

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

No. ECI/PN/108/2024

27.05.2024

Press Note

J&K makes an indelible mark on India's electoral history with highest voter turnout in a General Election in last 35 years

Kashmir Valley witnesses massive 30 points jump in poll participation compared to 2019

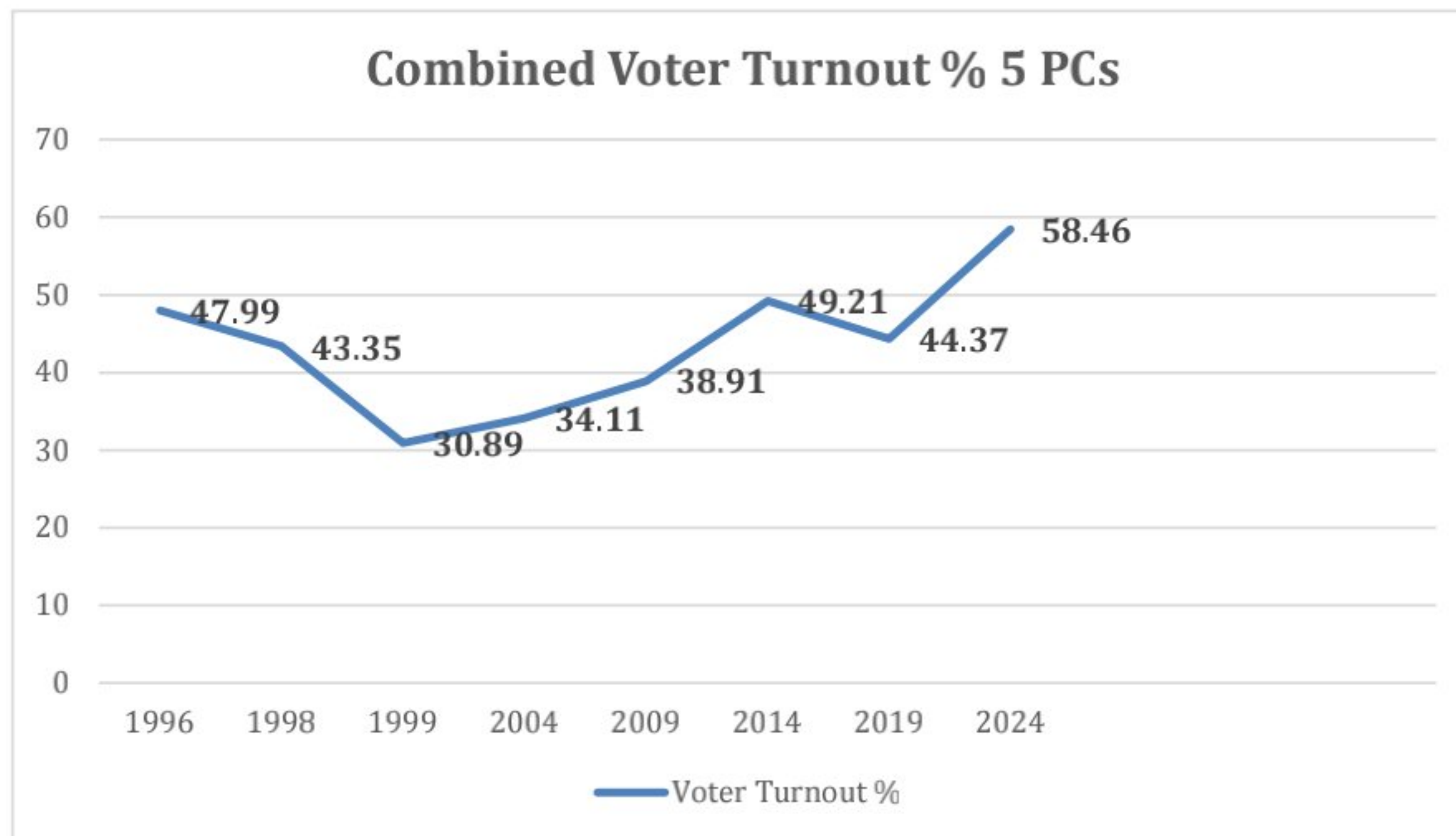
Active participation of the people of J&K in GE 2024 is a huge positive for upcoming assembly elections in the UT of J&K

People of J&K embrace democracy and assert their stake in governance

In a massive stride for India's electoral polity, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed its highest poll participation in the last 35 years. The Combined Voter Turnout (VTR) at the polling stations for the entire Union Territory (5 Lok Sabha seats) was **58.46 % in the General Elections 2024**. This significant participation is a testament to the robust democratic spirit and civic engagement of the people in the region. Commission led by CEC Rajiv Kumar along with ECs Sh. Gyanesh Kumar and Sh. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu thanked the polling personnel and security officials over the peaceful conduct of elections in the UT.

