

ECI reviews poll preparedness for forthcoming Assembly Elections in West Bengal

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1. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Shri Gyanesh Kumar along with Election Commissioners Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Dr. Vivek Joshi held a detailed and comprehensive review of the poll preparedness for the forthcoming West Bengal Legislative Assembly Elections in Kolkata today.
2. During the review visit, the Commission interacted with the representatives of recognized national political parties namely Aam Aadmi Party, Bharatiya Janata Party, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Indian National Congress, and National People's Party and the recognised state political parties, namely, All India Forward Bloc and the All India Trinamool Congress and sought their suggestions.
3. Most political parties appreciated the massive SIR exercise being carried out by ECI in the state of West Bengal and also reposed their complete faith and trust in ECI.
4. Political parties urged the Commission to take stringent measures to curb ensure that there are no acts of aggression or intimidation of voters during the forthcoming elections. They called upon the ECI to ensure a peaceful, free & fair elections.
5. They called upon ECI to provide protection to each voter and deploy CAPF in large numbers to curb violence during elections. The parties raised their concerns about the possibility of use of crude bombs, illegal firearms, money and muscle power by certain parties.
6. Political parties urged the Commission to conduct the elections in one or two phases.
7. CEC Shri Gyanesh Kumar assured the political parties that elections in India are held as per Law and ECI will not leave any stone unturned in ensuring an impartial, transparent and a free and fair poll in West Bengal.
8. CEC Gyanesh Kumar said that ECI will have Zero tolerance towards violence and intimidation of either electors or election staff.
9. The political parties assured the Commission that they will fully cooperate in ensuring that the polls in West Bengal are free of violence.
10. CEC Shri Gyanesh Kumar reiterated that SIR has been conducted in the most transparent manner. He said that the objective of SIR is to ensure that no eligible elector is left out while no ineligible person is included in the Electoral Rolls. He added that Forms 6/7/8 can still be filed for any inclusions/deletions/changes.
11. Later, the Commission held a detailed review with the Heads/Nodal Officers of Enforcement Agencies, IGs, DIGs, Divisional Commissioners, Commissioners of Police, DEOs and SSPs/SPs on every aspect of election planning, EVM management, logistics, training of election staff, seizures, law and order, voter awareness and outreach activities.
12. The Commission directed all Heads/Nodal Officers of Enforcement Agencies to act with complete impartiality and firmly clamp down on all inducement related activities.

13. The Commission also directed all DEOs to ensure that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs), including ramps, wheelchairs and drinking water, are made available at all polling stations for the comfort of voters.

PK/GDH/RP

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