

NEXT IAS

ELECTION COMMISSION, DEMOCRACY AND FREE ELECTIONS

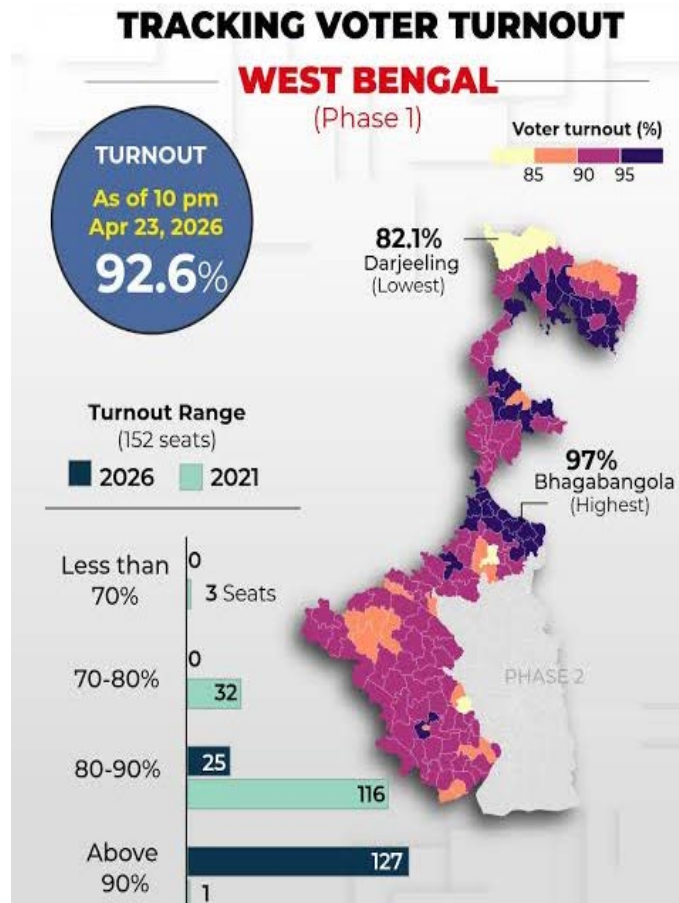
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Context:

- **West Bengal** registered a **record voter turnout of 92.03%** in the **first phase of Assembly elections** on **Thursday (April 23, 2026)**, amidst isolated incidents of violence.
- The **election**, saw the **highest-ever polling in the State since 1951**, was followed by a **four-month long special intensive revision (SIR)** of electoral rolls that saw a drop in the **electorate by about 12%**.



1. What is the Election Commission of India (ECI)?



- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** is an **autonomous and permanent constitutional body** responsible for organising free and fair elections in the Union and States of India.
- The **Constitution** grants the **ECI with the power of direction, superintendence, and control of elections to Parliament, state legislatures, the office of president of India and the office of vice-president of India.**
- The **ECI** does not deal with the elections to the urban bodies **such as Municipalities and Panchayats in the states** and hence, a separate State Election Commission.
- **Article 324 of The Constitution of India** mentions the provisions to safeguard and ensure the independent and impartial functioning of the Election Commission.
- The chief election commissioner is provided with security of tenure.
- He **cannot be removed** from his office **except in the same manner and on the same grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court.**
- In other words, he can be **removed by the President** on the basis of a resolution passed to that effect by both the Houses of Parliament with a **special majority, either on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity.**
- Any other **election commissioner** or a **regional commissioner cannot be removed from office except on the recommendation of the chief election commissioner.**

2. Enlist various constitutional provisions related to election in India?

- **Part XV (Article 324-329)** of the Indian Constitution deals with **elections and establishes a commission for these matters.**

Constitutional Articles	Description
Article 324	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.

Article 325	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll-on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.
Article 326	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be based on adult suffrage.
Article 327	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.
Article 328	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.
Article 329	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.

3. How is ECI in Question in Recent Bengal Elections?

Aspects	Description
Mass Deletion of Voters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Millions of people in the Indian state of West Bengal have been stripped of their vote ahead of a critical state election this week, after a controversial electoral revision described by critics as a “bloodless political genocide” and mass disenfranchisement of minorities. In West Bengal, a total of 9.1 million names have been deleted from the register, more than 10% of the electorate. While many were dead or duplicates, about 2.7 million people have challenged their expulsions, but still been removed.
Allegations of Bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trinamool Congress had sparked a fresh political row ahead of the first phase of the Bengal assembly elections, accusing an Election Commission-appointed police observer of holding a “clandestine” with a BJP candidate. The party in power alleged that the observer, Parmar Smit Parshottamdas, bypassed official protocol to meet Gour Sundar Ghosh at a hotel in Diamond Harbour.
Judicial Intervention Against ECI Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Calcutta High Court characterised the Election Commission of India’s (ECI) action in rejecting a technical bid for election surveillance services as “arbitrary and mala fide”, though it ultimately declined to set aside the contract due to the proximity of the 2026 West Bengal Legislative assembly elections.

<p>Free & Fair Election Concerns Raised by Leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BJP's Stand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has taken the most aggressive position on the issue. ▪ Party leaders argue that free and fair voting will not be possible under the influence of the ruling party unless a large deployment of central security forces is ensured. ▪ The BJP alleges that its workers are being threatened in several areas and that obstacles are being created during campaign activities. ▪ The party has urged the Election Commission of India to implement strict booth-level monitoring, video recording, and deployment of paramilitary forces. ● Trinamool Congress Responds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In response, the All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) has dismissed these allegations as political propaganda. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee stated that the BJP is already preparing excuses in anticipation of electoral defeat. ▪ She assured that the state government would fully cooperate with the Election Commission and that the voting process would be peaceful and transparent. ▪ The TMC also accused the BJP of attempting to disturb the atmosphere by bringing in outsiders. ● Concerns of Congress and CPI(M) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Indian National Congress (Congress) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) have also expressed concern over the situation. ▪ They claim that their grassroots workers are facing pressure, intimidation, and even violence in certain areas. ▪ Both parties have demanded a level playing field for all and a neutral environment at polling booths.
<p>Electoral Roll Freeze & Disenfranchisement Fears</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Petitioners argued in Supreme Court that around 27 lakh documented voters have been left without a functional appellate mechanism to restore their names, raising concerns about large-scale disenfranchisement. ● The plea argues that the court, having earlier invoked Article 142 of the Constitution to ensure completion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, can again rely on the same provision to enable these voters to participate in the polls.

