

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/53/2021

Dated: April 17th, 2021

PRESS NOTE

Polling in 15,789 Polling Stations spread across 45 Assembly Constituencies in West Bengal Phase V Elections, Bye-Election in 2 Parliamentary Constituencies and 12 Assembly Constituencies across 10 States conducted peacefully today;

Huge Turnout of Women Voters; Voter Turnout (at 5 PM) for Phase V West Bengal Election 78.36%

ECI thanks voters for strictly following COVID protocols

Polling in 56-Samsanganj and 58-Jangipur Assembly Constituency at West Bengal and 110-Pipili Bye-Election Assembly Constituency at Odisha stands adjourned

8266 out of 15789 polling stations monitored live through webcasting

Candidate in Noksen (ST) Bye-Election Assembly Constituency, Nagaland elected unopposed

Polling was today conducted peacefully in **15,789 Polling Stations** spread across **45 Assembly Constituencies**, in the fifth phase of elections in the State of West Bengal as well as in the Bye-Election in 2 Parliamentary Constituencies and 12 Assembly Constituencies across 10 States. Bye-Elections were also conducted in the Parliamentary Constituencies Tirupati (SC), Andhra Pradesh and Belgaum, Karnataka today. Bye-Elections were conducted in the Assembly Constituencies Morva Hadaf (ST), Gujarat; Madhupur, Jharkhand; Basavakalyan and Maski (ST), Karnataka; Damoh, Madhya Pradesh; Pandharpur, Maharashtra; Serchhip (ST), Mizoram; Sahara, Sujangarh (SC) and Rajsamand, Rajasthan; Nagarjuna Sagar, Telangana and Salt, Uttarakhand today.

Polling at 56-Samsanganj Assembly Constituency & 58-Jangipur Assembly Constituency West Bengal scheduled on 26 April stands adjourned due to death of Indian National Congress candidate and Revolutionary Socialist Party candidate respectively. Polling in Bye-Election to Pipili Assembly Constituency Odisha stands adjourned due to death of Indian National Congress candidate. These political parties will be provided an opportunity to nominate another candidate for which fresh notification shall be issued by the Commission.

Only one candidate filed nomination for Bye-Election to Noksen (ST) Assembly Constituency in Nagaland. Hence the candidate was elected unopposed.

In the Phase V of West Bengal Assembly Elections, the total number of PwD electors and 80+ electors are 60,198 and 1,79,634 respectively. A total of 15,789 Ballot Units (BUs),

15,789 Control Units(CUs) and 15,789 VVPATs were used in West Bengal during this phase. 8266 (52.35%) out of 15789 polling stations are monitored live through webcasting.

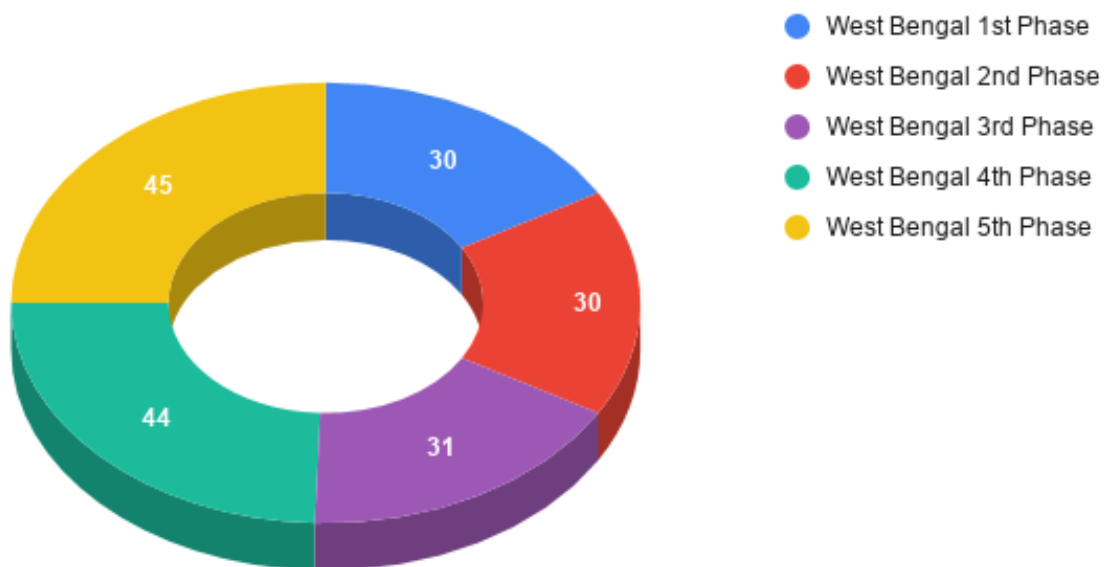
During the ongoing elections till this phase in West Bengal, a record seizure of Rs.310.50 Crores has already been reported till date. The seizure figure, which includes seizure of cash, liquor, narcotics, freebies etc., is 7 times of the total seizure of Rs. 44.33 Crores in GE LA 2016. The progressive seizure of all five States/UT where assembly elections have been/are being held, as on date is Rs.1013.1 Crore (this includes seizures of Rs.12.11 Crore in bye-elections also)

