

ECI deploys Additional Counting Observers and Police Observers in West Bengal

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1. Election Commission of India (ECI) has deployed **165 Additional Counting Observers** to assist Counting Observers and **77 Police Observers** to strengthen security and oversee law & order arrangements around Counting Centres for the ongoing General Election to the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal, 2026.
2. The Additional Counting Observers and Police Observers have been deployed to ensure that the counting proceedings are conducted in a **secure, peaceful, intimidation-free and transparent environment**.
3. These appointments have been made in exercise of the powers conferred upon ECI under Article 324 of the Constitution of India and Section 20B of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. During this period, the Observers shall be **deemed to be on deputation to the Commission** and will function under its superintendence and control.
4. Additional Counting Observers have been appointed to assist the Counting Observers for 165 Assembly Constituencies which have **more than one Counting Hall**.
5. Police Observers will oversee the security and law and order arrangements around the Counting Centres of the ACs assigned to them and ensure that the security arrangements around the Counting Centres are as per the Commission's instructions. However, the Police Observers **shall not enter the Counting Hall on the day of counting of votes** under any circumstance.
6. The Police Observers will function in **close coordination with the Counting Observers** and other election machinery deployed for the counting process.
7. Identity Cards for ROs, counting personnel, candidates and their agents shall be issued by the Returning Officer (RO) through a **dedicated module in ECINet**.
8. Entry into the counting centers shall be strictly based on the **QR code-based Photo ID** issued through ECINET by the ROs for Counting personnel, candidates and their agents.
9. It has also been directed that no person, except the Counting Observer and the Returning Officer, is permitted to carry a **mobile phone inside the Counting Hall**.
10. **Form 17C-II** containing the results of the counting from the Control Units will be prepared by the Counting Supervisors in the presence of **Counting Agents** and will be **shared with the Counting Agents for their signatures**. This process will be repeated if the Counting Agents so desire.
11. **Micro-Observers** deployed at each table will also **independently note down** the result from the CU display and handover to the Counting Observer at the end of each round for cross-verification.

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