

## Electoral Roll Controversy: Tejashwi Yadav Considers Boycott Amidst NDA Accusations



Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, a prominent figure in Bihar's opposition, has indicated that his political alliance, the Mahagathbandhan, is contemplating a boycott of the upcoming Bihar assembly elections. This potential action stems from alleged irregularities in the Election Commission of India's (ECI) ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Yadav made these remarks on Thursday, July 24, 2025, during the Monsoon Session of the Bihar Assembly, amidst heated exchanges that saw proceedings adjourned. In response, the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has swiftly characterized Yadav's statement as a concession of impending defeat.

The SIR exercise, intended to purify electoral rolls by removing duplicate or deceased voters and including eligible citizens, has become a flashpoint in Bihar politics. Yadav, who has been vocally critical of the process, argues that the ECI's methodology and timing, so close to the elections, are problematic and could lead to the disenfranchisement of a significant number of legitimate voters. He specifically questioned the ECI's demand for extensive documentation from voters, suggesting that many citizens, particularly migrant workers, may not possess the required papers. According to the ECI, the SIR has identified a substantial number of discrepancies, including millions of deceased, shifted, or duplicate voters, with 98.01% of voters in Bihar covered under the ongoing process as of July 23.

The NDA, encompassing parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janata Dal (United) (JD(U)), has countered Yadav's claims by asserting that his threat to boycott the elections is a sign of desperation. BJP leaders have stated that Yadav is "nervous" about the Mahagathbandhan's electoral prospects and is seeking an excuse to avoid contesting. They argue that the ECI's SIR is a legitimate and necessary "cleansing" drive to ensure fair elections and that voters have enthusiastically participated. JD(U) leaders have also mocked the boycott threat, suggesting it indicates the opposition's lack of a coherent agenda.

As the political temperature rises in Bihar, the controversy surrounding the SIR and the potential for an election boycott highlight a deep rift between the ruling coalition and the opposition. The ECI maintains its constitutional mandate to ensure accurate electoral rolls, while the Mahagathbandhan continues to express concerns over the integrity of the revision process. The coming weeks, particularly as the ECI moves to publish draft rolls and allow for claims and objections, will be crucial in determining the path forward for Bihar's political landscape.