Understanding SIR: Process, Legal Context, and the Karnataka Perspective

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1: An Over View of SIR :

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is a rigorous, nationwide exercise conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to update and verify electoral rolls. Unlike routine annual summary revisions, SIR involves intensive, house-to-house enumeration, document verification, and targeted corrections to ensure voter lists are accurate, inclusive, and error-free. Its key objectives include:

- **Adding Eligible Voters**: Incorporating citizens aged 18 and above, including new youth voters, migrants, and marginalized groups.

- **Removing Ineligible Entries**: Deleting duplicates, deceased individuals, non-citizens, or those who have migrated permanently.

- **Updating Details**: Reflecting changes due to migration, demographic shifts, or administrative boundaries.

- **Preventing Fraud**: Upholding the “one person, one vote” principle to minimize electoral malpractices like multiple voting or ghost entries.

SIR is grounded in Article 324[1] of the Indian Constitution (ECI's superintendence powers) and Section 21(3)[2] of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, allowing the ECI to initiate it independently of state governments. It is typically triggered before major elections or when rolls are outdated, enhancing transparency, public trust, and democratic integrity. In the 2025 context, SIR addresses accumulated inaccuracies from rapid urbanization, migration, and a 21-year gap since the last major nationwide exercise in 2004.

This research is designed keeping the welfare of minorities, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), particularly the poor and uneducated voters. Basic emphasis is placed on potential risks of disenfranchisement, we drew the same from balanced and trustworthy sources to highlight both official justifications and criticisms. The goal is to inform and advocate for protective measures to safeguard vulnerable communities in the state Karnataka.

- **Definition and Scope**: SIR, or Special Intensive Revision, is an electoral roll revision exercise conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to update voter lists. It involves verifying eligibility of all registered voters through house-to-house surveys, aiming to include eligible citizens while removing ineligible ones like deceased, migrated, or non-citizens.

- **Recent Developments**: Launched in phases;
    - Phase-1 one already completed : It ran from August 20 to September 30, 2025, targeting high-risk areas (according to the ruling party) for deletions of fake or deceased voters. **Haryana** was not part of this initial phase, which prioritized states like **Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.**
    - This second phase i.e. SIR 2.0 covers 12 states/UTs (e.g., Tamil Nadu, Bihar, West Bengal) starting October 28, 2025, but excludes Assam due to its ongoing NRC. Karnataka is not

[1] Article 324 (1) The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to Parliament and to the Legislature of every State and of elections to the offices of President and Vice-President held under this Constitution shall be vested in a Commission (referred to in this Constitution as the Election Commission).

[2] Section 21 (3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (2), the Election Commission may at any time, for reasons to be recorded, direct a special revision of the electoral roll for any constituency or part of a constituency in such manner as it may think fit:
Provided that subject to the other provisions of this Act, the electoral roll for the constituency, as in force at the time of the issue of any such direction, shall continue to be in force until the completion of the special revision so directed.

currently included in SIR 2.0, but still our opposition campaigns are active through several teams like us.

- **Our Welfare Focus**: For minorities, SC/ST, and OBC (especially poor/uneducated), SIR's implementation is a heavy approach that risks excluding those without formal records, potentially disenfranchising millions from **Right to vote, a fundamental** right under right to life, right to take part in governance and right to speech and expression. Article 326 of the Constitution[3] directly provides this specific right. Universal truth is that the Poor & marginalized voters often lack birth certificates or property papers, making them more vulnerable to arbitrary deletions.

2: Implementation Mechanism: How SIR Operates

- **Types Of Revisions :**
  - **Regular** updates - on day to day basis
  - **Annual** Summary Revision
  - **Pre-Election** Summary Revision
  - **Intensive Revision** - A comprehensive, de-novo (from scratch) preparation of electoral rolls involving house-to-house enumeration without primarily relying on existing rolls.
  - **Special Intensive Revision** - 2025 : A hybrid or enhanced intensive process with thorough house-to-house verification, pre-filled forms based on existing data, and stricter document requirements. This is invoked in exceptional cases for deep cleaning of rolls.

