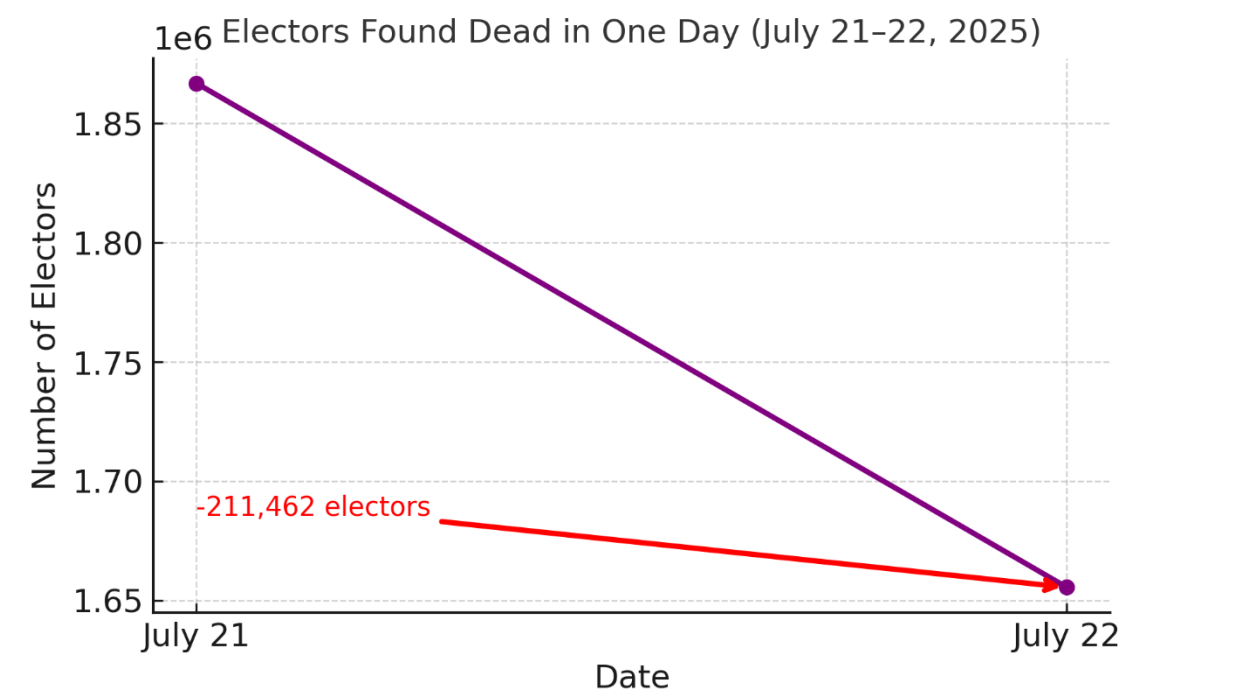
#### **Analysis/Observation:**

Will the CEC Mr. Gyanesh Kumar come clean and place the detailed reasons for deletions with all other details sought by the petitioners as now required by the Supreme Court?

The discrepancies do not stop here:

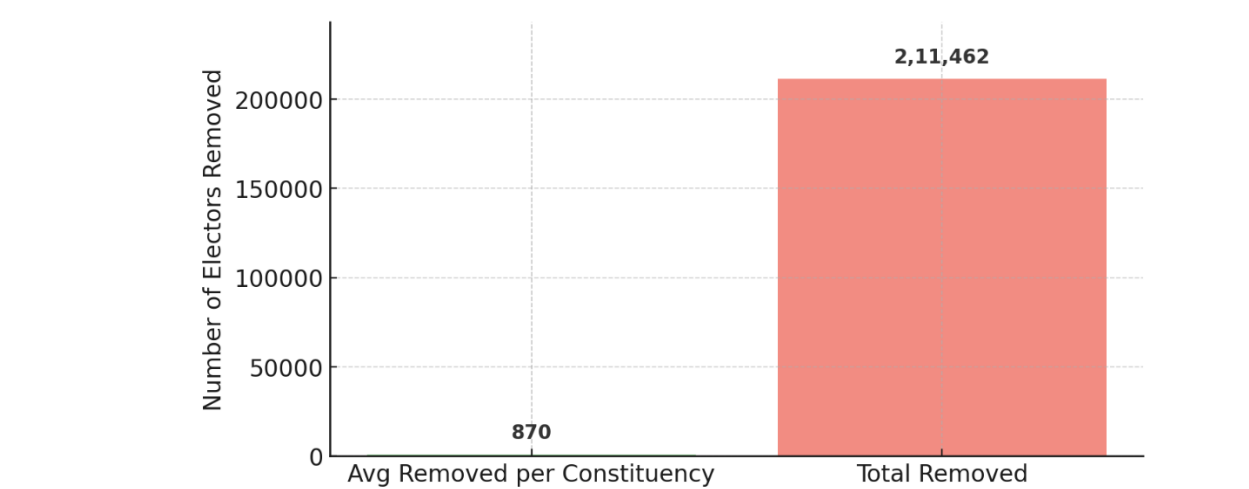
- (13) A staggering 2, 11, 462 electors (18, 66, 869 – 16, 55, 407) are claimed to have been found dead over just one day, between July 21 and July 22, 2025.

Graph 42 - Electors Found Dead in One Day (July 21-22, 2025)



