

# ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

*Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001*

No. ECI/PN/142/2024

01.10.2024

## Press Note

**Polling concludes for J&K assembly, heralding a new dawn for the region**

**No Repolls so far; overall voting beats Lok Sabha 2024 record**

**Enthusiastic turnout, peaceful polling & vibrant campaigning mark new chapter**

**EC delivers on its promise; dedicates historic elections to the people of J&K**

**Erstwhile militancy infested regions celebrates democracy; rebuff boycotts & violence**

**Phase-3 voter turnout 65.58% as of 7 PM**

The polling for the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly elections concluded today in a peaceful and celebratory atmosphere. Scenes of voters patiently waiting in lines at polling stations, set against the scenic backdrop of the region, highlighted the people's strong faith in democracy. The festive mood and enthusiastic participation were evident across all districts that went for polls in three-phased elections, underscoring a renewed spirit of civic participation and hope for a new era with people deciding their own future. CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar along with ECs Shri Gyanesh Kumar and Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu have delivered on their promise of ensuring democratic resurgence in Jammu & Kashmir.

CEC Rajiv Kumar said that *“J&K Assembly elections have marked a significant deepening of democracy which will echo in the pages of history and continue to inspire a democratic spirit of the region for years to come. He dedicated these elections to the people of J&K acknowledging their determination and belief in the democratic process. The peaceful and participative elections are historic, wherein democracy is taking root more profoundly than ever before, driven by the will of people of J&K”*.



The elections were a resounding statement in favour of democracy in line with the CEC Rajiv Kumar's vote of confidence given during the announcement of the General Elections

in J&K on 16th August, 2024. He had then expressed that *“in Jammu-Kashmir, the world will witness the defeat of nefarious and inimical interests and the triumph of democracy”*.

Voting across 40 ACs in the third and final phase which commenced at 7 AM today was held peacefully without any incidents of violence. As of 7 PM, a voter turnout of 65.58% was recorded at the polling stations.

## **Highlights of GE to LA of J&K 2024**

### **Seamless, smooth and peaceful conduct of elections**

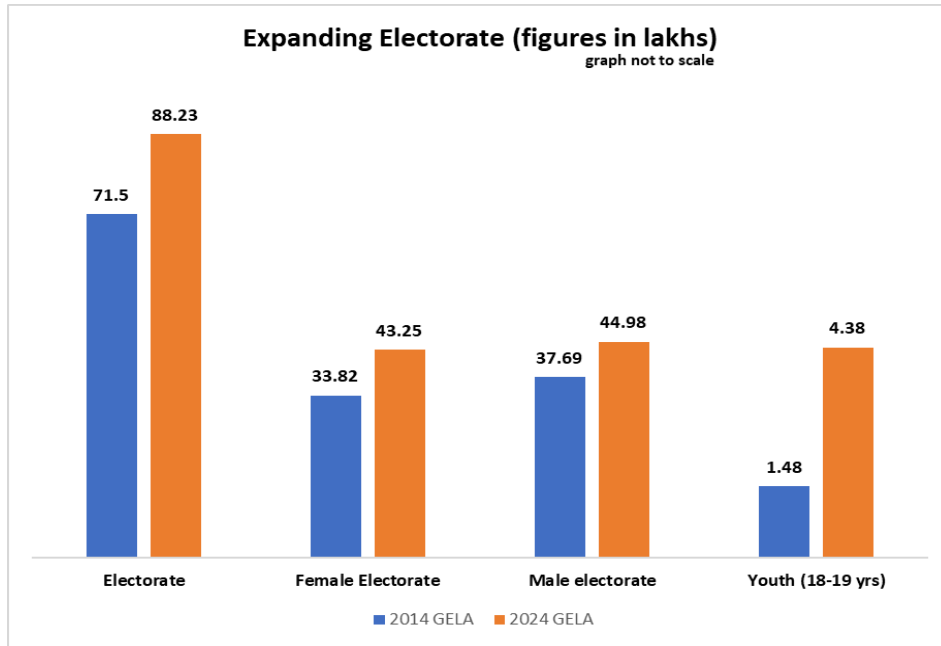
Meticulous planning and constant vigil by the Commission have ensured that the J&K elections this time have been smooth and streamlined, with no repolls recorded so far. Despite an increase in the number of ACs from 83 in 2014 to 90 in 2024, the elections were completed in 3 phases this time as against 5 phases in 2014. No major law and order incidents related to the election were reported, a significant improvement from 2014 when over 170 incidents were reported, including 87 on polling days. From the very beginning, clear instructions were given for ensuring a level playing field including no bias in allotting permissions for campaigning, which has resulted in vibrant campaigning across the political spectrum in J&K. There have been no complaints pertaining to arbitrary preventive detention of political functionaries in these elections which is unprecedented.