- **How many times already completed since independence :**

  Total it is conducted 14 times since Independence, including all types:

  1. 1952–1956 (foundational post-Independence exercises)
  2. 1957
  3. 1961
  4. 1965

[3] Article 326 of the Indian Constitution establishes elections to the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies on the basis of adult suffrage, granting voting rights to every Indian citizen aged 18 or above, subject to disqualifications.

5. 1966
6. 1983–1984
7. 1987–1989 (multi-year comprehensive effort)
8. 1992
9. 1993 (linked to Elector's Photo Identity Cards rollout)
10. 1995
11. 2002
12. 2003
13. 2004 (last major one before a long gap)
14. 2025 ongoing special intensive revision.

- **Step-by-Step Process of SIR:**

1. **Notification and Preparation**: The ECI issues an order specifying the qualifying date. Pre-filled Enumeration Forms (EFs) are generated for existing voters using legacy data.

2. House-to-House Enumeration by Booth Level Officers (BLOs):

    • BLOs (often government teachers or officials) visit every household multiple times (at least three) to distribute and collect EFs.

    • Voters fill details like name, date of birth, parents/spouse info, mobile/Aadhaar (optional), and a "legacy linkage" to electoral rolls from the last intensive revision (2002–2005).

    • Booth Level Agents (BLAs) from political parties may accompany BLOs for transparency.

3. **Verification and Document Requirements**: Voters must provide proofs,

    • If legacy linkage is established (via online search on voters.eci.gov.in), no additional documents are typically needed initially.

    • For unmatched cases or new voters, one of the below 12 specified documents may be required; these are indicative documents (not exhaustive) list of 12 documents that can be used for verification.

1. Identity card or Pension Payment Order issued to regular **employees/pensioners** of Central/State Government or PSUs.
2. Any **government-issued document** (e.g., identity card, certificate) issued in India before July 1, 1987 (by government, local authorities, banks, post offices, LIC, or PSUs).
3. **Birth certificate** issued by a competent authority.
4. **School leaving certificate** or matriculation certificate (or equivalent educational certificate indicating date of birth).
5. **Caste/tribe certificate** (SC/ST/OBC) issued by competent authority.
6. **Passport**.
7. **Domicile certificate** issued by competent authority.
8. **Land/house allotment records or revenue records** (e.g., pre-1987 land documents).
9. **Government service records or pension documents** indicating date/place of birth.
10. **Forest rights certificate or similar entitlement documents** issued by authorized agencies.
11. Extract from family register or other official records maintained by state/local authorities.
12. **Aadhaar card** (accepted only as proof of identity; must be supplemented with other documents if needed for age/residence verification, as per ECI letter dated September 9, 2025).

The process emphasizes ordinary residence and eligibility but has raised concerns about indirectly scrutinizing the citizenship.

4. Draft Roll Publication and call for Objections:

• A draft roll will be published (e.g., December 2025 for many states).

• Period for claims/objections (e.g., until January 2026), with hearings by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs).

5. Final Roll Publication:

• Final rolls released (on pre decided dates, for Phase-II states).

- Post-publication audits and limited corrections.

Major Concerns

- **Voters must provide proofs like above mentioned documents**
  - **Birth certificates, passports, or Aadhaar to verify citizenship/eligibility;**
  - **common documents (e.g., ration cards, PAN) are often excluded.**

- **Suspected non-citizens are marked and referred to authorities under the Citizenship Act, 1955.**

- **Timeline: Short windows (e.g., weeks for submissions), leading to rushed implementations.**
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- **Resources Involved**: BLOs conduct surveys, but under pressure reports of 33 BLO's deaths which includes suicide reports due to deadlines and workload often alleged due stress created by SIR[4].
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- **Welfare Focus**: Uneducated poor from SC/ST/OBC/minorities face challenges in understanding forms or gathering documents, often leading to exclusions. In Bihar, women (many from marginalized groups) vanished from rolls, highlighting gender and class biases. 12 This shifts the burden from ECI to voters, disadvantageous to those without literacy or resources.

