

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/134/2024

18.09.2024

Press Note

Jammu and Kashmir votes enthusiastically in Phase-I of Assembly Elections

Polling across 24 ACs in 7 districts incident free and peaceful

Phase-I voter turnout 58.85% as of 7:30 PM

Ahead of phase 1, over Rs.124 Cr worth of seizures recorded in J&K; firm crackdown on drugs

Building on the successful foundation of the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, peaceful and enthusiastic voting marked the beginning of assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir. Voters from all sections of society responded to the 'call of democracy' wholeheartedly, reaffirming the confidence expressed by CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar during the announcement of assembly elections that people of J&K will give a befitting reply to the nefarious forces attempting to disrupt the electoral process. Long queues of voters at the polling stations showcased the entire world, the deep trust and confidence of the people of J&K in the democratic exercise. Polling in the first phase recorded an approximate voter turnout of 58.85% as of 7:30 pm.



Long queues of voters at polling stations

Polling was held across 3276 Polling Stations established in 24 ACs spanning 7 districts namely, Pulwama, Shopian, Kulgam, Kishtwar, Anantnag, Ramban and Doda. In each of the 7 Districts where voting was held today, the voting participation exceeded the participation during the Lok Sabha 2024 elections. The performance builds on the trend witnessed during the Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir which saw a voter turnout of 58.58% at polling stations, highest in the last 35 years.

A total of 219 candidates are in the electoral fray in the first phase of which 9 are women candidates. Young and women voters shone bright at the polling stations, a testament to the deepening and embrace of democracy in J&K. Their enthusiasm to cast their vote is an emphatic response in favour of the ballot against boycotts and violence.

The Commission led by CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar along with ECs Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu kept a close watch on each and every aspect of the poll process from the very beginning. Meticulous preparations, clear directions and strong security measures were in place creating a conducive environment for voters to cast their vote without fear or intimidation. Along with webcasting in all polling stations, 32 Central Observers kept a vigilant eye on the election process on the ground, ensuring no disruptions to the electoral process.

Kashmiri Migrant voters were also empowered to exercise their franchise through 24 Special Polling Stations setup in Jammu (19), Udhampur(1) and Delhi (4). Earlier, the Commission had eased the process for Kashmiri migrant voters by abolishing the cumbersome Form-M and enabling self-certification.

Home-voting facility, introduced for the first time in Assembly elections in J&K saw democracy being taken to the doorsteps of those who are bound by physical limitations. Many voters aged above 85 years and PwDs with 40% benchmark disability opted to vote from the comfort of their homes, while those who visited polling stations were greeted with warmth and all assured minimum facilities.



Elderly and Senior Citizens displaying their inked fingers

As part of ECI's commitment to make the voting experience pleasant and memorable, Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF's) like drinking water, electricity, toilet, ramp, furniture, adequate shelter, helpdesk, wheel chair & volunteers amongst others were provided at all Polling Stations. One polling station each, exclusively managed by women and PwDs, was set up in every AC for giving a comfortable voting experience.



Women Managed Polling Stations

The elections were also truly participative and encompassing in nature as reflected in the data on cVIGIL usage. Since the start of the elections and till 18.09.2024, 355 complaints against electoral malpractices were disposed of with a disposal rate of 98.3%, which reduced campaign clutter and noise. The Suvridha platform has ensured transparent and timely approval of 4458 requests ahead of phase 1, by political parties and candidates for seeking permissions for rallies, grounds, halls, etc.



Young and female voters after voting in phase-1 of J&K assembly elections

The Commission in its resolve to ensure that no voter is left behind, ensured that Polling Stations are accessible even in remote corners of Jammu and Kashmir and even quiet villages were brought into the fold of the democratic exercise. In one such village in Dhadkai, famed as the “Silent Village”, the PwD voters with speech/hearing impairment made their voice heard loud and clear with their votes at Polling Station 195 Kuthyara in Bhadarwah AC, district Doda.



Three sisters with hearing/speech impairment after casting their vote at PS in Dhadkai village

While taking a facilitative approach to the legitimate requests of candidates and political parties, the Commission has firmly cracked down on illegitimate means to sway voters. Powered by technology and intelligence based targeted action, ECs persistent efforts for an inducement free elections, have led to seizures worth Rs 124.3 crores in J&K as on 18.09.2024, with firm crackdown on supply and distribution of drugs and narcotics which recorded seizures worth Rs. 107.9 Cr. Freebies amounting to over Rs. 15 Crore have also been seized. Enforcement Agencies are intensifying efforts to curb the menace of money power in the upcoming phases also.

The provisional voter turnout figures of 58.85% as of 7.30 PM will continue to be updated AC wise on the Voter Turnout App by the ROs, as and when the polling parties formally close the poll and return from the polling stations based on the geographical/logistical conditions and after scrutiny of statutory papers and consideration of repolls, if any. The Commission for convenience of stakeholders, will also issue another press note with provisional voter turnout figures at ~2345 hours today.

District-Wise Approximate Voter Turnout in Phase - 1 (7:30 PM)

Sl. No.	Districts	No. ACs	Approximate Voter Turnout %
1	Anantnag	7	54.17
2	Doda	3	69.33
3	Kishtwar	3	77.23
4	Kulgam	3	61.57
5	Pulwama	4	46.03
6	Ramban	2	67.71
7	Shopian	2	53.64
Above 7 Districts		24	58.85

Polling for the second and third phase will be held on September 25 and October 1, 2024 respectively. Counting of votes is scheduled on October 8, 2024.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

PHASE 1

Facts at a glance

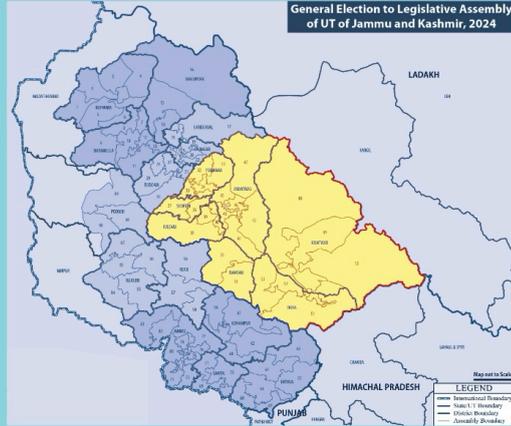
POLLING DATE: SEPTEMBER 18TH

Total
ACs

24

24 Assembly Constituencies in Phase 1

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Pampore | 13. Anantnag |
| 2. Tral | 14. Srigufwara - Bijbehara |
| 3. Pulwama | 15. Shangus - Anantnag East |
| 4. Rajpora | 16. Pahalgam |
| 5. Zainapora | 17. Inderwal |
| 6. Shopian | 18. Kishtwar |
| 7. D.H. Pora | 19. Padder - Nagseni |
| 8. Kulgam | 20. Bhadarwah |
| 9. Devsar | 21. Doda |
| 10. Doortu | 22. Doda West |
| 11. Kokernag (ST) | 23. Ramban |
| 12. Anantnag West | 24. Banihal |



Electors' profile

Total Electors	~23.27 Lakh
Male electors	~ 11.76 Lakh
Female electors	~ 11.51 Lakh
85+ electors	~ 15,774
PwD electors	~ 28,309
18-19 Years electors	~ 1.23 Lakh

Polling Stations

Total PS: 3276



Rural
2974



Urban
302



Green PS
24



Women Managed
24



PwD Managed
24



Youth Managed
18



Male Candidates

210

Female Candidates

09

Total Candidates

219

Anuj Chandak

Anuj Chandak

Joint Director