



India's First Mobile E-Voting in Bihar

[Source: TH](#)

Bihar became the first Indian state to pilot mobile phone-based e-voting in municipal elections **using the E-SECBHR app developed by C-DAC**. The initiative aimed **to improve voting access for senior citizens, pregnant women, and persons with disabilities**.

- To ensure **security and transparency**, the system **used [blockchain technology](#), facial recognition, biometric scanning, voter ID verification**, and limited 2 voters per mobile number.

Recent ECI Electoral Reforms & Privacy Safeguards

- **Restriction on Public Access to Polling Booth CCTV Footage:** The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has restricted public access to **CCTV, webcast, and videography footage** of polling stations citing **voter privacy and security**. As per new rules:
 - **Destruction of footage** is mandated **45 days after result declaration**, unless a **petition is filed**.
 - Footage can only be submitted to a **High Court** hearing an **election petition & no other authority or individual may access it** as public release may violate **Section 128 of the [Representation of People Act, 1951](#)** (secrecy of voting) and **[Supreme Court](#) rulings** that uphold **ballot secrecy**.
 - ECI clarified that videography is **not legally mandated**, and is used only as an **internal management tool**.
 - In **December 2024**, **Rule 93(2)(a)** of the **Conduct of Election Rules, 1961** was amended to **exclude CCTV and electronic footage** from public inspection.
- **New Voter-Friendly Measures:** In bye-elections across **5 Assembly Constituencies**, ECI introduced new initiatives to improve **transparency and voter convenience**, including:
 - **Mobile deposit facility** for voters
 - **Real-time voter turnout reporting** via the **ECINET App**
 - **100% webcasting** (except one station)
 - **Individual mock poll training** for all Presiding Officers
 - **Conducted Special Summary Revision (SSR)** to revise the electoral rolls, for the **first time in nearly 20 years**.

ELECTORAL REFORMS IN INDIA

ELECTORAL REFORMS ARE CHANGES MADE TO IMPROVE THE ELECTION PROCESS AND ENSURE FAIRNESS.

Electoral Reforms Before 1996

- **Model Code of Conduct (1969):** Guidelines to regulate political parties and candidates prior to elections
- **61st Constitutional Amendment Act (1988):** Lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 years
- **Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) (1989):** Switched from individual colored ballot boxes to ballot papers, and later to EVMs
- **Booth Capturing (1989):** Provision for adjournment of poll or countermanding of elections in such cases
- **Elector's Photo Identity card (EPIC) (1993):** Electoral roll is the basis to issue EPIC to registered electors
- **ECI- A Multi-member Body (1993):** Election commissioners were appointed in addition to CEC

Electoral Reforms of 1996

- **Time-limit for By-elections:** Elections must occur within 6 months of any vacancy in a legislative house
- **Listing of Names of Candidates:** Contesting candidates categorized into 3 groups for listing
 - Recognised & registered-unrecognised political parties
 - Other (independent)
- **Disqualification for Insulting the National Honour Act, 1971:** Leads to election disqualification for 6 years upon:
 - Insulting the National Flag, Constitution of India or preventing the singing of National Anthem

Electoral Reforms After 1996

- **Vote Through Proxy (2003):** Service voters in Armed Forces & forces under Army Act can vote by proxy
- **Allocation of Time on Electronic Media (2003):** Equitable sharing of time on electronic media during elections to address the public
- **Introduction of Braille Signage Features in EVMs (2004):** To facilitate the visually impaired voters to cast their votes without an attendant

Electoral Reforms Since 2010

- **Voting Rights to Indian Citizens Living Abroad (2010)**
- **Online Enrollment in Electoral Roll (2013)**
- **Introduction of NOTA option (2014)**
- **VVPAT Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (2013):** Introduction of VVPAT with EVMs to conduct free and fair elections
- **Photos of Candidates on EVMs and Ballot Papers (2015):** To prevent confusion in constituencies with namesake candidates
- **Introduction of Electoral bonds (2017 Budget):** An alternative to cash donations for political parties
 - Declared as unconstitutional by SC (2024)
- **Launch of Electronic EPIC (2021)**
- **Home Voting for People with Disabilities & Those Above 85 years of Age (2024)**

IMPORTANT COMMITTEES/ COMMISSION

Committees/ Commission	Year	Purpose
■ Tarkunde Committee	1974	■ By Jaya Prakash Narayan (JP) during the "Total Revolution" movement.
■ Dinesh Goswami Committee	1990	■ Electoral Reforms
■ Vohra Committee	1993	■ On the Nexus between Crime and Politics
■ Indrajit Gupta Committee	1998	■ State Funding of Elections
■ Second Administrative Reforms Commission of India	2007	■ Report on Ethics in Governance (Headed by Veerappa Moily)
■ Tankha Committee (Core Committee)	2010	■ To look into the whole gamut of the election laws & electoral reforms.

Read More: [Electoral Reforms in India](#)