Favorable Things of SIR Process

The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** does not require documents from all voters during the initial house-to-house enumeration phase of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR, 2025–2026).

Voters primarily establish "legacy linkage" by tracing their name (or a family member's) in the electoral rolls from the last intensive revision (typically 2002–2005, varying by state). **In Karnataka it was lastly held in 2002.**

[4] It reported (by **The Wire, Al-Jazeera & NDTV**) total of at least 33 Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in India who have died amid the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, with some cases confirmed as suicides and others linked to medical emergencies or stress. Families and reports attribute these deaths to intense pressure, tight deadlines, inadequate training, and workload from voter list verification duties across states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Gujarat, and others.

If linkage is established online or via details provided, no documents are needed at that stage.

Documents are required only in specific cases:

- For "**unmatched**" voters (no legacy linkage found).
- **During the claims/objections period** after draft roll publication.
- For **new registrations or where verification raises doubts** about eligibility (age, residence, etc.).

Key Notes:

- Common documents like **ration cards, PAN cards, driving licenses, or current bank passbooks** are generally **not accepted as standalone proofs** for age or eligibility in SIR, as they do not reliably establish date/place of birth or pre-1987 linkage.
- The list is "indicative"—Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) may accept other reasonable proofs in certain cases.
- Voters born before July 1, 1987, benefit from a presumption of citizenship under the Citizenship Act, making pre-1987 documents particularly useful.
- For official confirmation, refer to **voters.eci.gov.in**[5] or contact your local Booth Level Officer (BLO).

3: Legal Framework and Background

[5] http://voters.eci.gov.in

- **Statutory Basis**: Grounded in the Representation of the People Act (ROPA), 1950 (Sections 21-28)[6], which allows electoral roll revisions for accuracy. ECI justifies it as routine to address migration and urbanization.

- **Background**: SIR evolved from annual revisions but intensified post-2024, with SIR 1.0 in Bihar (July-October 2025) deleting 6.5-6.8 million names. No specific SIR law; critics argue it lacks Gazette notification or parliamentary oversight.

- **Constitutional Links**: Aligns with Articles 324-329 (ECI powers) and 326 (adult suffrage), but challenged for violating Articles 14 (equality), 21 (life/liberty), and federalism.

- **Welfare Focus**: Legal infirmities could exacerbate[7] inequalities; poor/uneducated SC/ST/OBC/minorities lack access to legal aid for appeals, risking permanent exclusion. Supreme Court petitions (e.g., by DMK) highlight this as unconstitutional overreach.

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[6] Section 21: Preparation and Revision of Electoral Rolls
- Electoral rolls prepared/revised by reference to a qualifying date; effective upon final publication.
- Mandatory revisions: Before general elections and bye-elections; optional annual revision if directed by ECI.
- ECI can direct special revision (including Special Intensive Revision) at any time for recorded reasons.
- Existing roll remains in force until new revision completes.

Section 22: Correction of Entries in Electoral Rolls
- Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) can amend, transpose, or delete entries on application or suo motu after inquiry.
- Grounds: Erroneous/defective entry; change of ordinary residence within constituency; death or ineligibility.
- Reasonable opportunity of hearing must be given before deletion or action on residence grounds.

Section 23: Inclusion of Names in Electoral Rolls
- Any person not on the roll can apply for inclusion.
- ERO must include name if applicant is entitled; inform and strike off from any other constituency's roll if duplicate.
- No changes (amendments, inclusions, deletions) allowed after nomination deadline until election completion.