<p>Law & Order Concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rising incidents of violence and obstruction during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal have triggered serious concerns over law and order. ● Allegations of attacks on officials and administrative lapses have put the governance of Mamata Banerjee under sharp scrutiny.
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4. What is the SIR controversy in West Bengal?

- **The Election Commission of India (ECI)’s Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has been conducted in 13 States and Union Territories so far.**
- **It is in West Bengal that terms such as ‘adjudication’, ‘logical discrepancies’ and ‘voter tribunals’ have cropped up.**
- **The SIR process has also led to a “trust deficit” between the ECI, a constitutional body, and the elected Trinamool Congress government, according to the Supreme Court.**

<p>Controversies</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>How has the SIR impacted the electoral rolls of West Bengal?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The SIR began in West Bengal on November 4, 2025, with 7.66 crore voters on the list. ● The draft rolls published on December 16 showed that over 63 lakh names had been deleted, bringing down the number of voters to around 7 crore.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The deleted names were marked under the ASDD (absent, shifted, dead, and duplicate) category. ● However, of the 7 crore in the draft list, 30 lakh names were categorised as “unmapped voters” (with no link to the last SIR conducted in 2002), and 1.20 crore names had logical discrepancies.
<p>What is the logical discrepancy category? What was the result of this exercise?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Voters under the logical discrepancy category were checked against a highly contentious five-point list even if they were mapped to the 2002 SIR list. ● Under a new AI algorithm, the ECI identified five types of discrepancies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (a) spelling differences in names between the 2002 and 2025 rolls; ▪ (b) cases where more than six voters linked themselves to a single ancestor; ▪ (c) age gaps between a voter and their parent falling beyond the 15-45 year range; ▪ (d) cases where the difference between the grandparents’ age and the voters’ age was less than 40 years; and ▪ (e) instances where the voters’ gender did not align with the name provided. ● After the ECI hearings, about 60 lakh of the 1.5 crore cases remained disputed, with Electoral Registration Officers and micro-observers appointed by the Election Commission of India unable to agree on their eligibility. ● This process resulted in over 60 lakh names falling into the ‘under adjudication’ category. ● They were excluded from voting pending verification.
<p>What happened to voters placed in the ‘under adjudication’ category?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Supreme Court in March took the “extraordinary” decision to involve the judiciary in the SIR process, saying the persistent “trust deficit” between the Mamata Banerjee government and the ECI had led to a “stalemate”, with time running out. ● A three-judge Bench headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant requested the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court to deploy a force of serving and retired judicial officers to take over the quasi-judicial task of Electoral Registration Officers/Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (EROs/AEROs).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CJJ said the rolls published on February 28 would not be treated as the final ones and those cleared in the adjudication would be added in subsequent supplementary lists. ● Thus, nearly 700 judicial officers from West Bengal, as well as neighbouring Odisha and Jharkhand, heard over 60 lakh cases that were “under adjudication”
<p>How many names did the judicial officers clear? What is the status of those whose names did not make it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The judicial officers struck down 27 lakh of the 60 lakh names. ● Those whose names the ECI has not cleared can now approach the 19 special tribunals it set up. ● With the ECI freezing electoral rolls for the upcoming elections, these people are unlikely to get to vote in the upcoming Assembly polls even if their names are cleared by the tribunals. ● So far, the total number of names deleted from the pre-SIR 2025 list is 90.8 lakh. ● The number of eligible voters in Bengal is 6.77 crore.
<p>What has been the political fallout?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● While the BJP, the main Opposition in the State, has strongly backed the process, the Trinamool has questioned the timing and scale of the process. ● Initially, the party had protested against the short timeline for the exercise, arguing it would lead to errors. ● Since the process began, the SIR has become the main electoral plank in the Assembly polls, with the Trinamool accusing the ECI of playing the BJP’s game and trying to disenfranchise people who are loyal voters of the BJP. ● The Trinamool has repeatedly approached the ECI as well as the Supreme Court, with Ms. Banerjee herself appearing before the apex court to argue her case.
<p>What are the other issues flagged by civil society and Opposition?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Civil society activists such as Yogendra Yadav and Prashant Bhushan have attacked the Bengal SIR accusing the ECI of “deliberately” targeting Muslim voters. ● The maximum number of voters has been deleted from Murshidabad, Malda, and Uttar Dinajpur districts, which are predominantly Muslim in composition. ● He also said women have been targeted, especially in Matua-dominated areas.

5. What is the composition of the Election Commission of India?

- **Article 324 of the Constitution** has made the following provisions about the composition of the Election Commission of India.
- ECI shall consist of the **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and such number of other Election Commissioners (ECs)** as the President may from time to time fix.
- The **appointment of CEC and other ECs** shall be made by the **President**.
- When any other **Election Commissioner** is so appointed, **the Chief Election Commissioner shall act as the Chairman of the ECI**.
- The **President** may also appoint after consultation with the **ECI such Regional Commissioners (RCs)** as he may consider necessary to assist the ECI.
- The **conditions of service and tenure of office of the Election Commissioners and the Regional Commissioners** shall be determined by the **President** (subject to any related law made by the Parliament).
- According to the **Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991**, the **Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners hold office for a term of 6 years** or until they attain the **age of 65 years**, whichever is earlier.