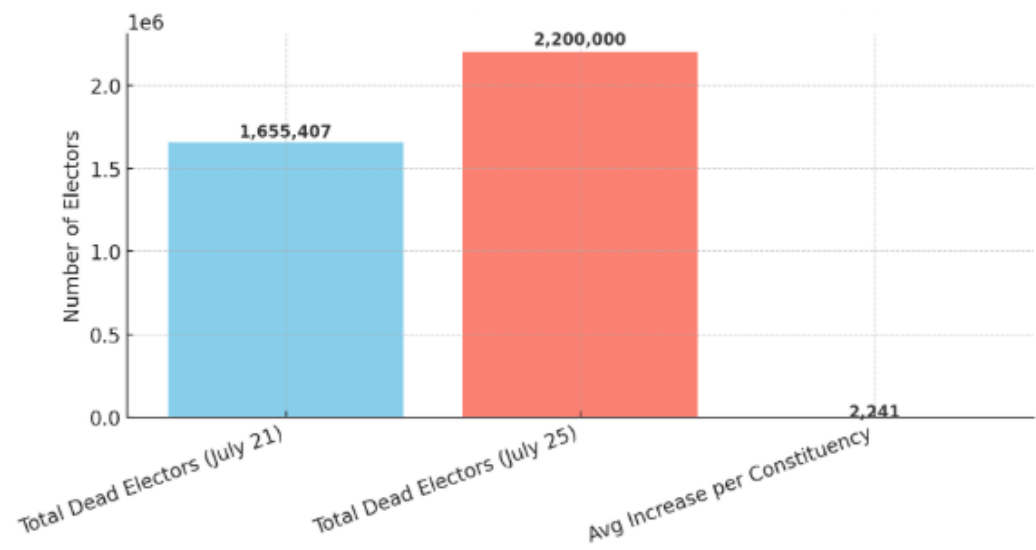
(14) Worse, 870 electors on an average per constituency have been removed over one day, between July 21 and July 22! This makes the electors removed per constituency in one day at **2, 11, 462!** Is this part of a genuine clean-up process or a pre-determined mass deletion?

Graph 43 – Electors Removed on July 22, 2025



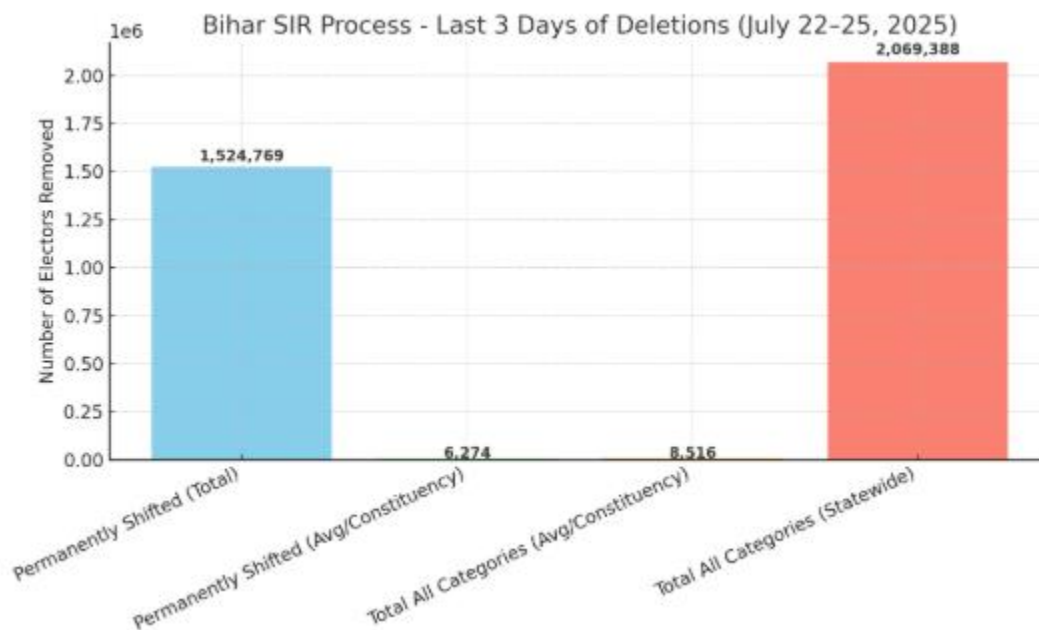
- (15) During the last five days of the SIR process, July 21 to July 25, the ECI has magically raised the number of dead electors from 16, 55, 407 on July 21, 2025 to a significant 22 lakh dead voters, four days later, on July 25. Thus, we see a hike of deletions in this category at 5, 44, 593 in 243 constituencies (which is a figure that is 2241 dead electors per constituency).

Graph 44 – Dead Electors Count and Average Increase per Constituency (July 21-25, 2025)



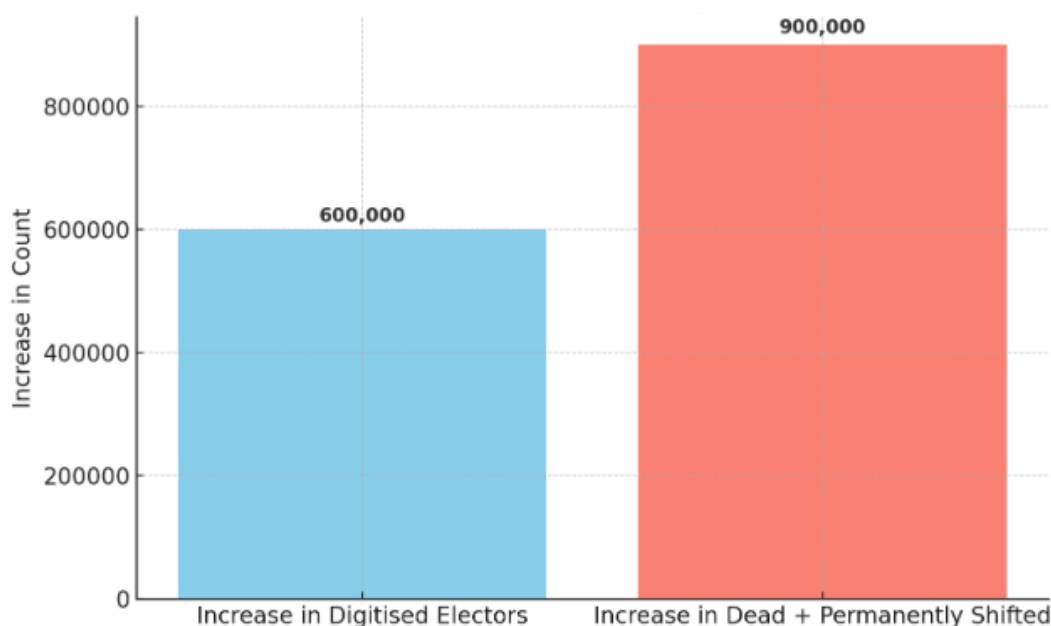
- (16) The hike in the mass deletions under the head permanently shifted is too high to be digested and the same in last three days is 15, 24, 769 for all the 243 constituencies and it turns out to be 6275 per constituency on an average. **Thus, the last three days have been most obnoxious deletion days (!!!) for the ECI’s Bihar SIR process where 8,516 electors have been removed from each of the state’s 243 constituencies.**

Graph 45 – Bihar SIR Process: Last 3 Days of Deletions (July 22-25, 2025)



- (17) The count of deleted voters is thus at the 64 lakh voters count which on an average turns out to be 26,333 votes per constituency.
- (18) All this already points to what amounts to a jugglery in data science. Why? Because the huge surge in the number of ‘dead’ and ‘permanently shifted’ voters *is almost double* the number of the electors’ forms digitalised in those 24 hours i.e. Between July 23 and 25, the number of digitised electors increased from 7.17 crore to 7.23 crore. Concurrently, the total count of deceased and permanently shifted voters rose from 48 lakh to 57 lakh, an increase of approximately 9 lakh.

