

Office of the Chief Electoral Officer West Bengal

13, Strand Road, Kolkata 700001

No. 42/CEO/PN/2026

Dated: 17.04.2026

PRESS NOTE

➤ ECI holds High-level review meeting

Election Commission of India (ECI) has scheduled a high-level review meeting via video conference today to assess the security preparedness and law-and-order situation for the upcoming West Bengal Assembly Elections 2026.

The session, presided over by the Senior Deputy Election Commissioner, will take place from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. This strategic dialogue serves as a critical stock-taking exercise to ensure a peaceful, free, and fair polling process across the state. The ECI has requested the mandatory presence of the state's top police hierarchy, including: Director General of Police (DGP), ADG (Law & Order) Commissioner of Police, Kolkata, State Police Nodal Officer (SPNO), All Zonal Inspectors General (IG) and Range Deputy Inspectors General (DIG)s of police.

➤ Commissioning of EVM-VVPATs for West Bengal Ph-I begins

Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs for constituencies going to polls on 23rd April commenced from 16th April (Thursday) onwards at different constituencies, in the presence of the candidates or their authorized representatives as well as General Observers.

Commissioning will be followed by a mock poll of 1000 votes in 5% of the EVMs randomly selected by the candidates/ their representatives. They will also be allowed to do the mock polls themselves.

Before commissioning, EVMs were allotted to their respective polling stations through a 2-stage randomization process through EVM management System. In the first stage, EVMs were randomly allocated from District level warehouses to the Assembly Constituencies. In the second stage, EVMs were randomly allocated from the AC level to the polling station level. The total number of polling stations in West Bengal (Phase-I) which are going to polls on 23rd April are 44378.

➤ Key event of Election on 17/04/2026

Phase	Date of Poll	Event
PHASE - I	23/04/2026	Functioning of Absentee Voters on Essential Services (AVES) postal ballots, at postal voting center at RO Head quarter.
		Commissioning of EVM VVPAT
PHASE - II	29/04/2026	Exchange of Postal ballot at NCH

➤ Enforcement and Seizure

MAJOR SEIZURES

Name of the Area	Kasafal Harbour, Odisha
Date of seizure	15.04.2026

Name of Agency	Indian Coast Guard	
Cohort (Precious Metal)	Qty.	Value (crore)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 720 bag of areca nut (Supari) transshipped from Bangladesh recovered from 2 Indian Fishing Boats without valid documents. 	INR ₹10.5/- approx
Description	<p>The modus operandi involved mid-sea transshipment from foreign fishing vessels and attempt for clandestine landing at isolated coastal stretches during hours of darkness using smaller country craft for evading detection. The incident demonstrates deliberate violation of maritime laws, exploitation of fishing vessels for unlawful activities, and potential involvement of a larger syndicate operating across international maritime boundaries.</p> <p>The apprehended boats have been handed over to Odisha state police in coordination with the Marine Police, Kasafal for initiating further legal proceedings against the defaulters.</p>	

The cumulative enforcement report of the State regarding itemized summary of seizure is provided in the table below –

**Seizure of Cash, Liquor, Drugs/Narcotics, Precious Metals & Freebies
(Report as received up-to 9 p.m. on 16.04.2026)**

Sl. No.	Item	Cumulative Seizure (Since 26.02.2026)
1	Cash	₹ 2156.62 Lakhs
2	Liquor	3266820.06 Liters / ₹ 8268.41 Lakhs
3	Drugs / Narcotics	5745241.16 gm / ₹ 10003.03 Lakhs
4	Precious Metals	439530.10 gm / ₹ 5400.88 Lakhs
5	Freebies and Other Items	78444163.93 / ₹ 17176.76 Lakhs
TOTAL VALUE		₹ 43005.69 Lakhs

Key Security Measures

The administration has deployed a multi-layered security strategy to maintain law and order and to ensure a peaceful voting environment:

Updated law and order report (As received up to 1 p.m. 16.04.2026)

Sl. No.	Items	Cumulative from 15/03/2026
1	No of unlicensed arms/ explosives seized	
	a) Arms / Weapons	Arms / Weapons (PCs) 342
	b) Cartridges / Explosives / Bombs	Cartridges (PCs) 550
		Explosives 128.8 KGs & 10364 PCs
	Bombs (PCs) 1137	
2	Licensed Arms	a) Total Licensed Arms (PCs) 52869
		b) Deposited (PCs) 41573

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

Extensive drives for removal of unauthorized political advertisements are ongoing. As per the latest reports, widespread public and private property defacements have been cleared across all districts and the District Election Officers have certified removal of defacement from all the public properties under their jurisdiction. Following is the detail of the district wise defacement removal and total cases registered.

District-wise Status of Enforcement of Model Code of Conduct (As per report received up-to 9:00 pm, 16.04.2026)

Sl. no	Name of District	Public Property Defacement Removed	Private Property Defacement Removed	Total no of Cases recorded
1)	Cooch Behar	60684	20423	81107
2)	Alipurduar	10377	3585	13962
3)	Jalpaiguri	61689	10931	72620
4)	Kalimpong	1126	30	1156
5)	Darjeeling	51532	23695	75227
6)	Uttar Dinajpur	26524	5305	31829
7)	Dakshin Dinajpur	45225	32081	86486
8)	Malda	40419	620	41039
9)	Murshidabad	126304	12570	138882
10)	Nadia	36929	555	37484
11)	North 24 Parganas	140494	2100	142787
12)	South 24 Parganas	76597	936	78150
13)	DEO Kolkata South	32804	1	32806
14)	DEO Kolkata North	132489	37	132526
15)	Howrah	47282	2163	50759
16)	Hooghly	99697	300	100750
17)	Purba Medinipur	112325	7675	120001
18)	Paschim Medinipur	78767	5760	84574
19)	Jhargram	13786	63	13849
20)	Purulia	26132	2586	29200
21)	Purba Bardhaman	45612	2023	50829
22)	Paschim Bardhaman	256442	60045	316535
23)	Bankura	25508	1319	26827
24)	Birbhum	76073	36598	130843
State total		1624817	231401	1890228

The Commission remains committed to strict compliance to the implementation of MCC in letter and spirit for ensuring a free & fair election.

Sd/-

(Arindam Niyogi)
Additional Chief Electoral Officer
West Bengal