To control the spread of Coronavirus, the Election Commission invoked powers under Article 324 to curtail the timing of campaign. Silence period has been extended from 48 hours to 72 hours in each of the remaining 3 phases. The Commission had written to political parties for taking additional measures to deal with COVID-19.

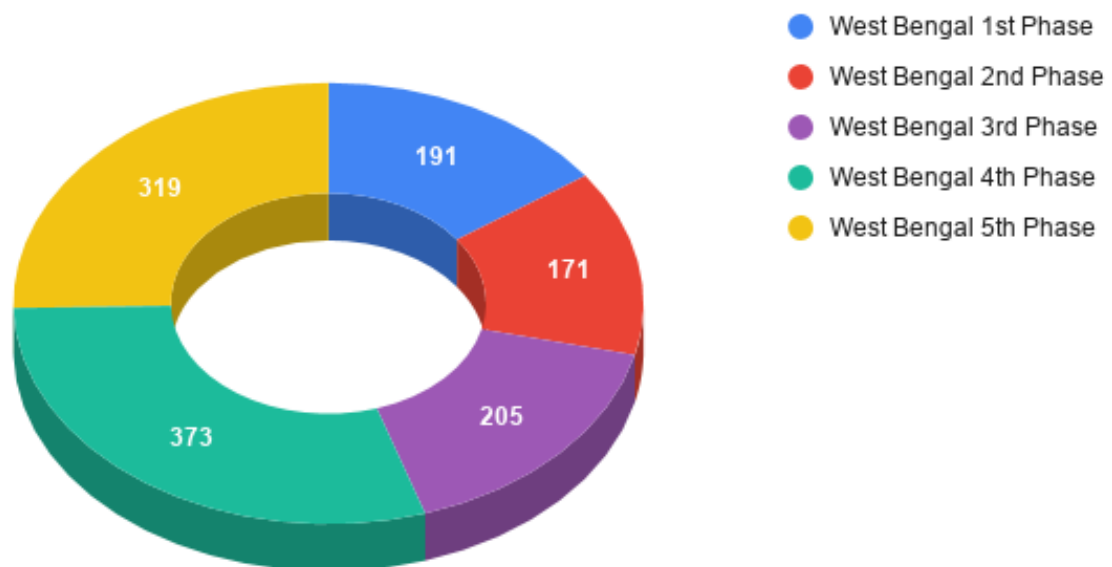
Details of Electors, Polling Stations & Observers in the poll are as follows:

Table 1 : Factsheet for West Bengal						
State	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Total upto Phase 5
Assembly Constituencies	30	30	31	44	45	180
No of Polling Stations	10,288	10,620	10,871	15,940	15,789	63,508
Registered Electors	7380942	7594549	7852425	11581022	11347344	45756282
Total number of contesting candidates	191	171	205	373	319	1259
No of General Observers deployed	20	23	22	35	33	133
No of Police Observers deployed	7	6	9	9	12	43
No of Expenditure Observers deployed	9	9	7	10	16	51
% of voting till 5 PM	84.63 (Final VTR)	86.11 (Final VTR)	84.61 (Final VTR)	79.90 (Final VTR)	78.36% (as of 5 PM)	