Section 24: Appeals
- Appeal lies to Chief Electoral Officer from ERO's orders under Sections 22 or 23.
- Prescribed time and manner apply.

Section 25: [Omitted]
Section 26: [Omitted]
Section 27: [Omitted]

Section 28: Power to Make Rules
- Central Government, after consulting ECI, can make rules for Part III.
- Rules may cover: Particulars in rolls, preliminary publication, claims/objections procedure, appointment of revising authorities, etc.

[7] means to make a bad situation, problem, or condition worse or more severe.

4: Connection with the NRC

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls are often argued as distinct processes, but as per our research and views of opposition parties have drawn strong parallels, posing SIR as an “indirect NRC,” “backdoor NRC,” or “NRC in disguise.”

This logical deduction or perception stems from shared elements of document-based verification and fears of exclusion, particularly amid the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019. Below is a detailed breakdown.

What is NRC?

• The NRC is a comprehensive register of genuine Indian citizens, primarily implemented in Assam under Supreme Court supervision (2013–2019).

• It aimed to identify illegal immigrants (post-March 24, 1971, cutoff per Assam Accord and Section 6A of Citizenship Act, 1955).

• Applicants had to submit extensive legacy documents proving ancestry.

• Outcome: Excluded about 1.9 million people (out of 3.3 crore applicants), disproportionately affecting marginalized groups (Muslims, Bengali Hindus, poor, women). Many faced detention risks or fear of statelessness.

• The final NRC (2019) remains in limbo, rejection slips not issued, list not notified by Registrar General of India; due to political challenges.

What is SIR?

• SIR is an electoral roll purification exercise by the Election Commission of India (ECI) under Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

• Ongoing nationwide (phased, 2025–2026): House-to-house verification, legacy linkage to pre-2005 rolls, and document submission in unmatched cases (indicative list of ~12–13 documents, e.g., pre-1987 IDs, birth certificates; Aadhaar for identity only).

• Goal: Remove duplicates, deceased, shifted, or ineligible voters; add new eligible ones.

Key Similarities (Fueling “Indirect NRC” Claims)

- **Document-Based Scrutiny and Burden Shift**: Both require proofs of eligibility/citizenship (e.g., parental linkage, date/place of birth). SIR's focus on "legacy" from older rolls and referrals of "doubtful" cases to authorities mirrors NRC's ancestry proof. Critics argue SIR inverts the presumption of citizenship—voters must prove eligibility, burdening the poor/uneducated.

- **Potential for Exclusions**: Like NRC's 1.9 million exclusions (mostly marginalized), SIR has led to millions of deletions (e.g., Bihar: heavy among women, minorities; similar patterns in West Bengal). Reports of suicides/deaths due to stress/anxiety echo NRC-era fears.

- **Disproportionate Impact on Vulnerable Groups**: Affects SC/ST/OBC, minorities (especially Muslims), women (post-marriage name changes/migration), migrants. Lack of documents common among poor.

- **Timing and Political Context**: SIR precedes elections in several states; critics allege targeting opposition-ruled or minority-heavy areas.

Key Differences (As Per ECI and Supporters)

- Scope and Authority:
    - NRC: Full citizenship determination under Citizenship Act, 1955; creates a separate citizen register.
    - SIR: Limited to electoral rolls; ECI verifies voting eligibility (citizenship + age 18 + ordinary residence). Doubtful cases referred to citizenship authorities, not decided by ECI.
- Assam Treatment:
    - Assam was excluded from SIR (or given milder "Special Revision" without intensive docs) precisely because of completed NRC and unique citizenship rules (1971 cutoff). ECI cites avoiding duplication/overlap with unresolved NRC.
- Inclusivity Measures:
    - SIR includes political party oversight, claims/objections period, online options; described by ECI as "cooperative" and "voter-friendly" (expanded document list post-Bihar feedback).
- No Explicit Citizenship Register: SIR updates voter lists, not a national citizen database.