Graph 46 – Comparison of Increase (July 23-25, 2025)



- (19) Another ECI driven miracle is that in this same period i.e. July 23, to 25, there was not even a single such elector who exists in the ‘registered at more than one place’ category!

Observation: The ECI appeared to be in a hurry over the last days of the SIR exercise to complete the first phase of pre-determined and desired number of deletions.

#### **Analysis/Observation:**

The figures declared by ECI in its official press release vide No. ECI/PN/261/2025 dated 22.07.2025 and that of the next day numbered as ECI/PN/265/2025 dated 23.07.2025, again stand as the testimony of the some manipulation of figures.

Let us have a look at the following table on the figures given out by the ECI

**Table 26 - ECI’s Bihar SIR data between July 22, 2025 and July 23, 2025**

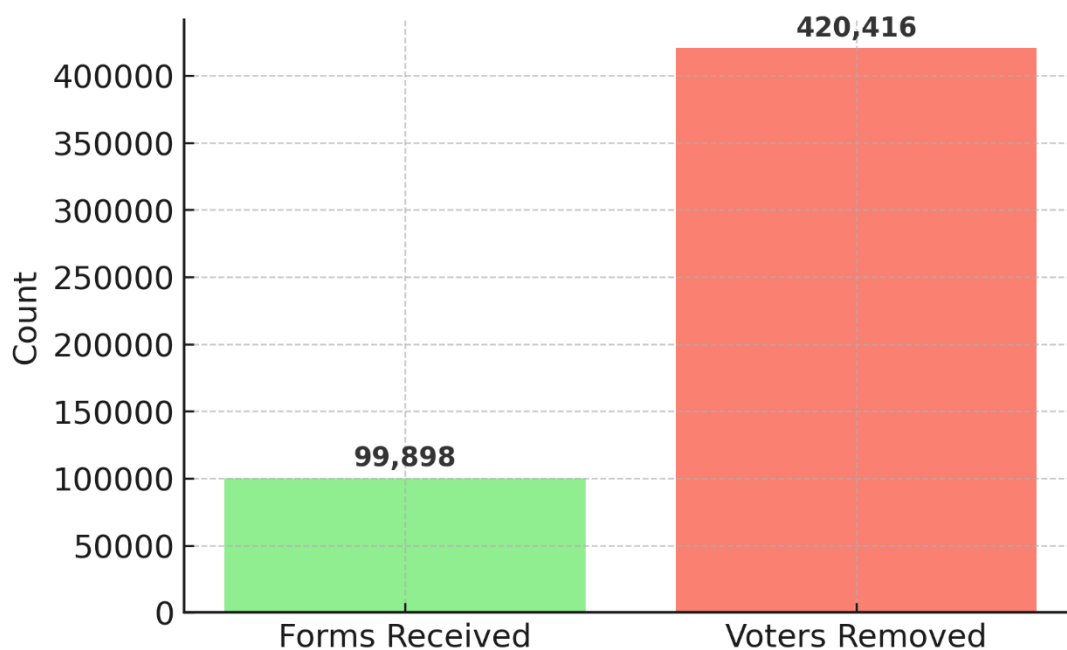
Date	EF received	Digitalised	Prob. De./ Deceased	Permanently Shifted	Registered More places	Untraceable
22.07.25	71604102 (90.67%)	71365460 (90.37%)	1866869 (2.36%)	2601031 (3.29%)	750742 (0.95%)	11484 (0.01%)
23.07.25	7.17 crore (90.89%)	7.17 crore (90.89%)	20 LAKH (2.53%)*	28 LAKH (3.54%)*	7 LAKH (0.89%)*	1 LAKH (0.13%)*

**Table 27 - Bihar SIR data between July 22, 2025 and July 23, 2025**

Electors' forms received between 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 23 <sup>rd</sup> of July	<b>99,898</b>
Dead ones	1,33,131
Permanently shifted	1,98,969
Untraceable	88516
Total unavailable (1,33,131 + 1,98,969 + 88516)	<b>4,20,416</b>

Notably, between July 22 and July 23, the ECI received 99,898 forms. However, in the same period, it identified 4,20,416 voters as dead, permanently shifted, or untraceable. This figure is more than four hundred percent higher than the number of forms collected, a highly unusual and questionable finding.

**Graph 47– Forms Received vs Voters Removed (July 22-23, 2025)**



This suggests an astonishingly high rate of deletion, with an average of 1,730 electors deleted per constituency over a single day. This rapid and large-scale deletion raises concerns about the accuracy and reliability of the ECI's data verification process.

Graph 48 – Single-Day Deletions (July 22-23, 2025)

