



Bihar Polling Station Rationalisation

Why in News?

Bihar has become the **first Indian state to ensure all [polling stations](#) have fewer than 1,200 electors**, marking a major reform to enhance **voter convenience and electoral accessibility**.

- This move aligns with a broader push by the [Election Commission of India \(ECI\)](#) to rationalize polling stations nationwide, particularly in the context of upcoming Assembly elections and the proposed **'One Nation, One Election'** plan.

Key Points

About Polling Station Rationalisation

- **Revised Elector Cap per Booth:** The [State Instructional Representation \(SIR\) Order of June 2025](#) revised the maximum number of electors per polling station from **1,500 to 1,200**, reversing the 2009 standard to reduce voter congestion.
- **Increase in Polling Stations:** Bihar added **12,817 new polling stations**, raising the total to **90,712**, up from 77,895. This effort places **all booths within 2 km** of voters, improving accessibility in rural areas.
- **Inclusive Voter Registration Drive:** Electoral officers conducted widespread consultations with **12 political parties** and shared lists of:
 - **29.62 lakh electors** whose forms were pending,
 - **43.93 lakh electors** not found at their registered addresses.
- **Draft Electoral Roll Timeline:** The **Draft Rolls will be published on 1 August 2025**, after which voters can submit claims, objections, or corrections for a month, as per the SIR Order.

Implications for Electoral Management

- **Impact on One Nation, One Election (ONOE):** The voter cap rationalisation will influence the logistics of ONOE, especially the **requirement for [EVM-VVPATs](#)** and polling personnel.
 - The ECI earlier projected over **13.57 lakh booths** and a cost of **₹7,950 crore** for a 2029 [simultaneous poll](#).
- **Judicial Intervention Prompted Reform:** A **December 2024 Supreme Court petition** demanded reverting to the 1,200-voter cap, citing long queues and voter apathy.
 - The EC's reform aligns with the Court's concerns about **voter fatigue and inefficiencies** under the 1,500-voter cap.
- **Historical Evolution of Booth Size Norms:**
 - **Pre-2009:** 1,200 electors per station (standard).
 - **Post-EVMs (2009):** Raised to 1,500.
 - **During COVID:** Reduced to 1,000–1,200.
 - **2024 General Elections:** Returned to 1,500.
 - **Post-2025 SIR:** **Back to 1,200 nationwide**, starting with Bihar.

What the Shift Entails



Poll Panel's decision to limit voters to 1,200 per station could add **3 lakh polling stations**, raising costs and logistics

THE NEW LIMIT WILL TAKE EFFECT BEFORE THE BIHAR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASING POLLING STATIONS



ECI's 2009 guideline set 1,500 voters per station but reverted to 1,200 during the pandemic. The **new announcement follows the SC's recommendation** to restore the 1,200 cap

CEC
Gyanesh Kumar announced the shift, ensuring **no polling station will exceed the set limit** and that all stations will be within **2 kms of voters**

Significance of the Reform

- **Template for Other States:** The ECI called Bihar's initiative a **model for other States and UTs**. Over **3 lakh new booths** may be needed nationwide to implement this cap before upcoming elections.
- **Administrative and Financial Burden:** The change will **increase election infrastructure costs**, with higher demand for EVMs, VVPATs, and personnel.
- **Strengthening Electoral Democracy:** These changes aim to **enhance the quality of voter participation, reduce disenfranchisement**, and ensure every eligible voter is registered and conveniently able to vote.