Link to CAA (2019)

• CAA fast-tracks citizenship for non-Muslim migrants (Hindus, Sikhs, etc.) from Pakistan/Bangladesh/Afghanistan entering before Dec 31, 2014.

• Critics feared CAA + Nationwide NRC would exclude Muslims (no fast-track) while protecting others—leading to 2019–2020 protests.

• With nationwide NRC stalled (post-Assam backlash), opponents claim SIR revives this via backdoor: Verifying voter rolls could identify "doubtful" citizens (e.g., alleged Bangladeshi migrants), potentially targeting Muslims/minorities.

• In SIR states (e.g., West Bengal with Matua/Hindu refugees), pending CAA applicants fear deletions before citizenship grants. Supreme Court cases address whether CAA receipts suffice for provisional voter inclusion.

• BJP/ECI deny links; SIR called routine cleanup of "infiltrators" (term often for Muslim migrants).

Broader Impacts and Controversies

• Welfare/Social Burden: Like NRC, SIR disadvantages those without documents (poor, illiterate, marginalized). Reports: BLO stress/deaths, rushed timelines, gender/class biases (e.g., women "vanishing" post-marriage).

• Legal Challenges: Supreme Court hearings (ongoing as of Dec 2025) question ECI's citizenship scrutiny powers; petitions allege ultra vires, mass disenfranchisement.

• Political Divide: Opposition (TMC, Congress, SP, etc.) calls it BJP-orchestrated exclusion; ECI/BJP insist neutral, necessary for clean rolls.

In summary, while officially separate (SIR electoral vs. NRC citizenship), the perceived connection arises from overlapping verification mechanics and exclusion risks, amplified by CAA's divisive backdrop. ECI maintains SIR ensures accurate democracy; critics see it as citizenship policing without parliamentary mandate. For official stance, refer eci.gov.in; ongoing court cases may clarify boundaries.

5: Experiences and Lessons Learned from Other States

- **Assam NRC (Key Example)**: Excluded 1.9 million; process caused trauma, suicides, debt from document hunts. Disproportionate impact on women (2/3 excluded), trans people, disabled, and poor without land/bank records.

- **Bihar SIR 1.0**: Deleted 6.5 million, mostly poor/illiterate; only 500 illegal immigrants found, but many legitimate citizens affected.

  Lessons: Arbitrary raids on Muslims, xenophobia.

- **General Lessons**: Processes fuel discrimination; need better support for document-less groups. ECI should prioritize inclusion over exclusion.

- **Welfare Focus**: Marginalized communities suffer most—e.g., Adivasis/Dalits lose rights; uneducated voters face barriers in appeals.

6: Ground-Level Realities of SIR Implementation

- **Challenges**:
  - Rushed timelines cause stress;
  - BLO suicides highlight administrative pressure.
  - In Bihar, deletions for “routine” reasons masked citizenship scrutiny.

- **Realities**:
  - House visits often biased;
  - migrants/minorities targeted.
  - Lack of transparency in deletion process.

- **Welfare Focus**:
  - Poor/uneducated SC/ST/OBC face exclusion due to illiteracy; e.g., in Bihar, 30 million poor are affected.
  - Women from minorities vanish from rolls,
  - Both losing voice in democracy.

7: Major Concerns and Grounds for Opposition

- **Key Concerns**:
    - Disenfranchisement[8] without due process;
    - no appeal mechanisms for deletions.
    - ECI overreach into citizenship.

- **Opposition Grounds**:
    - “Planned exclusion” of poor/minorities;
    - lacks parliamentary
    - Supreme Court petitions argue ultra vires.

- **ECI Justification**: Ensures clean rolls for fair polls; 99% deletions routine.

- **Welfare Focus**:
    - Opposition (e.g., Congress, DMK) highlights threats to SC/ST/OBC/minorities’ voting rights, calling it anti-democratic.