CEC Sh. Rajiv Kumar while conveying ECs compliments to the voters of J&K said *"This achievement sits on a credible weave of 25% increase in number of contesting candidates since 2019, C-vigil complaints showing enhanced citizen involvement and Suvidha Portal showing 2455 requests for rallies etc., reflecting the steady retaking of the election & campaign space away from hesitation and to fuller participation. Compared this outcome of the layered depth of electoral mobilization and participation, as reminiscent of the fame and deft of the legendary Kashmiri artisanal weave. This active participation is a huge positive for Assembly elections to be held soon so that the democratic process continues to thrive in the Union Territory"*.

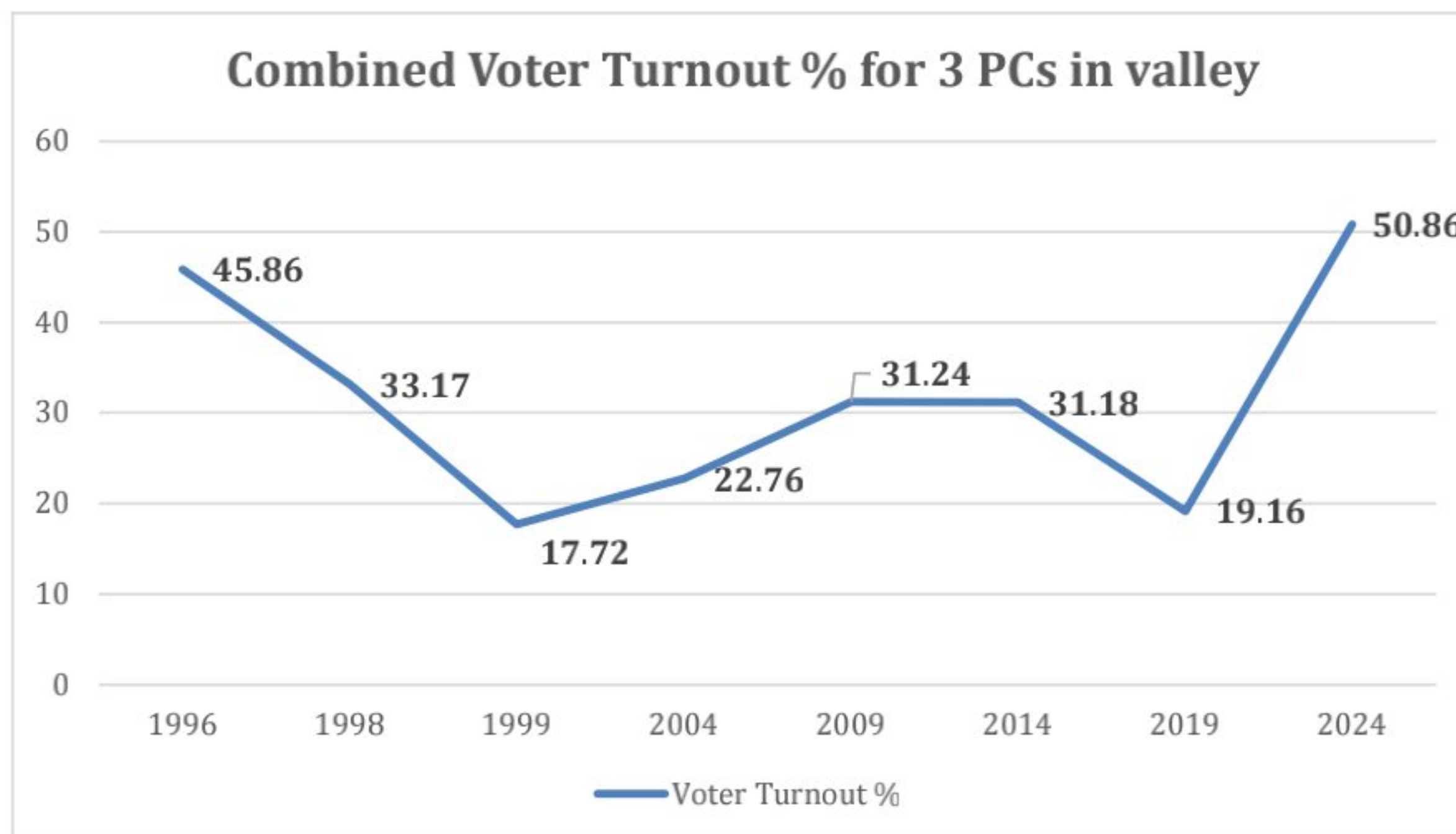
UT of Jammu and Kashmir comprises 5 PCs namely Srinagar, Baramulla, Anantnag, Rajouri, Udhampur and Jammu. The combined VTR for the 5 PCs in past few elections is given below:



* PC of Ladakh has been removed which was part of erstwhile state of J&K for comparison.

