

# SUMATI FUSION

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ARTICLE



Bihar



## SIR Electoral Roll in Bihar

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## SIR Electoral Roll

The term "SIR" in the context of the Election Commission refers to the "Special Intensive Revision" of the electoral rolls. This is a thorough process conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to update and verify voter lists to ensure accuracy and remove ineligible voters while including all eligible citizens. The SIR involves house-to-house enumeration without relying on existing voter lists, typically carried out before major elections or following administrative changes such as constituency delimitation.

**The SIR process aims to ensure transparency and integrity in electoral rolls by:**

- Including all eligible voters.
- Excluding ineligible voters, such as duplicates or foreign illegal immigrants.
- Engaging political parties and their Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to monitor and support the process.
- Making relevant documents available online for verification by authorized election officials.

### SIR Electoral Roll in Bihar

ECI has decided to conduct Special Intensive Revision of the Electoral Rolls in Bihar. Understand the SIR Electoral Roll, a unique voter list verification process in India, and its importance in ensuring accurate, fraud-free elections through comprehensive voter validation.

#### ➤ **What is SIR Electoral Roll Bihar**

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has begun a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the state's electoral rolls four months prior to the Bihar state elections. The controversy behind this decision can now be heard in the parliament with the monsoon session going on.

The SIR's effort is to "ensure that no eligible citizen is left out while no ineligible person is included in the Electoral Roll." As per the notification, the new electoral roll will only be released after claims and objections have been resolved. The decided date for the release of the final electoral roll is set on September 30. The first phase of this drive has been completed by the ECI. The enumeration exercise started on July 1.

## ➤ Main objectives of the SIR electoral roll in Bihar

The main objectives of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll in Bihar are:

- To ensure that every eligible citizen is included in the electoral roll and no eligible voter is left out.
- To exclude all ineligible persons from the electoral roll, such as duplicate entries, deceased voters, permanently migrated individuals, and foreign illegal immigrants.
- To maintain complete transparency in the process of addition or deletion of electors from the electoral rolls.
- To update the electoral roll to reflect changes due to rapid urbanization, frequent migration, newly eligible young voters, and underreporting of deaths.
- To prepare an error-free and accurate voter list for the upcoming state elections.
- To undertake house-to-house enumeration by Booth Level Officers (BLOs) for authentic voter verification without relying on existing electoral rolls.
- To adhere strictly to legal provisions regarding voter eligibility and disqualification under Article 326 of the Indian Constitution and the Representation of People Act, 1950.
- To involve political parties actively in the process through their Booth Level Agents (BLAs) to resolve discrepancies early and minimize claims, objections, and appeals.
- To ensure no temporary migrant from Bihar is left behind, encouraging their registration either in Bihar or the state they temporarily reside in.
- To facilitate inclusion of young voters who attain the age of 18 by the qualifying date and encourage them to register.
- This extensive revision aims to maintain the integrity of the electoral rolls and enable free and fair elections in Bihar by building a clean, transparent, and comprehensive voter list.

## ➤ SIR Electoral Roll in Bihar Latest Updates

Check for the latest updates regarding SIR Electoral Roll process being carried out in Bihar for the upcoming legislative assembly election:

- **August 11, 2025:** The Supreme Court has been informed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) that it is not required by law to compile or publish a separate list of the almost 6.5 million names that are not on Bihar's draft electoral rolls or to provide an explanation for their exclusion. This reply was in response to a petition filed by an NGO, ADR (Association for Democratic Reforms).
- **August 1, 2025:** After completing a month-long Special Intensive Revision (SIR) effort in preparation for the next Assembly elections, the Election Commission (EC) has released

the first draft electoral rolls for Bihar on Friday. Additionally, this would initiate the "claims and objections" procedure, which would run until September 1 and allow voters to file complaints about names being wrongfully deleted to seek redress from the relevant authorities. Approximately 65 lakh voters are expected to be removed from the list



## Why in the News?

- The first phase of the SIR electoral roll has finally been completed, as announced by the ECI. During the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral lists, the Election Commission of India (ECI) disclosed that more than 52.3 lakh voters in the state of Bihar, which is set to go to polls, could not be located at their registered locations.

These 52.3 lakh cases, or 6.62% of Bihar's total electorate of 7.89 crore, fall under a number of categories, including duplicate enrollments, permanently moved individuals, deceased voters, and those who are totally untraceable, according to the data provided by ECI.