6. Discuss various functions of the Election Commission of India?

<p>Administrative Functions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To demarcate electoral constituencies in the country on the basis of the Delimitation Commission Act of Parliament. ● To prepare and periodically update electoral rolls and to register all eligible voters. ● To notify the dates and schedules of elections and to scrutinise nomination papers. ● To grant recognition to political parties and allot election symbols to them. ● To cancel polls in the event of rigging, booth capturing, violence and other irregularities. ● To supervise the machinery of elections throughout the country to ensure free and fair elections. ● To register political parties for the purpose of elections and grant them the status of national or state parties on the basis of their poll performance ● ECI appoints the following seats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chief Electoral Officer ▪ District Election Officer
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Returning Officer ▪ Electoral Registration Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It regulates the campaign expenditure per candidate of all political parties without any discrimination.
Quasi-Judicial Powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It acts as a court for settling disputes related to granting of recognition to political parties and allotment of election symbols to them. ● To appoint officers for inquiring into disputes relating to electoral arrangements. ● It defines a model code of conduct for all political parties and candidates and ensures they adhere to it during election season.
Advisory Powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It advises the president on matters relating to the disqualifications of the members of Parliament. ● It advises the governor on matters relating to the disqualifications of the members of state legislature. ● It advises the president whether elections can be held in a state under the president's rule in order to extend the period of emergency after one year.
Judicial Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The election commission cannot review any result on its own without a proper election petition filed before the High court or Supreme Court.

7. What is the Representation of Peoples Act 1950?

**THE
REPRESENTATION OF
PEOPLE ACT, 1950**
[43 of 1950]
And
**The Representation of
People Act, 1951**
[43 of 1951]
[As amended by the Finance Act, 2017 (7 of 2017), w.e.f. 1-4-2017]

Alongwith

- ❖ The Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959
- ❖ The Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961
[As amended vide SO 1023 (E), dt. 26-2-2019, w.e.f. 26-2-2019]
- ❖ The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968
- ❖ The Registration of Electors Rules, 1960
- ❖ Maximum Election Expenses under Conduct of Election Rules, 1961
[As amended vide SO 5196(E), dt. 10-10-2018, w.e.f. 10-10-2018]
- ❖ List of Recognised National and State Parties, Registered Unrecognised Parties and the List of Free Symbols
[As amended vide Noti. No. O.N. 33(E), dt. 9-3-2019]

- To provide a legal framework for elections, **Parliament passed the Representation of the People Act, 1950.**
- The **RPA, 1950**, lays down procedures for the **delimitation of constituencies, seat allocation in legislative bodies, electoral roll preparation, voter qualifications**, and more.

Provisions	Analysis
Delimiting Constituencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The President holds the power to amend constituency delimitation orders, but only after consulting the ECI. ● Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have reserved seats in the Lok Sabha, and the ECI determines which constituencies are to be reserved for Scheduled Tribes in certain states. ● Delimitation Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to Article 82 of the Constitution, Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after each census. Subsequently, the Central Government forms a Delimitation Commission, responsible for demarcating parliamentary constituency boundaries. ▪ The present delimitation is based on the 2001 census data, with the Constitution amended in 2002 to delay further delimitation until after the first census following 2026.
Allocation of Seats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Every state strives to receive proportional representation in the Lok Sabha based on census figures.
Electoral Rolls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 1950 Act allows the registration of residents within a constituency, including certain categories such as armed forces members and government employees posted abroad. ● A proposal to make provisions gender-neutral is under consideration, replacing "wife" with "spouse."
Electoral Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Electoral Officer (CEO): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each state has a CEO nominated or designated by the ECI in consultation with the state government to oversee election activities. ▪ The District Election Officer (DEO) is similarly appointed, working under the CEO's supervision. ● Electoral Registration Officer (ERO): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ERO is responsible for preparing electoral rolls for each constituency, with an appeal process now involving the District Magistrate.

	<div data-bbox="574 134 1273 680" data-label="Diagram"> <p>One Team, One Goal Here's the Hierarchy of Election Machinery in India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECI - ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA 36 CEO - CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER 701 DEO - DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER 7522 ERO/AERO - ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER / ASSISTANT ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER 9.94 LAKHS BLO - BOOTH LEVEL OFFICER </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Returning Officer (RO): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The RO manages constituency elections and declares elected candidates. ▪ The ECI, in consultation with the state government, appoints the RO. ▪ The Central government, in consultation with the ECI, has the authority to establish rules under the act, while civil courts are prohibited from challenging the legality of ERO actions regarding electoral roll revisions.
<p>Schedules in RPA, 1950</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First Schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocation of seats in the House of the People. ● Second Schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total number of seats in Legislative Assemblies ● Third Schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocation of seats in Legislative Councils. ● Fourth Schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local authorities for Legislative Council elections.

8. What is the Representation of Peoples Act 1951?

- The **Representation of the People Act 1951 (RPA)** is a crucial legislative framework that guides **India's electoral process**, ensuring transparency, fairness, and efficiency in the democratic system.
- It was introduced in Parliament by **law minister Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**.
- The Act was enacted by the provisional parliament under **Article 327 of Indian Constitution**, before the first general election.

- It defines **rules for conducting elections, candidate eligibility, registration of political parties, and disqualification criteria**, promoting a balanced and ethical electoral environment.