The Commission had also strictly instructed against clubbing of Polling Stations just before the poll day, and accordingly, voters voted at their actual polling station location as opposed to 98 polling stations shifted in 2014 at the eleventh hour. Role of money and muscle power has been curtailed to a significant extent. Vigilance and seizures have been fortified by the coordinated efforts of Enforcement agencies resulting in seizures worth **130 crores, highest ever in the history of J&K elections and even surpassing Rs 100.94 crores done during Lok Sabha Elections 2024**. The bulk of seizures included drugs worth Rs 110.45 crore. 12 ACs were identified as Expenditure sensitive for enhanced vigil.

Strong security measures were in place creating a conducive environment for voters to cast their vote without fear or intimidation. Across 90ACs, webcasting was in place in 100% polling stations to ensure transparency of the voting process as compared to 20% polling stations in 2014 assembly elections.

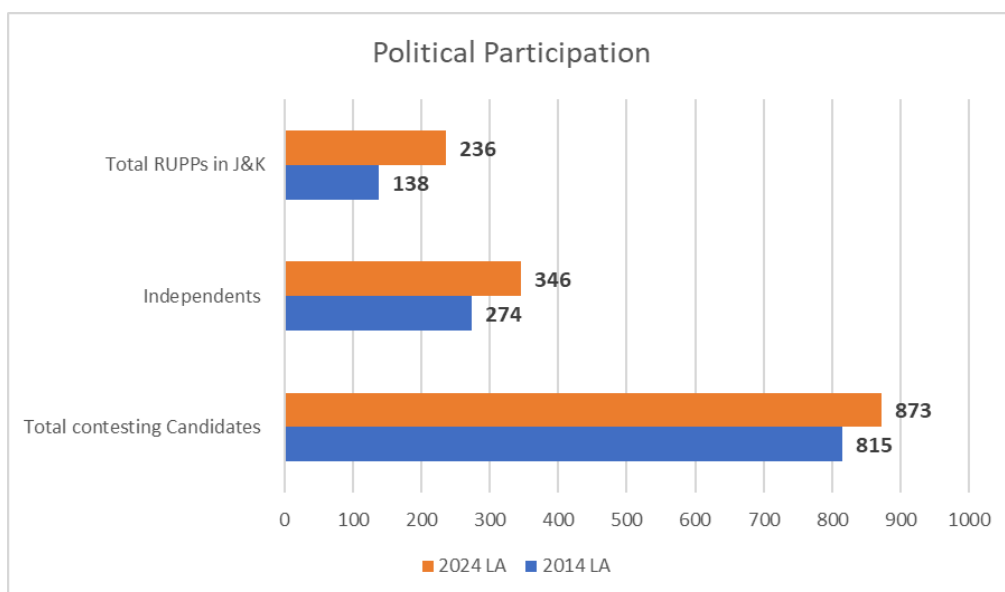
### **Increasing vibrancy of electorate**

Intensive efforts to increase the size of the electorate have yielded results. Overall, there has been a significant increase (~23%) in the size of the electorate from 2014. Encouragingly, the gender diversification of the electorate is very apparent with an increase of 27.90% in female electors. Young electorate, especially first time voters, embodied the aspirations of peace, democracy and progress and proudly showcased their inked fingers after voting.