Total Number of Assembly Constituencies gone to poll as yet = 180



Total Number of Contesting Candidates as yet = 1259



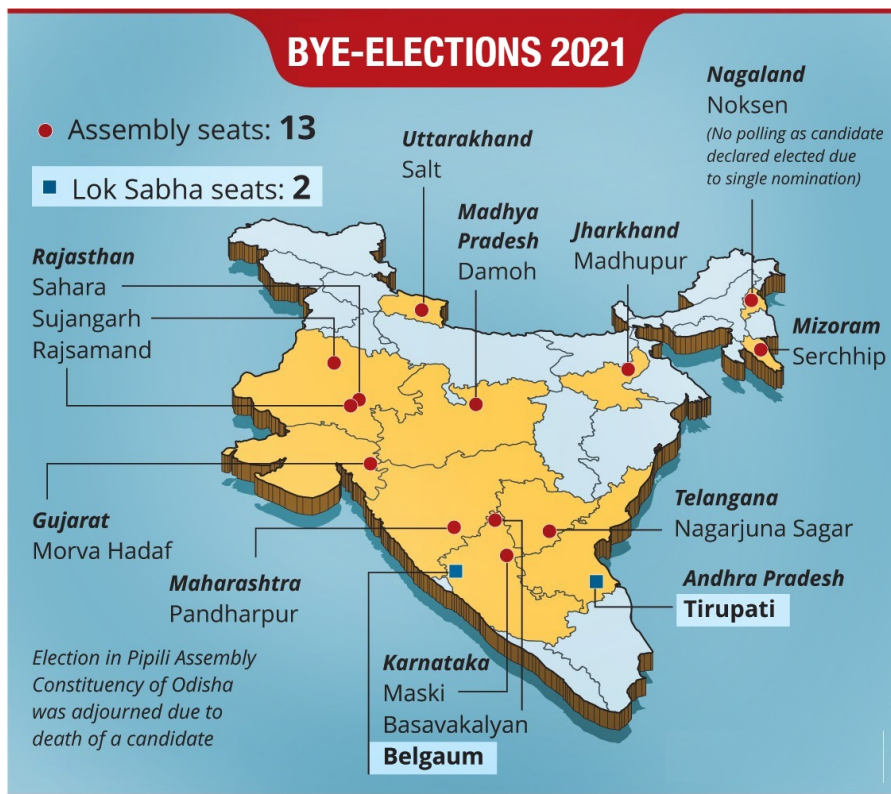


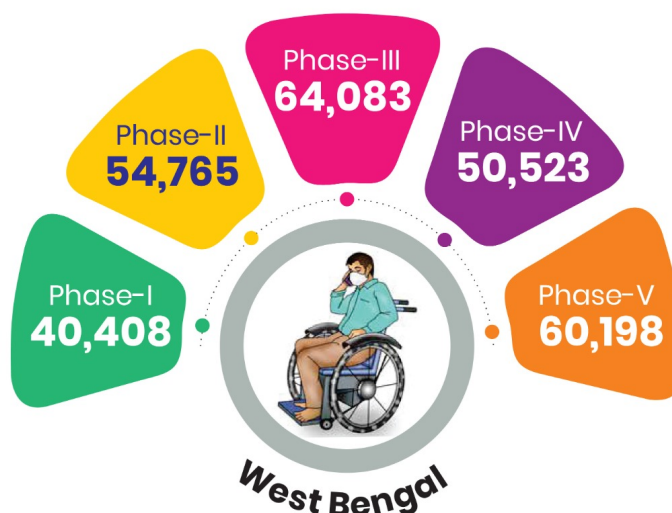
Table No 2: Number of Constituencies having Bye-Elections

States	Parliamentary Constituencies	Assembly Constituencies
Andhra Pradesh	Tirupati (SC)	
Gujarat		Morva Hadaf (ST)
Jharkhand		Madhupur
Karnataka	Belgaum	Basavakalyan, Maski (ST)
Madhya Pradesh		Damoh
Maharashtra		Pandharpur
Mizoram		Serchhip (ST)
Rajasthan		Sahara, Sujangarh (SC), Rajsamand
Telangana		Nagarjuna Sagar
Uttarakhand		Salt
Total Number of Constituencies	2	12