Provisions of RPA,1951	Description
RPA act provides for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of elections of the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State. • Details about the structure of administrative machinery for the conduct of elections. • Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of those houses. • Corrupt practices and other offences at or in connection with such elections and the decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections.
Qualification for membership of the Lok Sabha	<p>A person shall not be qualified to be chosen to fill a seat in the House of the People, unless—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) in the case of a seat reserved for the Scheduled Castes in any State, he is a member of any of the Scheduled Castes, whether of that State or of any other State, and is an elector for any Parliamentary constituency; • (b) in the case of a seat reserved for the Scheduled Tribes in any State (other than those in the autonomous districts of Assam), he is a member of any of the Scheduled Tribes, whether of the State or of any other State (excluding the tribal areas of Assam), and is an elector for any Parliamentary constituency; • (c) in the case of a seat reserved for the Scheduled Tribes in the autonomous districts of Assam, he is a member of any of those Scheduled Tribes and is an elector for the Parliamentary constituency.
Qualification for membership of the Council of States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person shall not be qualified to be chosen as a representative of any State or Union territory in the Council of States unless he is an elector for a Parliamentary constituency.
Disqualifications	<p>Found guilty of election offences/corrupt practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conviction for any offence resulting in imprisonment for 2 or more years. • Conviction for promoting enmity between different groups. • Failed to lodge an account of his election expenses within time. • Having interest in government contracts, works or services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If dismissed from government service for corruption or dis-loyalty to the state. ● If punished for practising and preaching social crimes like sati, untouchability, etc.
<p>Election offence covered under RPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any form of gratification for electors for voting or refraining from voting, and to the candidates for withdrawing or not withdrawing nomination is considered as a corrupt practice. ● It includes any direct or indirect interference with the free exercise of any electoral right by the candidate or his election agent. ● Promoting enmity between classes in connection with election. ● Penalty for filing false affidavits, etc. ● Prohibition of public meetings during a period of forty-eight hours ending with an hour fixed for conclusion of poll. ● Restriction on publication and dissemination of results of exit polls, etc.
<p>Election expenses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● According to the section 77 of RPA, 1951, every candidate contesting in election to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of a State, shall, either by himself or by his election agent, keep a separate and correct account of all expenditure in connection with the election incurred or authorized by him or by his election agent.
<p>Provisions Related to Political Parties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Every association or body in order to become a political party must be registered with the ECI whose decision regarding registration will be final. ● Registered political parties, in course of time, can get recognition as 'State Party' or 'National Party'. ● Change in name and address of a registered political party must be communicated to the ECI. ● The ECI cannot derecognise a party.
<p>Section 126 of the RPA, 1951</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 48 hours before the polling ends or concludes, displaying any election matter by television or similar apparatus in a constituency is prohibited. ● Section 126 is not applicable to the print media, news portals and social media

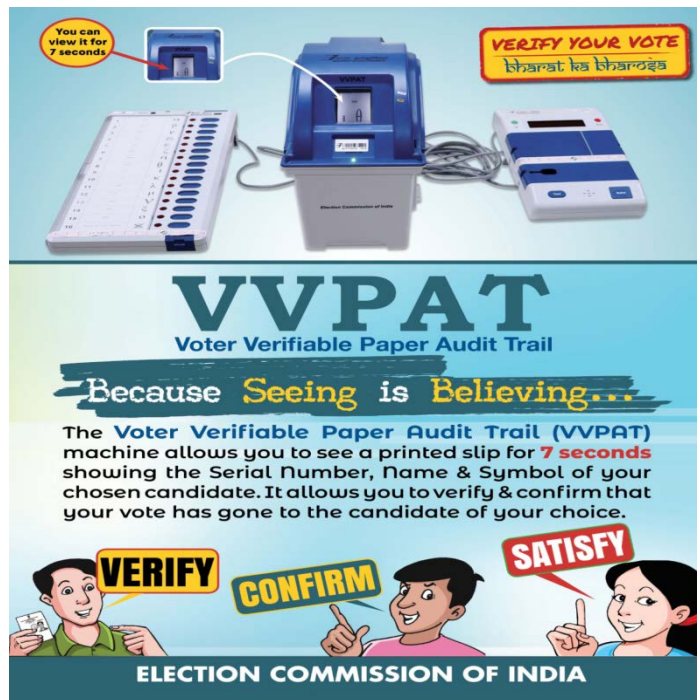
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Section 126A prohibits the conduct of exit polls and dissemination of its results during the period mentioned.
Voluntary Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Voluntary contributions by any person or company within India (other than a government company) can be accepted by the registered political party. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A company can donate any amount of money to any political party. ▪ There is no obligation of the company to report such donations in its profit and loss account. ● It is mandatory for the political parties to submit to the ECI a list of donations they received above Rs. 2,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Political parties cannot receive more than Rs 2000 as cash donations. ● Now, political parties are eligible to accept contributions from foreign companies defined under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010.
Declaration of Assets and Liabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individuals contesting elections have to file an affidavit, declaring their criminal records, assets & liabilities and educational qualification. ● After getting elected, MPs are required to file a declaration of assets and liabilities with the Speaker of Lok Sabha and the Chairman of Rajya Sabha. ● These declarations have to be made by MPs within 90 days of taking their seats in Parliament.