### Democracy deepened - Increased political Participation

The 2024 GELA in J&K has seen a 7% increase in the number of candidates contesting from assembly elections in 2014. Hearteningly, women candidates made a significant leap, increasing from 28 to 43 in the corresponding period, while independent candidates saw a 26% rise, further contributing to the expanding electoral landscape and grassroots political participation. Post delimitation exercise in J&K, for the first time in history, 9 seats were reserved for Scheduled Tribes (ST) in J&K resulting in a more inclusive & participative election. Registered Unrecognized Political Parties (RUPPs) also demonstrated a remarkable 71% increase in participation from 138 in 2014 to 236 in 2024. For campaigning by various parties, a total of 330 requests were received for pre-certification of campaign content by State MCMC as compared to 27 in 2014 LA elections.



## Embracing democracy over boycott

These elections have witnessed a significant increase in voter turnout in areas which have been infamous for militancy and boycotting democratic processes. Polling percentage has increased by 12.97% in Pulwama AC in the Legislative Assembly Elections 2024 compared to the corresponding elections held in 2014. Zainapora AC in Shopian saw a 9.52% increase while Eidgah AC in Srinagar registered a 9.16% increase, reflecting growing confidence in the electoral process.

## Democracy in remote corners and at the frontiers

In the mountainous landscape of J&K, the Commission in its resolve to leave no voter behind setup polling stations (PS) at even the most remote locations. 469 unique polling stations were set up near the Line of Control (LOC) and International Border with 106 PS in phase 2 and 363 PS in phase 3, ensuring voters in remote and sensitive areas could exercise their democratic right.

### Border Polling Stations - Phase 2:

District	Poonch	Rajouri	Total
No. of PS	55	51	106

### Border Polling Stations - Phase 3:

District	Samba	Jammu	Baramulla	Bandipora	Kathua	Kupwara	Total
No. of PS	34	152	40	31	29	77	363

Polling Station 05-Khamba A in border constituency 84-Nowshera in Rajouri district saw a voter turnout increase from 78% in Lok Sabha Elections 2024 to 84% in the Assembly Elections 2024. Polling Station 07-Bhawani-A saw an increase from 70.66% in LS 2024 elections to 82.01% in assembly elections 2024. In Thanamandi Assembly Constituency, 19 polling stations were located near the LOC, with polling percentages at 97-Saroola and 99-Saroola A reaching 76% and 79%, respectively. Phelgowari Polling Station, located 46 km from Kishtwar District Headquarters at an altitude of 1600 meters, saw 97.99% voter turnout, despite being snowbound for two months annually.

## Blooming participation of diverse populace

In Dhadkai village, colloquially known as the "*Silent Village of India*" due to the high prevalence of people with hearing and speech impairments, 1,005 out of 1,724 registered voters cast their vote, including 23 out of 30 voters with speech and hearing impairments.

Polling Station 146-Gorrow in Inderwal Assembly Constituency (Kishtwar district) recorded 100% voter turnout, with all 65 registered electors casting their votes in phase 1.

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. Overall, 21395 migrant voters exercised their franchise in these polling stations in the three phases.

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. The entire process was videographed to ensure transparency while preserving the secrecy of the ballot. *Overall, 3381 85+ year elderly voters and 2734 PwD voters used home voting facility to cast their vote.*

### Enhancing voter experience at polling stations

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. For the convenience of voters, CEC Shri Rajiv Kumar had specifically directed all DEOs to ensure assured minimum facilities at all polling stations including providing benches in queues for convenience of voters.



Accessible and inclusive elections is a key objective of the Commission. Towards ensuring this, one polling station in each AC was manned by Persons with Disabilities, women and youth, numbering 90 in each category. The ECI is also pioneering efforts to environmentally sustainable elections and to this effect, 90 Green Polling Stations were also established.