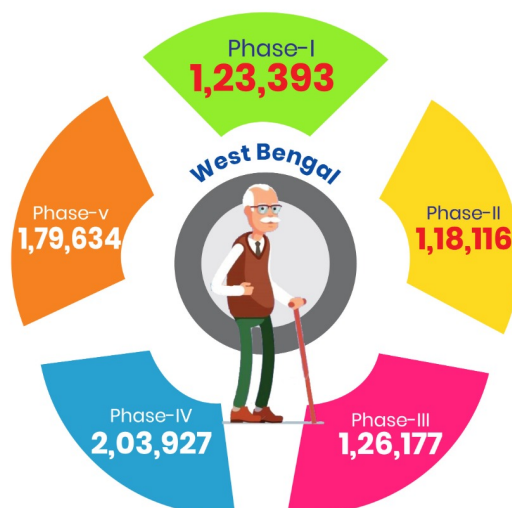
To ensure inclusive and accessible elections, the Commission has extended the option of postal ballot facility to PwDs, Senior Citizens above the age of 80 years, COVID-19 suspect or affected persons and persons employed in essential services. The Observers at the ground level oversaw that proper arrangements for facilitation were made available for these voters.

Table 3 : Number of PwD & 80+ electors in West Bengal						
State	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Total upto Phase 5
Number of PwD electors	40,408	54,765	64,083	50,523	60,198	269,977
Total number of 80A+ electors	1,23,393	1,18,116	1,26,177	2,03,927	1,79,634	751,247

Total Number of PwD Electors = 60,198



Total Number of 80+ Electors = 1,79,634







A total of 15,789 Ballot Units (BUs), 15,789 Control Units(CUs) and 15,789 VVPATs were used in West Bengal during this phase. As per standard procedure all these EVMs and VVPATs had already undergone First Level Checking, Randomisation, and Commissioning in the presence of Political Parties/Candidates agents. During FLC and during commissioning each of these EVMs and VVPATs had undergone mock polls. Today before the start of the poll each of the EVMs and VVPATs again underwent a mock poll in the presence of polling agents of the candidates with minimum 50 votes cast on each, as per standard procedure. At the end of the mock poll the results of EVM were matched with the result of VVPAT slips and shown to the polling agents. Nonfunctioning rate during the poll is comparable to what was experienced in the last few polls.



As a major push for conducting free and fair elections, live monitoring and webcasting of more than 50% of Polling Stations including critical and vulnerable polling booths has been put in place as per Commission's norms, to ensure a safe and secure atmosphere in polling areas. Commission, CEOs, DEOs, Observers could watch live streaming and keep a close watch on these polling booths.

8266 *Polling stations*
(52.35%) *out of 15,789*
monitored live
through webcasting

As per Commission's instruction police officials including CAPF personnel will not go inside the polling booth unless required by the Presiding Officer due to law and order problem. It is the standing instruction of the Commission that outsiders will not be allowed in the areas of poll going assembly constituencies during the silence period i.e. 48 hours before the end of polling hours. The Commission had reiterated this instruction in a briefing of DEOs and police officials. These guidelines were strictly and rigorously followed.