8: Impact on Marginalised and Vulnerable Communities

- **Disproportionate Effects**:
    - Poor/uneducated lack documents; e.g., Dalits/Adivasis/Muslims excluded en masse. Women, migrants, disabled hit hardest.

- **Long-Term Harms**:
    - Loss of voting rights leads to reduced welfare access;
    - potential statelessness like Assam.

- **Welfare Focus**:
    - SC/ST/OBC/minorities, especially poor, face systemic bias; e.g., Bihar deletions targeted these groups. Uneducated voters can’t navigate processes, amplifying inequality.

9: SIR within the Context of Karnataka

SIR, or Special Intensive Revision, is a comprehensive exercise conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to verify, update, and clean up electoral rolls. The same we have understood above.

[8] Disenfranchisement refers to the act of depriving a person or group of rights, privileges, or power, most commonly the right to vote. It often occurs systematically through laws, intimidation, or barriers that exclude marginalized groups from political participation.

This SIR process differs from routine summary revisions by being more intensive and time-bound, often ahead of major elections, to improve accuracy and reduce errors like double registrations.

Timeline of SIR in Karnataka

SIR has been rolled out in phases across India, starting with Bihar as a pilot in mid-2025, followed by other states. In Karnataka, preparations began around September 2025, with the ECI indicating readiness to implement it anytime after September 25, 2025, following completions in states like Bihar and Kerala. However, as of December 2025, Karnataka was not included in the formal Phase-II rollout also, that covered almost 12 states and Union Territories (such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and others), which began in early November 2025 with enumeration form distribution and had deadlines extended to mid-December 2025 in some areas. This aligns with the provided status that Karnataka is “not in SIR 2.0,” referring to the second phase.

No specific start date for a full SIR in Karnataka has been confirmed in recent updates, but civil society opposition and campaigns like ‘My Vote, My Right’ suggest it’s either imminent or under consideration for early 2026, potentially tied to upcoming local or by-elections.

As of now the ECI has published final electoral rolls for 2025 in Karnataka as of January 2025, indicating routine revisions occurred, but a dedicated SIR could follow if deemed necessary for accuracy ahead of future polls.

Major Concerns for People in Karnataka and Why

The SIR process, while said to be aimed at improving electoral integrity, has sparked significant apprehension in Karnataka, echoing nationwide fears. Key concerns include:

- **Disenfranchisement of Vulnerable Groups**: There’s widespread worry that poor, uneducated individuals from Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC), and religious minorities (especially Muslims) could be removed from voter lists due to inadequate documentation, lack of awareness, or errors in verification. This is exacerbated by ongoing debates over SC quota reservations in the state, which heighten tensions for marginalized communities already facing socio-economic challenges. Deletions could strip them of voting rights and access to welfare schemes linked to voter IDs, like subsidies

or reservations.

- **Impact on Migrants and Urban Poor**: Migrants, particularly those in informal sectors, fear being flagged as “unmapped” or deleted if they’re not present during BLO visits or can’t provide proofs like old family links to electoral rolls. In Karnataka’s urban hubs like Bengaluru, this affects Dalits, Muslims, and interstate workers. The process’s resemblance to NRC/CAA exercises fuels paranoia about citizenship scrutiny, with protesters drawing parallels to past anti-CAA agitations where minorities felt targeted.

- **Allegations of Manipulation and Bias**: Past incidents in areas like Mahadevapura have involved claims of “vote theft” through bogus entries or deletions, with political parties accusing rivals of influencing the process. Nationwide, SIR has led to mass exclusions (e.g., 43 lakh in Madhya Pradesh, 25 lakh in Kerala), raising fears of similar scale in Karnataka, potentially altering electoral outcomes. Critics argue the push for digital voter lists and Aadhaar linkage could exclude those without tech access or proper IDs.

- **Procedural Flaws and Harassment**: Reports highlight incomplete form distribution, harassment during verification, and errors like wrong photos or inclusion of deceased people in lists. In Karnataka, campaigns urge the Congress-led government to pass resolutions protecting these groups, reflecting distrust in the ECI’s neutrality.