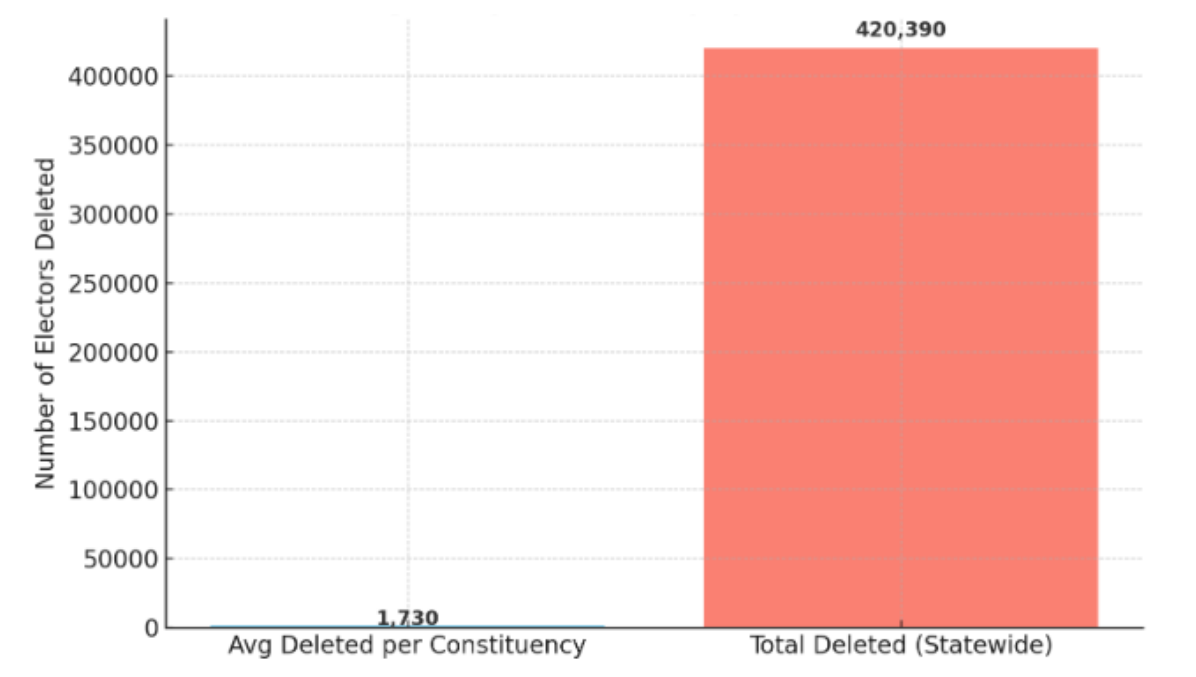


Table 28 - Bihar SIR data between July 23, 2025 and July 25, 2025

Date	Electors Forms Received	Deceased Electors Reported	Permanently Shifted Electors	Electors Enrolled at Multiple places	Untraceable
23.07.25	7.17 crore (90.89%)*	20 LAKH (2.53%)*	28 LAKH (3.54%)*	7 LAKH (0.89%)*	1 LAKH (0.13%)*
25.07.25	7.23 crore (91.52%)*	22 Lakh (2.78%)*	35 lakh*** (4.43%)*	7 lakh (0.89%)*	Merged in 35 lakh
<b>Electors Figures Digitalised between 23 - 25 July</b>	<b>6 Lakh</b>	<b>2 lakh</b>	<b>7 lakh</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Merged In shifted</b>

**More revelations from July 23-25, 2025 that is on the last day of SIR enrolment:**

- (20) Only 6 lakh (six hundred thousand) elector/voter forms have been collected by the field staff or say have also been uploaded (according to the ECI), however, the ECI has found 9 lakh electors as missing voters! To explain further: Between July 23 and July 25, 2025, ECI data reports show a notable increase in several key metrics. The number of received electoral forms rose from 7.17 crore to 7.23 crore, a net increase of 6 lakh forms. Concurrently, the reported figures for deceased voters increased



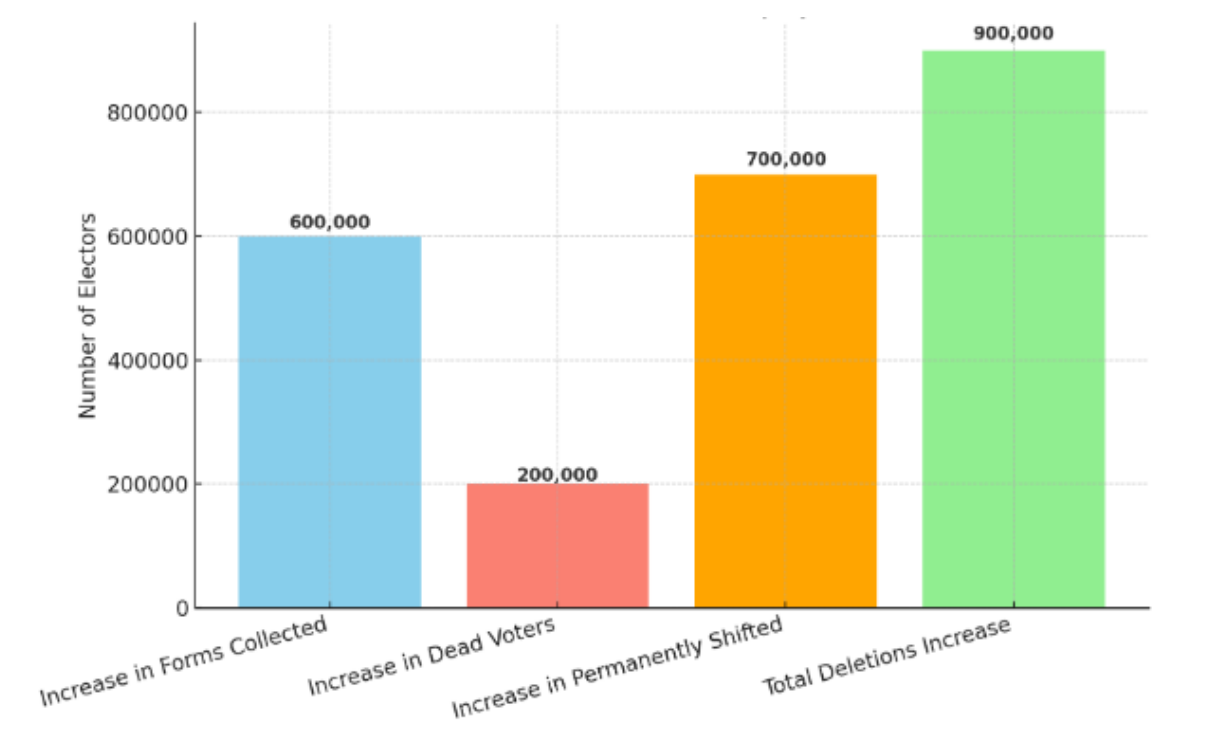
from 20 lakh to 22 lakh, and "permanently shifted" voters increased from 28 lakh to 35 lakh. This represents a total increase of 9 lakh in these two categories of deletions.