9. How has the Electoral System of India evolved?

General Elections post Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After India attained Independence in August 1947, there was a need to hold General Elections to elect a truly representative Government on the basis of universal adult suffrage. ● Article 324, which provides for the setting up of the Election Commission as an independent constitutional authority, was therefore brought into force from November 26th, 1949, whereas most of the other provisions were made effective from January 26th, 1950 (when the Constitution of India became effective).
Formation of Election Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Election Commission was formally constituted on January 25th, 1950, a day before India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The First Chief Election Commissioner, Shri Sukumar Sen, was appointed on March 21st, 1950.
<p>Composition of Election Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission functioned as a single member body from 1950 to October 16th, 1989 but was converted into a three member body on October 16th, 1989 to January 1st, 1990. • In the year 1990, January 1st, it was reverted to the system of single member body. • However, since October 1st, 1993, the Commission has been functioning as a three member body. • The Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners are given the same salary and allowances as of a Judge of the Supreme Court. • All the three Commissioners have equal powers in decision making and in case of any difference of opinion on any issue, the decision is taken by the majority. • The term of the office of CEC and ECs is six years or till the age of 65, whichever is earlier.
<p>First delimitation order</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the purpose of first General Elections to the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas, the first delimitation order was issued by the President, in consultation with the Election Commission and with the approval of Parliament on August 13th, 1951.
<p>Representation of the People Act, 1950</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a legal framework for the conduct of elections, Parliament passed the first Act on May 12th, 1950 (Representation of the People Act, 1950) providing mainly for the preparation of electoral rolls and second Act on July 17th, 1951 (Representation of the People Act, 1951) laying down the procedure for the conduct of elections to both Houses of Parliament and Vidhan Sabhas for each State.
<p>Specifications of First Elections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral Rolls for constituencies were published in all States by November 15th, 1951. • The total number of voters (excluding J&K) was 17,32,13,635 as against the total population of India (excluding J&K), 35,66,91,760 according to the 1951 census. • The first General Elections to the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas were held between October, 1951 and March, 1952.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The first Lok Sabha consisting of 497 members was constituted on April 2nd, 1952. ● The first Rajya Sabha consisting of 216 members was constituted on April 3rd, 1952.
Recognition of Political Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After the constitution of the two Houses of Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies, the first Presidential election was held in May, 1952 and the first duly elected President assumed the charge of office on May 13th, 1952. ● At the time of the first General Election in 1951-52, the Commission had recognized 14 political parties as multi-state parties and 39 parties as the state parties. ● Presently, there are seven recognized National Party and 40 State Party.
Adoption of 'Balloting System'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For the first and second General Elections in 1951-52, and 1957, the Election Commission adopted the 'Balloting System' of voting. ● Under this system, every candidate was allotted a separate ballot box at each polling station in a screened compartment and the voter was required only to drop his ballot paper, the centrally pre-printed ballot papers into the ballot box of the candidate of his choice.
'Marking system' of voting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From the 3rd General Elections in 1962 onwards, the Commission switched over to the 'marking system' of voting. ● Under this system, a common ballot paper containing the names and election symbols of all contesting candidates is printed on which the voter has to put a mark with an arrow cross mark rubber stamp on or near the symbol of the candidate of his choice.
Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were used for the first time in part of Parur Assembly Constituency in Kerala in 1982, on experimental basis. Later, the extensive use of EVMs started in 1998. ● The EVMs were used at all polling stations in the country in the 14th General Elections to the Lok Sabha in 2004 for the first time. ● Since then all elections to Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies have been held using EVMs.



10. Comment on the status of Independence of Election Commission of India (ECI)?

ECI as Independent Body:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 324 of the Constitution has made the following provisions to safeguard and ensure the independent and impartial functioning of the Election Commission. 	
Security of tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECI cannot be removed from his office except in the same manner and on the same grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court.
Service conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service conditions of the chief election commissioner cannot be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment.
Other election commissioner or a regional commissioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other election commissioner or a regional commissioner cannot be removed from office except on the recommendation of the chief election commissioner.
Complete Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Election Commission has complete authority on how, where, and when to conduct an election without any interference from the executive, whether it is general election or by-election.
Why Independence of ECI Matters for Democracy?	
Free and Fair Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independence ensures a level playing field for all political parties, a key requirement of democracy.

Legitimacy of Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When elections are impartial, the resulting government enjoys public trust and legitimacy.
Protection of Voter Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An autonomous ECI safeguards the right to vote without coercion or manipulation.
Prevention of Electoral Malpractices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It enforces the Model Code of Conduct and curbs misuse of money and muscle power.
Flaws In Ensuring Independence Of ECI	
Appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution has not prescribed any qualifications (legal, educational, administrative or judicial) of the members of the Election Commission.
Term of office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution has not specified the term of the members of the Election Commission.
Retired Election Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution has not debarred the retiring election commissioners from any further appointment by the government.

11. Enlist various challenges wrt Election Commission of India?

Challenges	Analysis
Political Interference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ECI faces pressure from political parties and powerful interest groups, which seek to influence electoral outcomes through unfair means. The resignation of Election Commissioner Arun Goel on the threshold of the Lok Sabha elections 2024, ostensibly on account of differences with the Chief Election Commissioner has renewed questions about the independence of the constitutional body. Election Commissioner Arun Goel, who was appointed only in November 2022 and was to have a tenure that would last until December 2027, resigned abruptly and his resignation was promptly accepted by the President of India Droupadi Murmu. Speculation is rife that political interference in the election process was the cause of the differences between the two. Similar questions were raised at the time of the resignation of Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa back in 2020.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lavasa, who was seen as being an upright man, too resigned in circumstances that raised more questions than they answered. 																											
<p>Limited Powers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The ECI's power to enforce its decisions and punish offenders is limited. ● This hinders its ability to effectively implement regulations and ensure compliance with electoral laws. 																											
<p>Electoral Fraud and Malpractice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The ECI grapples with the perennial challenge of combating electoral fraud and malpractice, such as voter intimidation, use of money and muscle powers, etc. ● According to the report of the Electoral Commission of India on the 2014 national elections, over seventy-five thousand FIR's were lodged with the police in connection with different kinds of poll-related violations, over three billion rupees in cash, six and a half million litres of alcohol, and almost five hundred thousand kilos of drugs were seized. ● Vernacular and national media outlets reported on a wide variety of fraudulent electoral practices. ● In Mumbai for example, two hundred thousand names mysteriously disappeared from the polling lists. 																											
<p>Electoral Violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instances of electoral violence, voter intimidation, and communal polarization persist in certain regions, undermining the foundational principles of democracy and social cohesion. <div data-bbox="532 1318 1386 1948" data-label="Figure"> <p><i>Political Violence and Associated Reported Fatalities, Panchayat Elections in West Bengal, India (1 Apr - 19 May 2018)</i></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Approximate data from the chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Day of Event Date [2018]</th> <th>Number of Events (Approx.)</th> <th>Reported Fatalities (Approx.)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Apr 6</td><td>15</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr 11</td><td>5</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr 21</td><td>18</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>Apr 26</td><td>5</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>May 1</td><td>2</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>May 6</td><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>May 11</td><td>3</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>May 16</td><td>60</td><td>22</td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Day of Event Date [2018]	Number of Events (Approx.)	Reported Fatalities (Approx.)	Apr 6	15	1	Apr 11	5	0	Apr 21	18	1	Apr 26	5	0	May 1	2	0	May 6	1	0	May 11	3	0	May 16	60	22
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Deepfake Deception