These concerns stem from historical mistrust in central institutions, perceived political motivations (e.g., benefiting ruling parties), and the potential for SIR to disproportionately affect opposition strongholds or demographics.

Number of Voters in Karnataka

As per the final electoral rolls published in January 2025, Karnataka has approximately 5.52 crore (55.2 million) electors. This includes a slight edge in female voters over males, with increases noted from draft rolls due to additions of young and new voters. Note that this figure is from early 2025; any SIR implementation could adjust it through deletions or additions by 2026.

Impact on Migrants from North India to Karnataka

North Indian migrants, especially from states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, form a significant workforce in Karnataka's cities (e.g., construction, tech, and services in Bengaluru). During SIR:

- **Risk of Deletion**: If migrants are absent during BLO home visits, their entries might be marked for removal as "unverified" or "shifted." They often lack local proofs or family linkages in Karnataka rolls, and many retain votes in home states, leading to potential double-entry flags. 35 40 This could result in losing voting rights in either state, affecting their political voice.

- **Economic and Social Fallout**: Verification might require travel back home, causing wage loss they can't afford. It also raises anxiety about welfare access (e.g., ration cards tied to voter IDs) and echoes anti-migrant sentiments, as seen in Tamil Nadu where Bihar migrants were accused of altering local rolls. Political parties from home states urge returns for voting, but this disrupts lives. 36

- **Broader Effects**: Vulnerable subgroups (e.g., women, trans persons) among migrants face higher exclusion risks due to documentation gaps. If deleted, they may need to reapply, but delays could bar them from upcoming elections.

Tackling Misuse of Power by ECI or Election Officers

Misuse, such as biased deletions, manipulation, or corrupt practices (e.g., appeals based on caste/religion), is addressed through legal and oversight mechanisms under the Representation of the People Act, 1951:

- **File Complaints**: Report issues to the ECI via its portal, helpline (1950), or district election officers. For polling officials' misconduct, use Section 28A provisions. Electoral offenses like bribery or undue influence can be reported to police or ECI observers.

- **Legal Recourse**: Approach high courts or the Supreme Court via writ petitions for violations of fundamental rights (e.g., Article 14 equality, Article 324 on ECI powers). Public interest litigations (PILs) have challenged ECI actions in the past.

- **Transparency Tools**: Use Right to Information (RTI) to seek details on revisions. Political parties can object during draft publication periods. 21

The ECI's 4M formula (Monitoring, Media, Money, Muscle) combats misinformation and abuse.

- **Public and Civil Action**: Join campaigns like 'My Vote, My Right' or civil society hearings to build pressure. 32 43 Advocate for reforms like better training for officers and digital safeguards.

These steps ensure accountability, though critics note the ECI's integrity has been questioned, emphasizing the need for systemic fixes.

10: Proposed Course of Action

- **Immediate Steps**: Join opposition campaigns; demand SC stays on SIR expansions. Push for digital, transparent voter lists and limit SIR to new voters.
- **Community Support**: Awareness drives for minorities/SC/ST/OBC to collect documents; legal aid clinics for poor/uneducated.
- **Policy Advocacy**: Amend rules for inclusive proofs (e.g., accept Aadhaar widely); monitor implementations to prevent bias.
- **Long-Term**: Strengthen ECI accountability; learn from Assam to prioritize welfare over exclusion.
- **Welfare Focus**: Prioritize protecting vulnerable voters through unity, ensuring no poor/uneducated person loses rights; democracy depends on their inclusion.

To-Do List for Individual Muslims

- Verify your name and family members' names in the draft electoral rolls immediately via the ECI Voters' Service Portal (voters.eci.gov.in) or Karnataka CEO website (ceokarnataka.kar.nic.in) using EPIC number or mobile details.

