

মমতা ব্যানার্জী
ममता बनार्जी
ممتا بنرجی

Mamata Banerjee



মুখ্যমন্ত্রী, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ
मुख्यमंत्री, पश्चिम बंगाल
وزیر اعلیٰ مغربی بنگال

CHIEF MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

No. 01- CM/2026

January 03, 2026

Dear Mr. Gyanesh Kumar,

I am once again constrained to write to you in order to place on record my grave concern regarding the serious irregularities, procedural violations, and administrative lapses being witnessed during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in West Bengal.

I had earlier drawn your attention to these issues vide my letters dated 20th November, 2025 and 2nd December, 2025, wherein I had highlighted the unplanned, ill-prepared, and ad hoc manner in which this critically important exercise—one that constitutes the very bedrock of our democratic system—was being undertaken. Regrettably, instead of any corrective course being adopted, the situation on the ground has only deteriorated further.

The undue haste with which the SIR is being conducted, without adequate groundwork or preparation, has rendered the entire process fundamentally flawed. There has been no proper or uniform training of officials entrusted with this sensitive constitutional responsibility; the IT systems being used are defective, unstable, and unreliable; instructions issued from time to time are inconsistent and often contradictory; and there is a complete lack of clarity and planning on the part of the Election Commission of India (ECI) and its State-level functionaries. Collectively, these deficiencies have reduced this vital democratic exercise to a farce and have severely eroded public confidence in the integrity of the electoral process.

It is deeply disturbing to observe that even at the national level, the ECI appears uncertain about the precise objectives, modalities, and end goals of the SIR. Although the exercise is described as time-bound, there are no clearly defined, transparent, or uniformly applicable timelines. Different States are following different criteria, and timelines are being altered arbitrarily, reflecting a glaring lack of clarity, preparedness, and procedural understanding. Shockingly, critical instructions are being issued almost on a daily basis, frequently through informal channels such as

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WhatsApp messages and text messages. No proper written notifications, circulars, or statutory orders—mandatory for an exercise of such magnitude and constitutional significance—are being issued.

Such informality and arbitrariness leave no scope for accuracy, transparency, or accountability. Any error, ambiguity or uncertainty in this process can lead to serious discrepancies, including the potential disenfranchisement of genuine electors—an outcome that is wholly unacceptable in a constitutional democracy governed by the rule of law.

There are also grave allegations regarding the backend deletion of electors through the misuse of IT systems, without following due process and without the knowledge or approval of the Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), who are the competent statutory authorities under the Representation of the People Act. This raises serious questions as to who has authorised such actions and under what legal authority. The ECI must be held fully accountable for any illegal, arbitrary or biased actions carried out under its supervision or direction.

It has further been brought to our notice that the Family Register, which was extensively accepted as a valid proof of identity during the SIR exercise in Bihar, is now reportedly being denied as a valid document through an informal communication issued by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer via WhatsApp message, without any formal notification or statutory order to that effect. Such selective and unexplained exclusion of a previously accepted document raises serious concerns of discrimination and arbitrariness. This is neither the proper nor lawful manner of conducting an exercise of such critical constitutional importance.

It has also been informally communicated to all District Election Officers (DEOs) that Permanent Residence Certificates /Domicile Certificates issued by various authorities of the State Government will not be accepted as proof of identity of electors. Further, migrant workers who have moved to other States in search of livelihood are being compelled to appear for hearings, despite being fully eligible to be enrolled as electors under the provisions of the Act.

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This is in total contrast to the procedure followed in Bihar and in other states during the current SIR.

Further, in the name of addressing so-called logical discrepancies—such as spelling errors, age-related variations, etc.—the ECI has directed verification of documents of all such electors. In cases where these certificates have been issued by authorities in other districts or states, verification is required to be carried out by the concerned issuing authorities.

This approach appears to be intended to delay the exercise, as such inter-district or inter-state verifications will, in many cases, not be possible to complete within the stipulated time. This is likely to result in the deletion and disenfranchisement of genuine electors.

Additionally, electors are being summoned for hearings without being informed of the specific reasons for such hearings, thereby subjecting them to needless anxiety and harassment. Even elderly, infirm, and seriously ill citizens are not being spared. Many electors are being compelled to travel distances of 20–25 kilometres to attend hearings, which have inexplicably been centralised rather than decentralised. This has caused severe hardship to ordinary citizens. A decentralised hearing mechanism would have ensured accessibility, convenience, and orderliness; however, the Commission appears wholly insensitive to ground realities and persists with these deeply flawed practices.

Observers are being appointed in complete disregard of the panels of officers forwarded by the State Government, further reinforcing the perception of arbitrariness and institutional bias. Similarly, micro-observers are being engaged without any consultation with the State machinery. These micro-observers are mostly group B central government employees who have no experience and training for this specialised and sensitive work and are acting well beyond their prescribed mandate, thereby adversely affecting the fairness, neutrality, and credibility of the entire process.

Furthermore, electors appearing for hearings are neither informed in advance about the documents required nor provided with any acknowledgment or receipt for documents submitted. In many cases, no proof of hearing is furnished. This complete lack of documentation creates

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uncertainty, enables arbitrariness, and opens the door to potential misuse, making it impossible to rule out biased or mala fide actions.

Booth-Level Agents (BLAs) were actively involved in the enumeration phase, but surprisingly have been denied access during the hearing process. In fact, during the polling process, Polling Agents of different political parties are allowed in the Polling Stations with the objective of maintaining fairness and transparency. The denial of BLAs during hearing process raises questions about the fairness, transparency and credibility of SIR.

The issues enumerated above are only illustrative and by no means exhaustive. Taken together, they demonstrate that the SIR process, as presently being conducted, stands deeply compromised and strikes at the basic structural framework of our democracy and the spirit of the Constitution.

In view of the foregoing, I strongly urge you to immediately address and rectify the glitches, address the flaws and make the necessary corrections, failing which this unplanned, arbitrary and adhoc exercise must be halted. If allowed to continue in its present form, it will result in irreparable damage, large-scale disenfranchisement of eligible voters, and a direct assault on the foundational principles of democratic governance.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Mamata Banerjee)

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Chief Election Commissioner
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