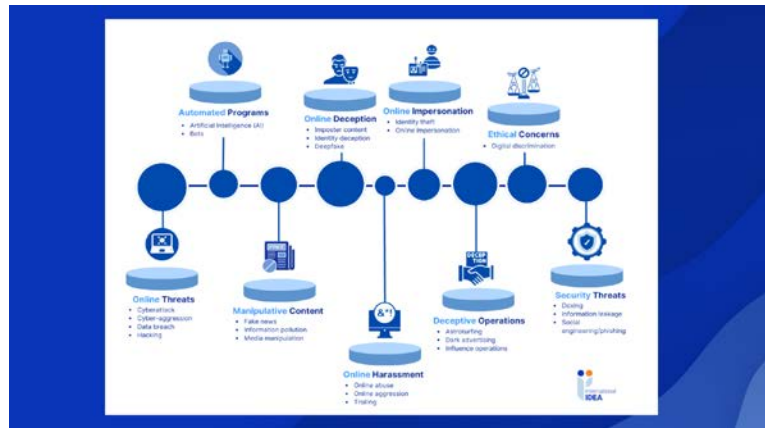
- The rise of **AI-generated deepfakes** poses a significant threat to the authenticity of **electoral discourse**, enabling **malicious actors to manipulate public opinion** and disseminate false narratives.

Deepfakes and Their Impact Globally

- 
Politics
 Disinformation, Election Manipulation
- 
Reputation
 Defamation, Character Assassination
- 
Cybercrime
 Financial Fraud, Identity Theft
- 
Social Fabric
 Communal Unrest, Incitement of Violence
- 
Mental Health
 Emotional Distress, Trauma

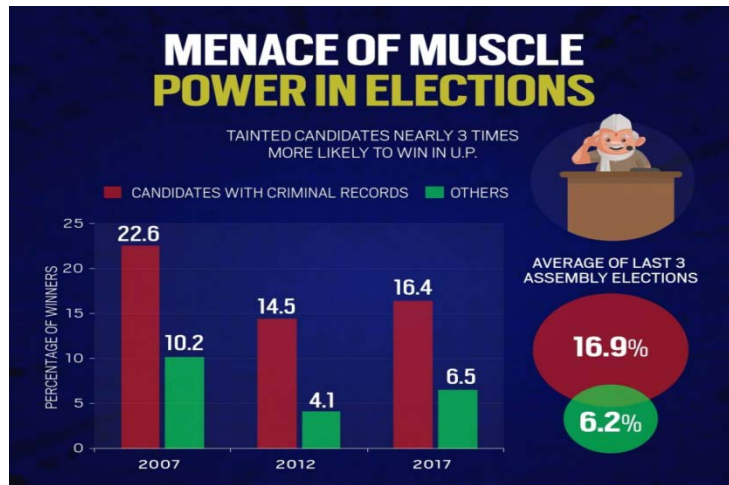
Electoral Disinformation and Manipulation

- The **proliferation of digital misinformation and manipulation**, fueled by **artificial intelligence** and social media, undermines the integrity of electoral discourse and fosters polarization, **challenging the legitimacy of electoral outcomes**.