## Enhancing transparency and accessibility through technology

During the J&K elections, several apps played a vital role in supporting voters and candidates. The Know Your Candidate (KYC) app, which provides voters with essential candidate details, including criminal records, was downloaded over 6.45 lakh times, aiding informed decision-making. The Voter Helpline app, a one-stop solution for voter information and services, saw over 1.14 lakh downloads. The Saksham app, designed for Persons with Disabilities (PWD), enables users to request services like wheelchair assistance and manage voter registrations. Additionally, the Suvidha Candidate app helped streamline nomination and permission processes for candidates. Over 7200 applications were approved for campaign-related permissions. 541 complaints were received through cVigil for election related violations.

The provisional voter turnout figures of 65.58% as of 7 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 tonight.

### District-Wise Approximate Voter Turnout in Phase - 3 (7PM)

Sl. No.	Districts	No. ACs	Approximate Voter Turnout %
1	Bandipora	3	64.85
2	Baramulla	7	55.73
3	Jammu	11	66.79
4	Kathua	6	70.53
5	Kupwara	6	62.76
6	Samba	3	72.41
7	Udhampur	4	72.91
<b>Above 7 Districts</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>65.58</b>

### Background

In Phase-3, 40 Assembly Constituencies, spread across 7 districts saw polling across 5060 Polling Stations set up for voters in this phase. 415 Candidates were in the fray including 387 men and 28 women candidates in this phase of the elections. The seven districts that went to polls in phase 3 are - Bandipora, Baramulla, Jammu, Kathua, Kupwara, Samba and Udhampur.

Phase-1 and Phase-2 saw a polling percentage of 61.38% and 57.31% respectively. Counting of votes is scheduled on October 8, 2024.

# JAMMU AND KASHMIR

# PHASE 3

## Facts at a glance

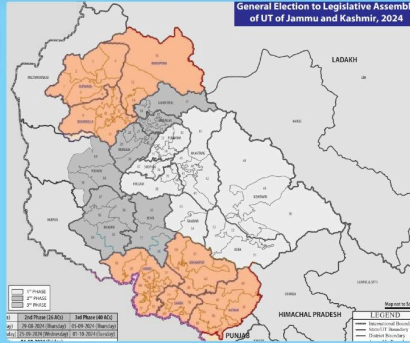
POLLING DATE: OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup>

Total  
ACs

**40**

### 40 Assembly Constituencies in Phase 3

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Karamah           | 21. Bari                    |
| 2. Trehgam           | 22. Billewar                |
| 3. Kupwara           | 23. Basohli                 |
| 4. Lolab             | 24. Jasrota                 |
| 5. Handwara          | 25. Kathua (SC)             |
| 6. Langate           | 26. Hiranagar               |
| 7. Sopore            | 27. Ramgarh (SC)            |
| 8. Rafiabad          | 28. Samba                   |
| 9. Uthi              | 29. Vijaypur                |
| 10. Baramulla        | 30. Bishnah (SC)            |
| 11. Gulmarg          | 31. Suchetgarh (SC)         |
| 12. Wagoora - Kreeri | 32. R.S. Pura - Jammu South |
| 13. Pattan           | 33. Bahu                    |
| 14. Sonawari         | 34. Jammu East              |
| 15. Bandipora        | 35. Nagrota                 |
| 16. Gurez (ST)       | 36. Jammu West              |
| 17. Udhampur West    | 37. Jammu North             |
| 18. Udhampur East    | 38. Marh (SC)               |
| 19. Chenani          | 39. Akhnoor (SC)            |
| 20. Ramnagar (SC)    | 40. Chhamb                  |



### Elector's profile

Total Electors	~39.18 Lakh
Male Electors	~20.09 Lakh
Female Electors	~19.09 Lakh
Third Gender Electors	~57
18-19 Electors	~1.94 Lakh
PwD Electors	~35,860
85+ Electors	~32,953

### Polling Stations

Total PS: 5060



Male Candidates

**387**

Female Candidates

**28**

Total Candidates

**415**

*Anuj Chandak*

Anuj Chandak

Joint Director