- Gather and digitize essential documents like Aadhaar, birth certificate, voter ID, utility bills, or educational certificates for quick submission if needed.

- File Form 6 for inclusion, Form 7 for objections to deletions, or Form 8 for corrections by January 8, 2026, either online via NVSP or offline through your BLO.

- Attend local awareness sessions or masjid meetings to learn about SIR processes and share experiences with neighbors.

- Report any harassment or bias by BLOs to the District Election Officer or via the Voter Helpline (1950), documenting incidents with dates and details.

- Link your voter ID with Aadhaar if not done, to simplify future verifications, while ensuring privacy.

- Educate yourself on rights through ECI apps and resources, and encourage family members, especially women and youth, to participate actively.

- Prepare for the long-term by maintaining family records and considering community support networks for documentation help.

To-Do List for Community Leaders

- Organize neighborhood or masjid-based verification drives to help residents check rolls and file forms collectively.

- Collaborate with local NGOs like Jamaat-e-Islami Hind or FDCA-K to set up free documentation camps and legal aid clinics.

- Raise awareness through community meetings, WhatsApp groups, or social media about deadlines and processes, using Urdu/English/Kannada materials.

- Monitor BLO activities in your area for fairness and report systemic issues to the CEO Karnataka or ECI.

- Build alliances with other minority groups for joint advocacy on transparent SIR implementation.

- Collect data on deletions in your locality to highlight patterns and submit to authorities or media for accountability.

- Promote voter education programs focusing on women's and youth participation to strengthen community turnout.

- Plan for post-SIR resilience by creating mutual aid funds for those affected by exclusions.

To-Do List for Muslim Politicians

- Advocate in assemblies or Parliament for ECI reforms, such as easier document requirements and anti-bias training for BLOs.

- Push for state-level helplines and extended deadlines in Karnataka, coordinating with CM Siddaramaiah's office.

- File RTIs to obtain data on deletions by demographics and challenge disproportionate impacts legally.

- Mobilize party workers for door-to-door assistance in constituencies, especially in Muslim-majority areas like Bengaluru or Mysuru.

- Join or lead coalitions like the opposition's "Vote Chori" campaign to demand paper ballots and CJI involvement in ECI appointments.

- Highlight SIR concerns in media and public forums to build national pressure for safeguards.

- Sponsor bills or resolutions for "One Nation One Voter ID" to prevent recurring revisions.

- Engage with ECI directly through representations to ensure inclusive processes in upcoming phases.

To-Do List for Religious Scholars

- Issue fatwas or guidance emphasizing the Islamic duty to protect rights and participate in democratic processes.

- Integrate SIR awareness into khutbahs (Friday sermons) and madrasa teachings, framing it as upholding justice (adl).

- Partner with ulema bodies to provide Sharia-compliant advice on documentation and appeals.

- Address community fears through counseling, promoting unity and avoidance of panic.

- Collaborate with scholars from Pasmanda or other sub-groups to ensure inclusive representation in advocacy.

- Educate on historical Islamic perspectives on citizenship and rights to build resilience.

- Organize interfaith dialogues to foster broader support against discriminatory policies.

- Document and share success stories of restored voter rights to inspire action.

To-Do List for Social Workers

- Conduct fieldwork to identify vulnerable individuals (e.g., migrants, elderly) and assist with form submissions.

- Train volunteers on ECI portals and processes through workshops in urban slums or rural areas.

- Liaison with government offices to resolve bulk issues, like missing legacy data for post-2003 registrants.

- Document case studies of exclusions and submit reports to human rights bodies like NHRC or PUCL.

- Provide psychosocial support for those facing anxiety from the process, linking to mental health resources.

- Advocate for digital literacy programs to help communities use online tools effectively.

- Network with national groups like Citizens for Justice and Peace for legal support in petitions.

- Evaluate post-finalization impacts (after February 7, 2026) and plan follow-up campaigns for reinclusions.