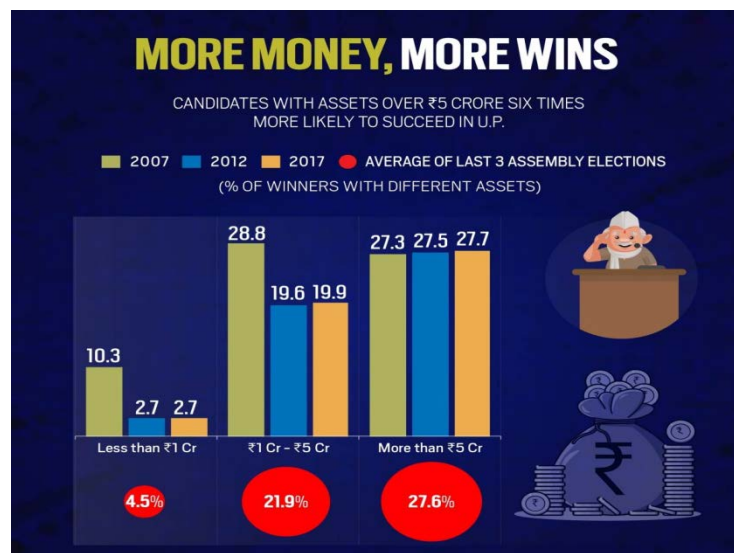


12. Mention about the challenges associated with elections in India?

Challenges	Analysis																																																																		
<p>Criminalization of politics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In India, the Criminalization of politics has become a growing concern, with a significant number of elected officials facing criminal charges. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections saw 46% of elected members with criminal cases. <div data-bbox="597 970 1307 1312"> <p>Under the scanner Close to 43% winners of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls have criminal cases against them, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms</p> <table border="1"> <caption>% with criminal cases</caption> <tr><th>Year</th><th>%</th></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>30%</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>34%</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>43%</td></tr> </table> <table border="1"> <caption>% with serious criminal cases*</caption> <tr><th>Year</th><th>%</th></tr> <tr><td>2009</td><td>14%</td></tr> <tr><td>2014</td><td>21%</td></tr> <tr><td>2019</td><td>29%</td></tr> </table> <p>* rape, murder, kidnapping, crimes against women, etc</p> </div> <div data-bbox="597 1312 1307 1816"> <p>MORE MONEY = MORE VOTES?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="2">Candidates with assets in excess of ₹1 crore (%)</th> <th colspan="2">Candidates with criminal records (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Last elections</th> <th>Recent elections</th> <th>Last elections</th> <th>Recent elections</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Maharashtra</td><td>17</td><td>32</td><td>24</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>Haryana</td><td>32</td><td>42</td><td>9</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>Bihar</td><td>9</td><td>25</td><td>32</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>Jharkhand</td><td>6</td><td>17</td><td>27</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>West Bengal</td><td>4</td><td>12</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>Assam</td><td>13</td><td>22</td><td>10</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>Tamil Nadu</td><td>28</td><td>38</td><td>14</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>Kerala</td><td>16</td><td>18</td><td>39</td><td>28</td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Year	%	2009	30%	2014	34%	2019	43%	Year	%	2009	14%	2014	21%	2019	29%		Candidates with assets in excess of ₹1 crore (%)		Candidates with criminal records (%)			Last elections	Recent elections	Last elections	Recent elections	Maharashtra	17	32	24	26	Haryana	32	42	9	7	Bihar	9	25	32	30	Jharkhand	6	17	27	29	West Bengal	4	12	17	18	Assam	13	22	10	7	Tamil Nadu	28	38	14	21	Kerala	16	18	39	28
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<p>Money and Muscle power in election</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political parties and candidates use the money generated by criminal activities to influence voters, secure their support, and win elections. 																																																																		



- Money and muscle power are still influencing election outcomes.



<p>Electoral Violence and Polarization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instances of electoral violence, voter intimidation, and communal polarization persist in certain regions, undermining the foundational principles of democracy and social cohesion.
<p>Misuse of caste and religion for electoral gains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The use of religion, caste, community, tribe, and any other form of group identity for electoral gain or for gathering political support should not be allowed.
<p>Political Influence and Independence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Election Commission's ability to maintain its independence and resist undue political influence is critical. ● Instances of allegations regarding the impartiality of the Commission can undermine public trust in the electoral process.
<p>Violation of Model Code of Conduct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instances of political parties and candidates violating the model code of conduct have been on the rise.

MODEL CODE VIOLATIONS

14
TOTAL CASES
13 Notices
+
1 Direct censure

Actions taken
11

Censures: 6 Bans: 3 Advisories: 2

Action yet to be taken
3

CASES TAKEN UP BY DIRECTLY BY THE EC			
Date of notice	Leader/party	Date of EC action	Action
Mar 27	Dilip Ghosh (BJP)	April 1	Censure
Mar 27	Supriya Shrinete (INC)	April 1	Censure
Apr 3	N Chandrababu Naidu (TDP)	May 6	Censure
Apr 5	Atishi (AAP)*	—	—
Apr 7	Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy (YSRCP)	May 6	Censure
Apr 9	Randeep Singh Surjewala (INC)	April 16	48 hour ban
No notice	Konda Surekha (INC)	April 26	Censure
Apr 16	K Chandrashekar Rao (BRS)	May 1	48 hour ban
Apr 25	Mallikarjun Kharge (INC)	May 22	Directions
Apr 25	J P Nadda (BJP)	May 22	Directions
May 10	Humayun Kabir (TMC)	May 18	Censure
May 17	Abhijit Gangopadhyay (BJP)	May 21	24 hour ban
May 18	Sukanta Majumdar (BJP)*	—	—
May 18	Sukanta Majumdar (BJP)*	—	—

*EC took action in 14 MCC cases this time, leading to campaign bans on 3 leaders, censures for 6
 Five notices were sent to BJP leaders, 4 to Congress from start of the 2024 elections till now*
*No action yet

- The **Election Commission** faces the **challenge of effectively enforcing ethical standards**, ensuring a level playing field, and swiftly addressing violations.

13. Enlist various initiatives taken by the Election Commission of India to reform the electoral process in the country?

A Step Towards Sustainable Elections

Directions to Election Machinery & Political Parties

Waste Management:

- Avoid single-use plastic completely
- Ensure separate collection bins and proper signage
- Ensure adequate disposal facility for each type of waste
- Partner with local waste management/recycling facilities

Minimisation of Paper:

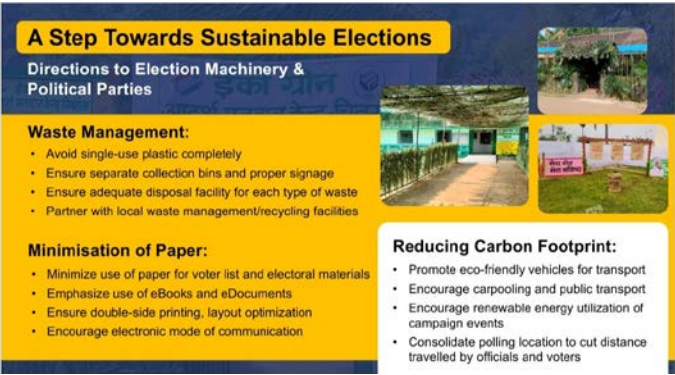


- Minimize use of paper for voter list and electoral materials
- Emphasize use of eBooks and eDocuments
- Ensure double-side printing, layout optimization
- Encourage electronic mode of communication

Reducing Carbon Footprint:

- Promote eco-friendly vehicles for transport
- Encourage carpooling and public transport
- Encourage renewable energy utilization of campaign events
- Consolidate polling location to cut distance travelled by officials and voters

Eco-friendly elections

- The **Commission** has been **asking all the political parties** and instructed to take adequate steps and measures to **not use single-use plastic as campaign materials** (posters, banners etc.,) during the elections in the interest of human health and environment.