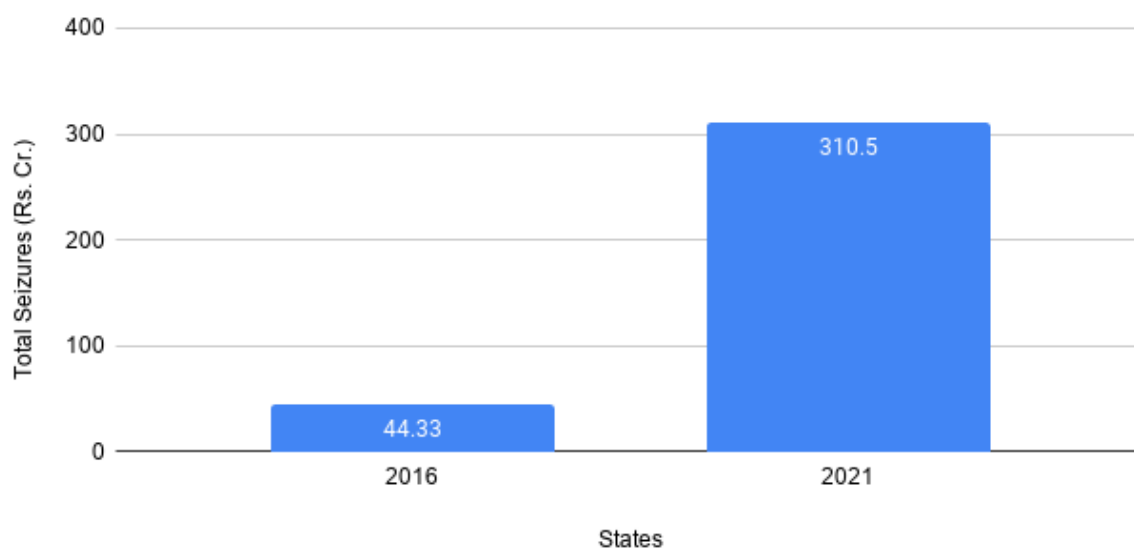


During the ongoing elections till this phase in West Bengal, a record seizure of Rs.310.50 Crores has already been reported till today. The seizure figures, which includes seizure of cash, liquor, narcotics, freebies etc., is 7 times of the total seizure of Rs. 44.33 Crores in General Election to Legislative Assembly, 2016. The Commission has been laying specific emphasis on inducement free elections and curbing the malaise of undue money power, liquor, freebies. For effective monitoring a total 1137 Flying Squads (FS) and 1012 Static Surveillance Teams (SST) were operationalised to check movement of cash, liquor, drugs & freebies in the State closely supervised by DEOs, Expenditure Observers in Districts and

Special Observers. A total 3 Air Intelligence Units (AIU) of IT Department are also set at different stations in Kolkata, Andal in Durgapur and Bagdogra in West Bengal..

The progressive seizure of all five States/UT and bye-elections where assembly elections have been/are being held, as on date is Rs.1013.1 Crore (this includes seizures of Rs. 12.11 Crore in bye-elections also.)

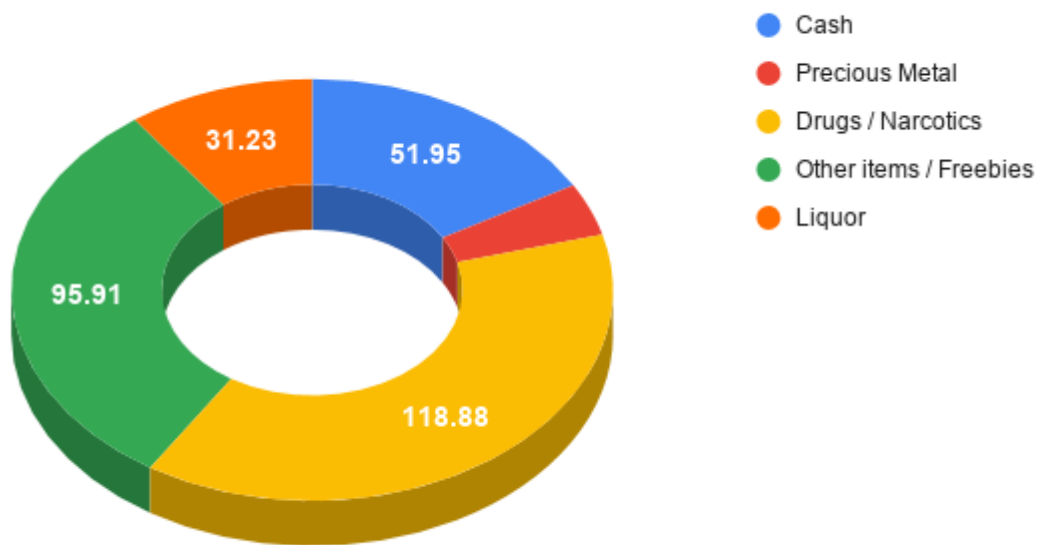
700% increase in Total Seizure in GE to LA 2021 compared to GE to LA 2016