**Graph 49 – Breakdown of ‘Missing Voters’ by Category**



- (21) Out of these ‘missing voters’ two Lakh have been shown to be dead and seven Lakh have been shown to have shifted permanently or have been untraceable. Obviously these 9, 00, 000 (nine lakh) ‘additional electors’ have been marked for further deletion/exclusion category. Is it an exaggeration to assume that this too is a matter of designed exclusion?

Graph 50 – Forms Collected vs Deletions (July 23-25, 2025)

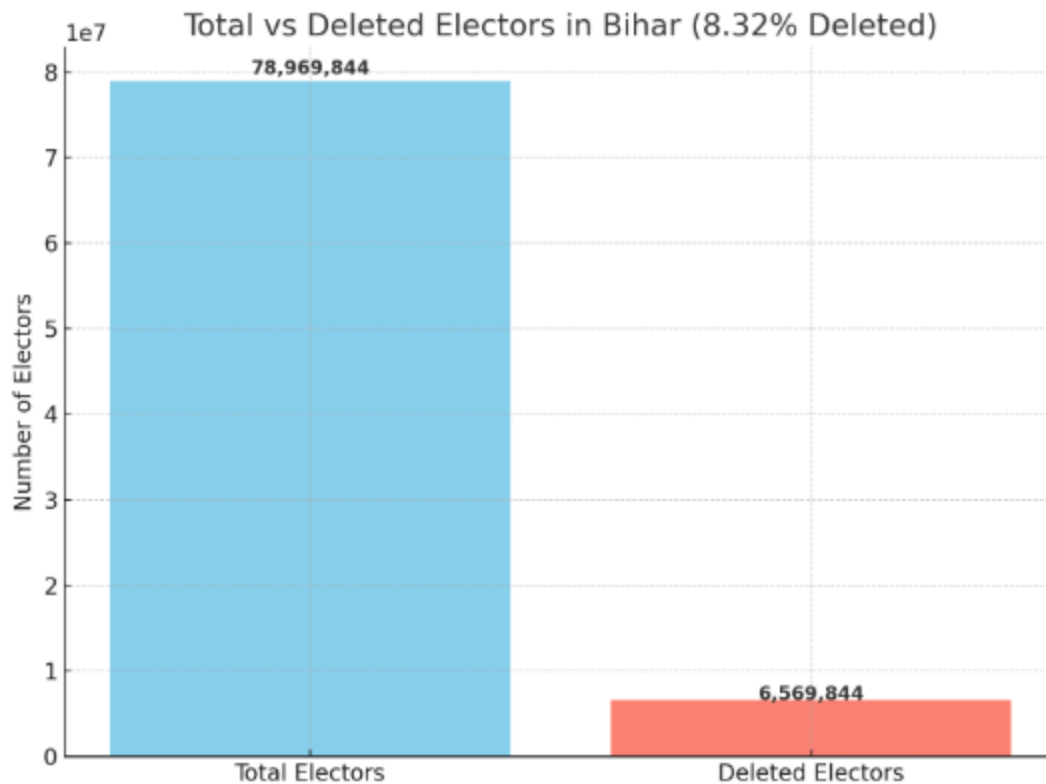


### Analysis/Observation:

Given the concerns and apprehensions expressed by the entire political opposition on the huge number of deletions in the first draft list of electoral rolls (Bihar) after the conclusion of the 27-day SIR, the ECI must, constitutionally and morally come clean. What appear to be paper deletions need to be thoroughly explained and answered by the constitutional body since it is the impoverished, women, SCs, minorities, STs and BCs who have been most targeted by these deletions.

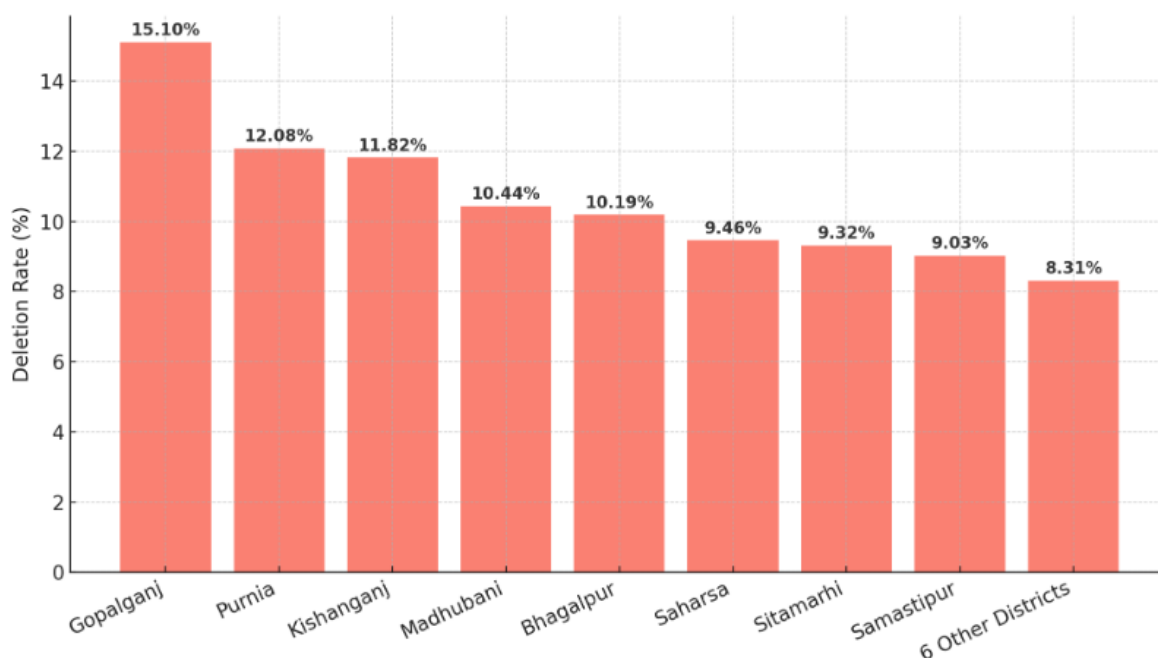
- (22) In all the 38 districts of Bihar out of a total of 7, 89, 69, 844 electors, a staggering 65, 69, 844 electors/voters have been summarily deleted. This is a removal of 8.31 per cent of the existing voters list.