- Previously, on Thursday, July 10, the Supreme Court recommended that the Election Commission of India (ECI) consider allowing Aadhaar, voter ID cards, and ration cards as legitimate documents for updating the rolls. The Supreme Court declined to stop the ECI from proceeding with its Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bihar.
- The ECI's new requirement that even current voters, if enrolled after 2003, provide documentary proof to establish their date and/or place of birth, which is then used to determine citizenship, has met with widespread political opposition and significant confusion on the ground in the state that is headed to the polls.

## How will ECI update Bihar Voter List?

ECI will be updating the voter list of Bihar by following the given steps:

- Trained Booth Level Officers (BLO) will go door-to-door and assist current voters (4.89 crore) in filling out enumeration forms. Additionally, BLOs will gather enumeration forms and provide recommendations on each one. Submissions must be made by July 25, 2025.
- The boundaries of constituencies will be finalized, and polling places will be rearranged as needed. There should ideally be no more than 1200 voters in each polling station.
- A draft electoral roll will be released on August 1, 2025, and electoral rolls will be updated in accordance with completed enumeration forms.
- Anyone with claims or objections to the draft electoral rolls may submit them between August 1 and September 1.
- A judgment regarding completed enumeration forms and submitted claims will be made by September 25.
- On September 30, 2025, the database will be updated with the final electoral roll.

## Voter List last Updated in 2003

According to the ECI, similar SIRs were previously carried out in all or some regions of the nation for the purpose of preparing new electoral rolls in 1952–56, 1957, 1961, 1965, 1966, 1983–84, 1987–89, 1992, 1993, 1995, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

The most recent SIR in Bihar was carried out in 2003. Similar to the current drive, the SIR was completed in 31 days without the use of modern technology. In 2005, the electoral rolls were also updated in accordance with the usual cycle prior to the polls. The Bihar EC eliminated people with non-bailable warrants who were included on the electoral rolls after discovering 70,000 "duplicate names" in Patna alone.

### ➤ **How does the SIR process differ from previous electoral roll revisions in Bihar?**

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process for electoral rolls in Bihar differs from previous electoral roll revisions in several notable ways:

- **Comprehensive Rebuilding from Scratch:** Unlike past revisions which relied on existing electoral rolls, the SIR involves a complete fresh preparation of the electoral roll through house-to-house enumeration without consulting the current rolls initially. Enumerators visit every household to list eligible voters as of the qualifying date.



- **Mandatory Submission of Enumeration Forms by All Electors:** In the current SIR, every existing elector must submit an enumeration form to the Booth Level Officer (BLO). This is a departure from previous exercises where enumerators carried existing voter details during verification. Additionally, electors registered after the last major revision (in 2003) have to submit documentary evidence of their date and place of birth, including their parents' birth details, which is a new requirement.
- **Introduction of Documentary Proof During Enumeration:** The SIR requires voters to submit documents at the enumeration stage itself to establish identity and eligibility, which did not happen in earlier revisions. This is a significant measure to prevent fraudulent or duplicate entries.
- **Updated Legal and Procedural Framework:** The SIR exercise follows stringent adherence to constitutional and legal provisions under Article 326 of the Constitution and the Representation of People Act, 1950. It is implemented under powers conferred by Article 324 of the Constitution and Section 21 of the RP Act.
- **Addressing Urbanization and Migration Issues:** The SIR specifically responds to rapid urbanization, migration, and demographic changes that have caused large-scale additions and deletions in electoral rolls over the last two decades, leading to potential duplication and inaccuracies.
- **Political Party Involvement and Transparency:** The SIR emphasizes active involvement of political parties and their agents to ensure transparency and minimize discrepancies early in the process.
- **Hybrid Methodology:** It combines door-to-door field verification (typical of intensive revision) with elements of summary revision such as distributing enumeration forms based on existing rolls, making it a hybrid and flexible approach.
- **First Such Exercise in More than Two Decades:** The last similar intensive revision was carried out in Bihar in 2003. The current SIR is the first intensive, full-scale revision in over 20 years.

In summary, the SIR is a more rigorous, document-based, and comprehensive exercise than previous revisions, aimed at creating a clean, accurate, and error-free electoral roll ahead of the 2025 Bihar assembly elections by addressing long-standing issues of accuracy, duplicates, and ineligible entries.