

**COUNTING OF VOTES OF 12th ELECTIONS OF BAR COUNCIL OF WEST
BENGAL, 2026**

All sealed 298 ballot boxes containing the polled ballots, excluding 8 sealed boxes pertaining to Alipore Criminal Court Bar Association polled on 09.03.2026, have very recently been brought back from all the 82 number of polling stations situated in total sub-divisions of..... Districts, which includes the farthest booths situated at Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Durgapur, Purulia, Dantan, Kakdwip, Islampur, Chanchal, Gangarampur etc. through the transportation arranged by the Returning Officer, under adequate police protection, to Kolkata and stored in the strong room, set up at Standard Assurance Building, 1st Floor, 32, B.B.D. Bag, Kolkata – 700001 and kept under adequate armed police guards 24X7.

It is decided, in consultation with the High Powered Elections Committee that the counting of votes shall commence on and from 20.04.2026, at the above place, and shall continue on day to day basis (except weekly and notified holidays) from 11 AM to 5 PM till its completion. The days of poll and the day of counting for the ensuing West Bengal State Assembly Elections shall be excluded. In case of other exigencies that may compel stoppage of counting on any day(s), the same shall be notified in advance.

Information to the contesting candidates:

1. At the time of entry to the counting venue, the access card must be deposited with the authorised representative of the Returning Officer against issuance of a receipt in the form of a coupon, and the access card shall be returned back to the concerned person at the

time of his leaving the counting venue by surrendering the coupon to the authorised representative of the Returning Officer.

2. There shall be adequate police personnel at the entry of the counting venue. The counting venue being in an area covered by prohibitory orders under Section 163 of BNSS, any assembly of more than five persons, outside the main entry gate of the Standard Assurance Building, 1st Floor, 32, B.B.D. Bag, Kolkata – 700001, is not permitted. The candidates shall ensure that no gathering of five persons or more takes place outside the counting venue.
3. Entire counting process shall be video-graphed and be live telecast on a giant screen inside the counting venue. Each polled ballot paper shall be scanned and a soft copy of the same be stored in the computer to facilitate speedy counting. Each ballot paper shall be opened and displayed on the giant screen for the view of the candidates or their representatives.
4. The sealed Ballot Boxes shall be opened Booth-wise serially and validity of each polled ballot shall be adjudicated by the Returning Officer immediately. The rejected ballots shall be kept separately.
5. The grounds for rejection of ballot paper shall be strictly as per the instructions printed on each ballot paper, used during polling, which are quoted below:

***“i. The mark should be so placed to indicate clearly and beyond doubt, to which candidate the voter is casting his vote. If the mark is so placed making it doubtful as to which candidate the vote has been casted, that vote will be considered as invalid.*”**

ii. A voter while casting his vote: (a) shall write on the Ballot paper the preferential number in words, for example, 'One' in the space against the name of the candidate whom he chooses for his first preference; and (b) shall thereafter write the subsequent preference numbers in words, 'Two', 'Three', 'Four', 'Five' and so on in the spaces against the names of the candidates in order of his preference.

iii. A voter shall not sign the Ballot paper nor place any mark thereon by which he can be identified.

iv. Voting paper when invalid: A voting paper shall be invalid on which- (a) any of the preference number in words from "ONE", "TWO", "THREE" and son on or "One", "Two", "Three" and so on are not written; or (b) the words 'One' or any other number in words is written opposite the name of more than one candidate or is so written as to render it doubtful as to which candidate it is intended to apply; or (c) there is any mark or sign or writing by which the voter can be identified; or (d) the preferences are given by any other marking excepting the marking mentioned hereinbefore; or (e) if there is such effacement, obliteration, erasure or mutilation as to mark any of the preferences ambiguous."

6. Each 1st preference vote shall be counted first from each of the polled and sealed ballot boxes and be separately kept in pigeon boxes earmarked with the names of each candidate.

7. The quota of the preferential system shall be determined by the expert counting personnel of the West Bengal State Legislative Assembly.
8. Counting shall take place every day from 11 AM to 5 PM and will continue till its completion except on weekly holidays, other State and National holidays and on 23rd April, 2026, 29th April, 2026 and 4th May, 2026 and on such other days as the exigencies may require.

It be noted that in the event of counting process of a particular ballot box is not completed by 5 PM, then in that case counting shall continue till all the ballots of that particular box are counted.

9. As, within the precincts of the counting venue, there are other Government Establishments, the candidates and their representative who may be present at the venue, as the case may be, shall strictly ensure that no sloganeering and shouting take place inside and in the precincts of Standard Assurance Building, 1st Floor, 32, B.B.D. Bag, Kolkata – 700001. Any person found violating such instructions shall be immediately escorted out from the counting venue and shall also be banned from entry to Standard Assurance Building, 1st Floor, 32, B.B.D. Bag, Kolkata – 700001 during the remaining period of counting and the access card shall be forfeited.
10. There shall be adequate arrangement for water for all, at the counting venue. Limited toilet facilities are available at the venue.

By Order

Returning Officer
12th ELECTIONS OF BAR COUNCIL
OF WEST BENGAL, 2026.