Graph 51 – Total vs Deleted Electors in Bihar (8.32% Deleted)



- (23) However, in Gopal Ganj the rate is highest at 15.10%, thereafter comes Purnia at 12.08%, Kishanganj is at 11.82%, Madhubani is at 10.44% while Bhagalpur, the deletion is at 10.19%. The districts of Saharsa the deletion of voters is at 9.46%, in Sitamarhi it is at 9.32% and in Samastipur the percentage of deletion is at 9.03%. In another six of the state's 38 districts, the deletion percentages are between 8.31 to 9%.

Graph 52 – Voter Deletion Rates in Selected Bihar Districts



### Analysis/Observation:

In view of the above facts the present SIR exercise has been termed as Special Intensive Removal by the Opposition. To date, the list of those removed has not been placed in public domain<sup>86</sup>, the reasons for each removal and the documentary evidence as mandated by the law/rules has not been published. Reports have disclosed that many dead persons<sup>87</sup> figure in the list, many of those living have been excluded, there is a report of 17 villages out of a cluster of 18 is missing altogether. Evidently, the SIR has been conducted by the ECI motivated by extraneous, not constitutional requirements and concerns. This is the first time since Independence that the voters are being denied their right to franchise by mass exclusion arbitrarily and illegally.

This entire Bihar SIR exercise must be seen in the backdrop of the Lok Sabha elections of 2024. According to a report in the Business Standard<sup>88</sup>, 7, 79, 360 electors have been injected as ‘young voters’ being at 18-19 years of age while in the age group of 20-29 years the number of new electors inducted was as high as 1, 60, 61, 649 voters. The report was filed on the basis of figures released by Bihar’s State Election Commission.

Even with this huge hike in young voters, according to a story in the *Hindu*<sup>89</sup>, it was the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) that got a vote share of 22.14% *from this category*, the highest in the state; the BJP got 20.52 % of this category of voters and the Janata Dal (United) only 18.52%.

The disproportionately high voter deletion rates in specific districts—Gopalganj (15.10%), Purnia (12.08%), Kishanganj (11.82%), Madhubani (10.44%), and Bhagalpur (10.19%)—which significantly exceed the state

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2025/Aug/06/supreme-court-asks-ec-to-furnish-details-of-65-lakh-deleted-voters-in-bihar-draft-electoral-rolls>

<sup>87</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_0zxSSZSLA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_0zxSSZSLA)

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/patna-news/bihar-adds-1-2-million-voters-in-electoral-roll-released-by-state-election-body-101705922547257.html>

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/elections/lok-sabha/rashtriya-janata-dal-gets-highest-vote-share-among-parties-in-bihar-while-winning-only-four-seats-20-mps-from-obc-ebc-groups/article68255258.ece>

average of 8.31%, constitute a critical point of concern. The preposition is that these districts, often characterised by specific demographic profiles, are being disproportionately targeted under the 65-lakh deletion category.

Vote for Democracy (VFD) is hopeful that the Supreme Court will take cognizance of this apparent manipulation of the SIR process and data collection that has resulted in largescale, unfair deletions of the legitimate voter.

VFD is also hopeful that the campaign launched by the Opposition will succeed in mobilising public opinion against this attempt at strangling the fundamentals of Indian democracy. Individuals from the political class and public-spirited organisations and individuals are trying to expose the game with all their might.

## PART - V

### EXHIBITS/ ANNEXURES: MEMORANDA AND INFORMATION BY THE MVA IN MAHARASHTRA

#### I

#### On EVM vs. Postal Ballots

#### Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray), Varun Sardesai’s documentation

*EVM contradicted early postal ballot trends in many seats:*

In the Lok Sabha elections 2024, postal ballot trends indicated that the MVA would win 30 to 31 seats, while the Mahayuti was expected to secure 16. The final results closely mirrored these projections, with the MVA winning 31 seats and the Mahayuti 17. However, in the Maharashtra Assembly Elections - 2025, postal ballot trends showed the MVA winning 143 seats and the Mahayuti 140. After the EVM votes were counted, the results were drastically different, with the three MVA parties securing only 46 seats, while the Mahayuti won over 230.

**Table 29 - EVM contradicted early postal ballot trends in many seats**

2024 Maharashtra Loksabha Result as per leads in EVM	
MVA	31
Mahayuti	16

2024 Maharashtra Vidhansabha Result as per leads in Postal Ballots	
MVA	143
Mahayuti	140
Others	5

## II

### **Improper addition and deletion of voters: INC**

The Indian National Congress (INC) submitted a memorandum to the Election Commission of India (ECI) on November 29, 2024, alleging electoral fraud in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Elections. The memorandum raised concerns about improper voter deletions and additions, along with unexplained spikes in voter turnout.

1. **Improper Voter Deletions:** Congress accused the ECI of arbitrary deletions of voters in Maharashtra. They highlighted that approximately 10,000 voters were removed from each constituency, without following the prescribed legal framework under the Registration of Electors' Rules, 1960. The deletions occurred without proper verification, particularly without the required Form-7 submissions and door-to-door checks by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs). Congress demanded details on the number of deletions, Form-7 submissions, and verification processes to ensure transparency.

Sub-rule 1.7.1. Of Rule 1.7 of Handbook for Returning Officer, 2023, after final publication of rolls, no suo-moto deletion shall be done in an election year. Deletion can be done only on the basis of Form 7 or on the basis of a request of deletion made by the concerned elector in declaration part of Form 8. If any deletion has to be made in the electoral rolls after the final publication of rolls, i.e. during the period of continuous updation, the ERO shall consult the DEO before making any such deletion.

The DEO shall monitor all additions, deletions and corrections from the date of final publication of electoral rolls onwards. In case deletions required in any Assembly Constituency are more than 0.1% of the number of electors in the said constituency in the finally published rolls, the DEO shall take the approval of the CEO before allowing such deletions by the ERO.

Under sub-rule 1.7.2. Of Rule 1.7. Of HRO 2023, after the announcement of elections, no deletion or correction of entries in the electoral rolls shall be done by the ERO either suo-moto or on the basis of forms received. Forms 7, 8, received till the date of announcement of election will be taken up for disposal by the ERO concerned after expiry of the prescribed 7 days' notice period. This means, Forms 7, 8, received till the date of announcement of election would be processed as per due procedure till the 10th day from the date of announcement. Forms 7, 8 received after the announcement of election would be kept separately and shall be taken up for disposal only after completion of election.