Item wise break up of seizure report as till 17.04.2021 Forenoon

States	Cash (in Rs. Cr.)	Precious Metal (in Rs. Cr.)	Drugs/ Narcotics	Other items/ freebies	Liquor		Total (in Rs. Cr.)	Total Seizure in LA 2016 (in Rs. Cr.)	% of LA 2016
			Worth (in Rs. Cr.)	Worth (in Rs. Cr.)	Quantity (in Ltrs.)	Worth (in Rs. Cr.)			
Till West Bengal 5th Phase	51.95	12.53	118.88	95.91	2645889	31.23	310.50	44.33	+700%
Bye-Elections	2.95	0.33	1.86	4.96	84238.8	2.01	12.11		

Total Seizure in West Bengal in GE to LA 2021 = Rs 310.5 Crore



Election Commission of India's cVIGIL App is a citizen centric mobile application which empowers people to report cases of MCC violations in real time basis, with auto populated details of location and responded within 100 minutes after verification at field level. A total number of about **24652 cases** of Model Code of Conduct violations for West Bengal were reported through the cVIGIL app out of which **19801 cases** were disposed as of today (4:00 PM)

On all Polling Stations, Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) like drinking water, waiting shed, toilet with water facility, adequate arrangements for lighting, ramp of appropriate gradient for wheelchair for PwD electors and a standard voting compartment etc. were made available at all the Polling Stations. Arrangements like transport facility, volunteers assisting Persons with Disability and senior citizens were present at the Polling Stations.

All the Polling Stations followed COVID-19 Safety protocols. To control the spread of Coronavirus, the Election Commission invoked powers under Article 324 to curtail the timing of campaign. Silence period has been extended from 48 hours to 72 hours in each of the remaining 3 phases. The Commission had written to political parties for taking additional measures to deal with COVID-19. The Commission has stressed that it shall be the responsibility of the organizers of the public meeting / rallies to provide for masks, sanitizers for every person attending the meeting / rallies. The Commission has instructed the Special Observers, General, Police and Expenditure Observers for monitoring compliance of COVID norms during the campaign. The Commission has given the powers to District Election Officers and Returning Officers to cancel the public meetings / rallies if violations are observed.

The Commission thanks voters for strictly following the protocols laid down for controlling COVID. For the safety of the voters and the election officials it was ensured that the Polling Stations were sanitized one day prior to poll and facility of thermal scanning, hand sanitisers,

face masks were also made available at the Polling Stations. Proper arrangements for social distancing were put in place. BLOs and volunteers monitored and regulated strict compliance of social distancing norms at the Polling Stations. At the last hour of the poll, polling was conducted in full COVID-19 protective gear, with proper COVID-19 protocols and supervision of health authorities. The Commission has laid great emphasis on ensuring a transparent and vigilant mechanism for COVID safe, intimidation free and inducement free elections amidst tight security arrangements. Polling across ACs was conducted under strict security arrangements.

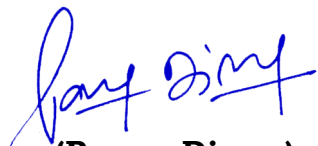




The Commission has laid out an elaborate security plan to ensure smooth and safe conduct of elections. Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) along with the local police force have been deployed to ensure peaceful, intimidation free and conducive atmosphere for the smooth conduct of elections in a free, fair, inclusive and accessible manner. Route marches in vulnerable pockets, regular point patrolling and other Confidence Building Measures were carried out to reassure voters, especially those belonging to the weaker sections of society. **Peaceful and orderly voting took place on 15,789 polling stations.**

The Commission expresses gratitude to all stakeholders specially the voters for their enthusiastic and fearless participation in the election process today. Commission particularly thanks PwD electors, senior citizens, service voters for taking part in elections honoring COVID protocol norms. The Commission also recognizes the services of the entire electoral machinery including polling staff on duty, security personnel, supervisory staff, Observers, Special Observers Railway Authorities, enforcement agencies as also the Health authorities for making comprehensive arrangements and dedicatedly working towards successful conduct of free, fair, transparent and safe elections despite pandemic. The Commission solicits active cooperation, close collaboration and constructive partnership from all stakeholders including media for delivering smooth and peaceful elections.

For election related updates, photographs and other details please visit our website eci.gov.in and Twitter handles [@SpokespersonECI](https://twitter.com/SpokespersonECI) & [@ECISVEEP](https://twitter.com/ECISVEEP).


(Pawan Diwan)
Under Secretary