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PRESS RELEASE

The Bihar Verdict 2025: An audit finds systematic subversion of the electoral mandate

From unprecedented voter roll purges to post-poll data manipulation, the new VFD report documents how Bihar's 2025 Assembly election was engineered before, during, and after polling

A detailed report of the 2025 Bihar Legislative Assembly election has raised grave concerns about the integrity of India's electoral process, documenting what it describes as a *systematic, multi-layered subversion of the democratic mandate*. The report, titled "The Bihar Verdict 2025", has been curated by Vote for Democracy (VFD), Maharashtra, and is based entirely on official data released by the Election Commission of India (ECI), statutory law, constitutional provisions, and documented anomalies.

The report does not rely on anecdotal allegations or political claims. Instead, it reconstructs the election process through official numbers, timelines, and legal frameworks, revealing how the outcome of the Bihar election was shaped long before votes were cast—and altered even after polling concluded. The said report has been authored and compiled by Vote for Democracy (VFD), Maharashtra under the guidance of experts MG Devasahayam (IAS (Retd) and Founder, Forum for Electoral Integrity), Dr Pyara Lal Garg, (Former Dean, Faculty of Medical Sciences, Panjab University, Chandigarh) and Professor Harish Karnick, (Computer Science Expert) and Madhav Deshpande, (Computer Science Expert).

Unprecedented Special Intensive Revision (SIR): An electoral 'ambush'

At the heart of the report is the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, notified on June 24, 2025, just months before the Assembly election. This move was unprecedented in both timing and scale, particularly in a state where electoral rolls have undergone continuous revision since 2003 and where a Special Summary Revision had already been completed in January 2025.

Crucially, the Election Commission recorded no reasons, disclosed no empirical basis, and provided no transparent methodology for undertaking such a massive revision so close to elections. The report finds that this violated both the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, while also raising serious constitutional concerns under Articles 14, 19, 21, 325, and 326.

Most significantly, the SIR reversed the foundational principle of electoral law—shifting the default from *presumption of inclusion* to *presumption of exclusion*, effectively subjecting citizens to a citizenship-style verification exercise without legislative sanction.

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Mass disenfranchisement by design

The numerical impact of the SIR was staggering. According to official ECI data:

- On June 24, 2025, Bihar had 7.89 crore registered electors.
- By the Draft Roll of August 1, 2025, this fell to 7.24 crore, reflecting 65.69 lakh deletions.
- The Final Roll of September 30, 2025 stood at approximately 7.42 crore electors.

Yet, the report finds that only 3.66 lakh voters were actually confirmed as ineligible. The scale of deletions was therefore grossly disproportionate, pointing not to routine correction but to electoral roll engineering.

Between July 21 and 25 alone, over 21.27 lakh voters were deleted in just three days—an implausible figure by any administrative standard. During this period, 5.44 lakh voters were marked ‘dead’, while 14.24 lakh were labelled ‘permanently shifted’. The number of voters marked ‘untraceable’ rose by 809% overnight, while *not a single “foreigner”* was identified—despite this being cited as a key justification for the revision.

Opaque ‘rectification’ and mathematical impossibilities

The report further exposes deep inconsistencies in the ECI’s claims of rectification. While the Commission stated that approximately 17 lakh objections or applications were received, the actual changes reflected in the rolls affected around 22 lakh entries. Even after accounting for corrections, the final voter count should have mathematically stood at approximately 7.38 crore, yet the ECI declared 7.42 crore electors, leaving an unexplained excess of 3.24 lakh voters.

No independent audit, reconciliation statement, or transparent explanation has been provided for this discrepancy.

Pre-poll manipulation after election notification

Electoral norms require that voter rolls be effectively frozen once elections are notified. However, the report documents that even after notification:

- On October 6, 2025, Bihar had 7.43 crore electors.
- By poll day, this had increased to 7.46 crore.

This means 3.34 lakh voters were added in just ten days, including a sudden and unexplained spike in youth voters—raising serious questions about roll sanctity during the election period.

Structural and institutional capture

Beyond voter rolls, the report highlights structural manipulation through:

- A sharp increase in polling booths—from 77,462 in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections to 90,740 in Bihar 2025—without corresponding expansion in remote or riverine areas.

- Constituency splits that violated contiguity norms.
- The Election Commission's decision to stop publishing constituency-wise turnout data and final votes polled prior to counting, releasing only fragmented, district-level data that could not be independently verified.

At the ground level, the deployment of 1.8 lakh 'Jeevika Didis'—beneficiaries of state welfare schemes—as poll volunteers blurred the line between welfare delivery and election administration. The report also documents a severe imbalance in Booth Level Agents, with opposition alliances averaging only 1.55 agents per booth, creating fertile ground for manipulation.

Poll-day, post-poll violations and the 'midnight hike'

On polling and counting days, the report records multiple red flags: CCTV failures, VVPAT slips found discarded on roads, unauthorised vehicles near strong rooms, and the transport of approximately 6,000 voters from Haryana via special trains, allegedly facilitated with free tickets.

The most alarming finding concerns the so-called “midnight hike” on November 12, 2025, when a uniform 0.18% increase in voter turnout—identical for both men and women—was recorded across phases. This single adjustment added 1,34,145 votes, altering outcomes in around 20 constituencies. Notably, 21 seats were decided by margins of just 0–15 votes, yet no automatic VVPAT recount was conducted.

A crisis of electoral credibility

The report concludes that the Bihar 2025 election cannot be explained as a series of isolated irregularities. Instead, it presents a picture of systematic electoral engineering, executed through administrative opacity, legal departures, data suppression, and post-poll manipulation.

At stake, the authors warn, is not merely the outcome of one state election, but the credibility of India's constitutional promise of universal adult suffrage itself.

We request that your organisation, and you individually widely disseminate the content of this report. The Report and PPT are available on <https://votefordemocracy.org.in/>

Full Report: <https://votefordemocracy.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/260113-FINAL-THE-BIHAR-VERDICT.pdf>

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