Further, under sub-rule 1.7.3. - Addition of names will be carried on till the last date of filing nominations. All the Forms 6 received till 10 days before the last date of filing nominations shall be disposed of and the Addition Supplement be prepared by the EROs up to the last date of filing of nominations. There may be some instances where Form 8 for shifting from one place to another might be received after the announcement of elections. In such cases, it would

not be appropriate to deny such claims in support of the applicants' registration at the new place.

2. **Improper Voter Additions:** The party also raised concerns about a surge in voter registrations, claiming that Maharashtra's electoral rolls grew by 71 lakh voters (13%) between the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. In 50 constituencies, there was an average increase of 50,000 voters, and the ruling BJP-led coalition won 47 of these seats, which Congress argued was statistically improbable. They alleged foul play and pointed to an FIR filed by a Voter Registration Officer regarding fake voter registrations using forged Aadhaar cards with mismatched photos, names, and addresses.

Under Rule 1.9 of the Handbook for Presiding Officer, 2023, all the additions made during the period of revision/continuous updation from last final publication date till the last date of making nominations (where elections are due), are put in chronological order giving continuous SI. No. starting with the next SI. No. of the last entry in final roll, with all deletions & modifications marked in last draft/final roll as per Commission's existing instructions.



### III

#### **Anomalous voter turnout in Maharashtra Assembly elections 2024: Indian National Congress (INC)**

The Indian National Congress (INC) also raised significant concerns about anomalies in voter turnout during the Maharashtra Assembly Elections 2024. In an urgent memorandum submitted to the Election Commission of India (ECI) on November 29, 2024, Congress highlighted irregularities and raised suspicions of electoral malpractice.

1. **Surge in voter turnout:** The memorandum focused on a dramatic rise in voter turnout between 5:00 PM and 11:30 PM, with the turnout increasing from 58.22% (5.64 crore votes) to 65.02% (6.59 crore votes). By 11:53 PM, the figure further increased to 66.05%, adding approximately 10 lakh votes. Congress called this surge "unprecedented," questioning the feasibility of such an increase within the short time frame.
2. **Non-Adherence to procedures:** The memorandum pointed out that the ECI's Handbook for Presiding Officers mandates issuing serially numbered slips to voters in queues after the official polling hours. However, Congress alleged that there was no evidence that these protocols were followed in constituencies where the turnout spiked. The lack of transparency in videographing voters also raised concerns.
3. **Lack of transparency in data:** Congress criticized the ECI for discrepancies in voter turnout updates. The official release at 11:53 PM stated 65.02%, yet the final turnout increased to 66.05%, raising questions about data manipulation.
4. **Political implications:** The party highlighted that these discrepancies were concentrated in constituencies where the **ruling BJP-led coalition secured significant victories, fueling further suspicions.**

The Congress demanded a detailed report, investigation into procedural adherence, and clarification of the additional votes. They urged the ECI to uphold its responsibility to ensure free and fair elections, stressing that any manipulation would undermine public trust in the electoral process.

## IV

### **AIPC Chairman Praveen Chakravarthy's Press Conference: 26.01.2025**

- **Significant manipulation of the voter list in Maharashtra Assembly Elections – 2024**

AIPC Chairman Praveen Chakravarthy held a press conference on “Election Fraud: manipulation of Maharashtra’s voter list”. He questions ECI over the suspiciously adding 48 lakh new voters in just six months before the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections, casting doubt on their legitimacy. Chakravarthy also raised concerns over unusual voter registrations, including 5,000-7,000 voters from a single building in Loni village, Shirdi, without valid Aadhaar cards. He demanded full transparency from the ECI, asking, “Who are these new voters? Are they real, fake, or duplicates? Were their documents properly checked?”

- **Suspicious surge in new voters for Mahayuti**

Chakravarthy questioned the legitimacy of the addition of a large number of voters in the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha election, specifically pointing out that these new voters overwhelmingly supported the Mahayuti alliance. He noted that this surge helped the Mahayuti alliance win a substantial majority in the Assembly elections, even after suffering a loss in the Lok Sabha elections just six months earlier.

He further elaborated on the apparent anomaly: He further elaborated on the apparent anomaly: “48 lakh new voters were added for the Vidhan Sabha election, but somehow, all these 48 lakh new voters voted for the Mahayuti alliance. How is that possible?” Chakravarthy pointed out that between the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections, Mahayuti gained 72 lakh additional votes compared to the Lok Sabha results.

However, he argued that only 24 lakhs of those votes could logically have shifted from the Mahavikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance, leaving a remaining 48 lakh votes unaccounted for. He called this “magic” and asked if this was the result of “executive interference” or “government interference in the Election Commission,” adding, “Is this not strange?”