** Graph depicts Gross VTR for 1996-2019; For 2024, VTR is at polling stations

The voter turnout of 50.86% from the three Parliamentary Constituencies in the Kashmir Valley echoes the faith of the people in the democratic process. The poll participation percentage witnessed 30 points jump from the last GE in 2019 where it was 19.16%. The three PCs in the valley namely Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantnag-Rajouri recorded VTR of 38.49%, 59.1% and 54.84% respectively, which has been highest in last 3 decades. The other two PCs in the UT namely Udhampur and Jammu recorded 68.27% and 72.22% voter turnout respectively.



Note: Due to delimitation exercise, the voter turnout data from previous elections for the PCs, may not be directly comparable

*Graph depicts Gross VTR for 1996-2019; For 2024, VTR is at polling stations

The historic participation in the UT was realised by earnest efforts of the election and security officials who had worked tirelessly to empower the people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the youth to participate in the elections. More young people have asserted their faith and embraced democracy in a big way. Another interesting perspective is the electors in the age group of 18-59 years which forms the major part of electors in the UT. The high poll percentage in GE 2024 is reflective of their faith in democracy, which is a positive and heartening development.

Age wise distribution of registered electors (percentage of total electors in a PC) in UT of J&K

Age Groups	Baramulla	Srinagar	Anantnag-Rajouri	Udhampur	Jammu
18 - 39 Years	56.02	48.57	54.41	53.57	47.66
40 - 59 Year	30.85	34.87	31.59	32.65	35.28
18 - 59 Years	86.87	83.44	86.00	86.22	82.94
60 & Above	13.13	16.56	14.00	13.78	17.06

The Commission has also enabled Kashmiri migrant voters residing at various relief camps in Delhi, Jammu, and Udhampur to also have the option of voting in person at designated special polling stations or using postal ballot. 21 Special Polling Stations were established at Jammu, 1 at Udhampur and 4 at Delhi.

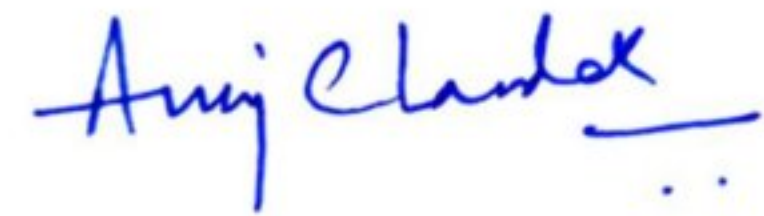
Ladakh, which was constituted as a separate Union Territory in 2019, also saw an enthusiastic response to the call of democracy as reflected in the VTR of 71.82%.

Gross Voter Turnout in past few elections in each PC

PC/Year	2019	2014	2009	2004	1999	1998	1996	1989
Srinagar	14.43%	25.86%	25.55%	18.57%	11.93%	30.06%	40.94%	Uncontested
Baramulla	34.6%	39.14%	41.84%	35.65%	27.79%	41.94%	46.65%	5.48%
Anantnag	8.98%	28.84%	27.10%	15.04%	14.32%	28.15%	50.20%	5.07%
Udhampur	70.15%	70.95%	44.88%	45.09%	39.65%	51.45%	53.29%	39.45%
Jammu	72.5%	67.99%	49.06%	44.49%	46.77%	54.72%	48.18%	56.89%

As part of awareness and outreach, wide range of activities were organized as part of SVEEP on the field in Jammu and Kashmir for the General Elections 2024. Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K organised adventure sports events, symposiums, awareness rallies, nukkad natak and numerous other events to propagate the message of voting. Amongst various efforts, activities included creating Igloos as a dummy polling station in Baramulla, Para scooter event in Kathua, sensitization in Beating the Retreat ceremony on Suchetgarh border, mega awareness Rally in Teetwal near LOC, near Dal Lake in Srinagar to Chougan in Kishtwar and playing instrumental version of ECI song on highest railway bridge.

Musical programmes and activities were carried out at many places including Lal chowk, Gulmarg, Kulgam, Anantnag by the famous singers. Every nook and corner of UT witnessed a rejuvenation of democracy and victory of ballot with thumping participation in polling, resulting in a record voters' turnout.



Anuj Chandak
Joint Director