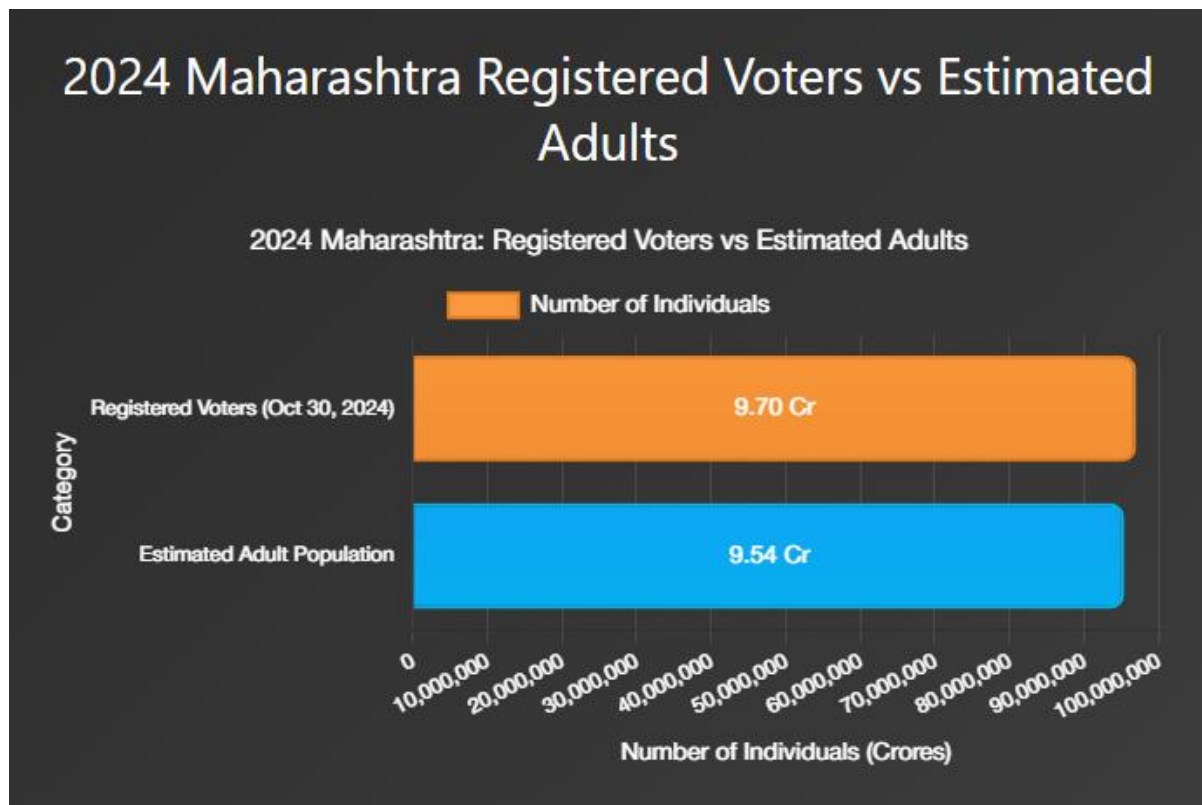
- **Unprecedented voter additions in six months**

Chakravarthy presented further evidence, questioning how the Election Commission could account for the addition of 48 lakh new voters within just six months. He pointed out that in the five years leading up to the 2024 elections (from 2019 to 2024), only 32 lakh new voters had been added to the rolls. This stark contrast in voter addition rates raised red flags about the legitimacy of the process. “How is it in six months 48 lakh voters were added, but in the previous five years only 32 lakh voters were added?” Chakravarthy asked.

- Discrepancy between voter count and adult population

Another key issue Chakravarthy raised was the discrepancy between the reported number of voters in Maharashtra and the actual adult population. According to the ECI, there were 9.7 crore total voters for the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha election. However, the total adult population of Maharashtra in 2024 was only 9.54 crore, as per the Ministry of Health.

**Graph 53 - 2024 Maharashtra Registered Voters vs Estimated Adults**



- Who are the new voters? – Congress, question over voters’ legitimacy

Chakravarthy continued his questioning, asking who the new voters were and whether they were legitimate. He inquired, “Are they real people or fake, ghosts, or duplicates? Were they brought in from other states? Were their documents checked, including Aadhaar cards or proof of identity and residence? Are they residents of Maharashtra?” These questions, he stressed, were essential for ensuring the fairness of the election process.

- In Loni village of Shirdi constituency, 5 to 7000 voters were added from just one building

Chakravarthy provided an example of suspected voter fraud in Loni village of the Shirdi Assembly Constituency. He claimed that nearly 5,000 to 7,000 voters were added from just one building. According to Congress candidate Prabhawati Gogre, when she investigated, the

new voters admitted that they were not residents of the village, and they did not possess Aadhaar cards. When asked how they registered to vote, they allegedly said they were brought in by BJP candidate VK Patil's team. Despite Gogre's complaint to the Election Commission, Chakravarthy claimed, "There was absolute silence, no action."

He said, *"nearly 5 to 7,000 voters were added from just one building. When the Congress candidate Prabhavati Gogre found out, she went to the Election Commission and questioned it. She went and asked the voters 'Are you a resident of this village?', 'Do you have an Aadhar card?', all of them said 'NO.'"*

- **Congress's questions before the Election Commission of India**

In light of these allegations, Chakravarthy called on the Election Commission of India to address several critical questions:

- *Why does the Election Commission not make the voter roll data for both the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections publicly available in a consolidated, accessible format for analysis?*
- *How does the ECI explain the extraordinary increase in the number of new voters within a short span of time?*
- *The ECI must provide documentation and proof regarding the legitimacy of these new voters, including verification of their identity and residence.*

## V

### **TMC Alleges "Grave Conspiracy" in Webcasting Tender for Kaliganj By-poll, Accuses ECI of Favoritism towards Gujarat Firm**

On June 30, 2025 – The Trinamool Congress (TMC) unleashed a scathing attack on the Election Commission of India (ECI), alleging a "grave conspiracy" in the tender process for webcasting services for the recent Kaliganj bye-election. The party, through a strongly worded post on X (formerly Twitter) on June 18, claimed that the ECI was "enabling" this alleged manipulation, which they believe is aimed at "hijacking surveillance systems" after the BJP purportedly failed to rig the voter list.

According to the TMC's accusations, the tender for webcasting in Kaliganj was deliberately "rigged to favour a Gujarat-based firm." They cited "tailored clauses, opaque scoring, and manipulated timelines" as mechanisms used to ensure this outcome, leading to the "deliberate disqualification" of Bengal-based agencies with proven track records. Senior TMC leader and state minister Chandrima Bhattacharya has formally penned a letter to the ECI, demanding accountability and questioning whether the commission will act as a "neutral umpire" or remain a "BJP's rubber stamp."

Link: <https://x.com/AITCofficial/status/1935374759539425763?t=jGlG79uhj-oTNpy57VVe5g&s=03>

The TMC's concerns extend beyond the immediate Kaliganj by-election, with the party also alleging that the same Gujarat-based company was awarded the tender for webcasting the entire 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections in a non-transparent manner. They contend that the selection of an agency with a higher financial bid, despite the availability of experienced local firms, suggests a predetermined outcome in the technical evaluation process.

While the Bengal Chief Electoral Officer, Manoj Kumar Agarwal, has publicly stated that all norms were followed during the e-tender process and denied any irregularities in awarding the contract to the Gujarat-based firm, the TMC continues to demand a thorough and transparent review of the entire selection procedure. This ongoing controversy highlights the heightened political tensions surrounding electoral processes in West Bengal, with the TMC consistently raising alarms about perceived attempts to undermine the fairness of elections.

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