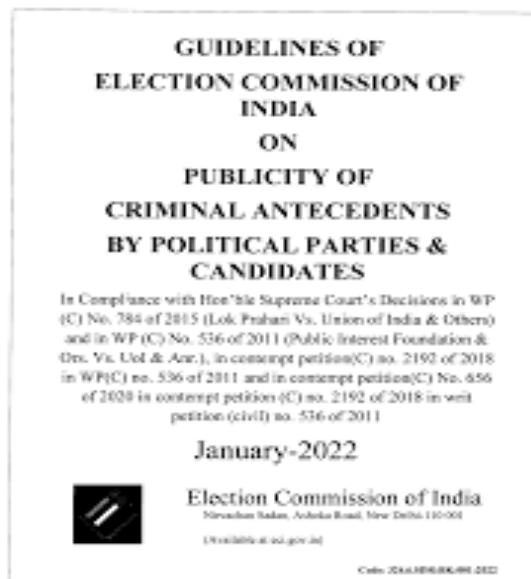
	 <p>A Step Towards Sustainable Elections Directions to Election Machinery & Political Parties</p> <p>Waste Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid single-use plastic completely • Ensure separate collection bins and proper signage • Ensure adequate disposal facility for each type of waste • Partner with local waste management/recycling facilities <p>Minimisation of Paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize use of paper for voter list and electoral materials • Emphasize use of eBooks and eDocuments • Ensure double-side printing, layout optimization • Encourage electronic mode of communication <p>Reducing Carbon Footprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote eco-friendly vehicles for transport • Encourage carpooling and public transport • Encourage renewable energy utilization of campaign events • Consolidate polling location to cut distance travelled by officials and voters
<p>Optional facility of Online data entry of personal details by candidates in Nomination Form and Affidavit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to move forward in the way of digital India and to minimize scope of mistakes in nomination form and the affidavit (Form-26), the Commission has provided an optional facility to the candidates for online data entry of personal details in nomination form.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This facility is available for the candidates through the Election Commission's Suvidha portal (https://suvidha.eci.gov.in).
<p>Optional Postal Ballot facility for Absentee voters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule 27A of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 has been amended vide Notifications dated 22.10.2019 and 19.06.2020. • By the said two amendments “Absentee voters” have an option entitled to vote by postal ballot.  <p>SAFE VOTING WITH POSTAL BALLOT</p> <p>Electors who are eligible for optional Postal Ballot voting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Persons with Disability flagged in the electoral roll ➤ Senior citizens (Above 80 years of age) ➤ Electors employed in Notified Essential Services (Absentee voters) ➤ Covid suspect or affected persons <p>भारत निर्वाचन आयोग Election Commission of India</p>



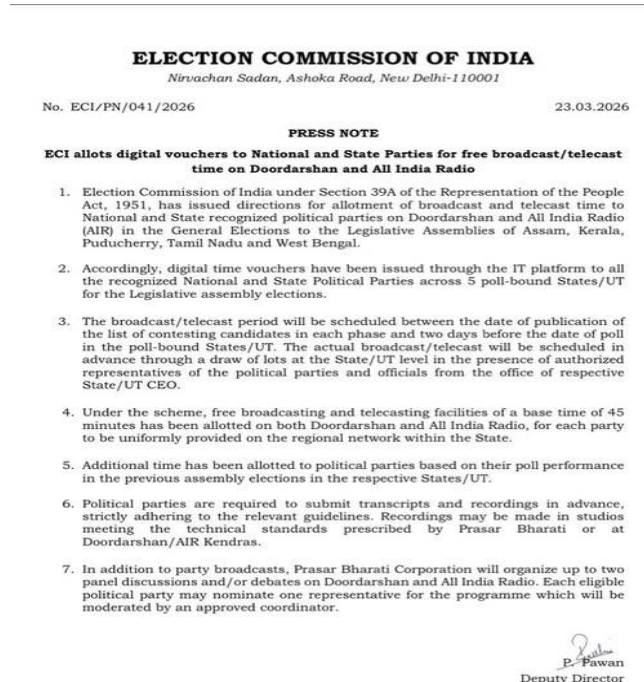
- **“Absentee Voter”** has been defined in clause (aa) of **Rule-27A of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961**, and includes persons who are employed in **essential services, senior citizens, persons with disability and COVID 19 suspect or affected persons.**
- The category of essential service is notified by the **Election Commission** under **Section 60(C) of the RP Act, 1951** in consultation with the **Central Government.**

Requirement of publishing details of candidates with pending criminal cases

- In pursuance of the directions given by the **Hon'ble Supreme Court** in its **Order dated 13.02.2020** the **Commission**, after due consideration has directed that **all political parties, that set up candidates with criminal antecedents**, either pending cases or cases of past conviction shall scrupulously follow each of the directions given by **Hon'ble Supreme Court** in its judgment in all future elections to the Houses of Parliament and State Legislatures.


















<p>Free time on DD & AIR to political parties to propagate the policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission notified a Scheme for use of Govt. owned Electronic media by Political parties, on 16th January 1998 which also holds a statutory basis under Section 39A of the R.P. Act, 1951 which provides free time on DD & AIR. ● The Commission has amended the existing scheme by introducing a provision to issue digital time vouchers through an Information Technology (IT) platform.
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14. Enlist a few committees who suggested electoral reforms?

Committees	Suggestion
<p>Dinesh Goswami Committee (1990)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It recommended limits on election expenses, voter IDs, and transparent political funding. ● The committee suggested that the funds could be used to provide equal opportunities to all political parties and candidates, reduce the influence of money power in elections, and promote clean and honest election campaigns.
<p>Indrajit Gupta Committee (1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advocated for state funding of elections. ● The Committee recommended two limitations to state funding. ● Firstly, that state funds should be given only to national and state parties allotted a symbol and not to independent candidates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secondly, that in the short-term state funding should only be given in kind, in the form of certain facilities to the recognised political parties and their candidates. 					
<p>Vohra Committee (1993)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The N.N. Vohra Committee which submitted its report in October 1993 studied the problem of criminalization of politics and the nexus among criminals, politicians, and bureaucrats in India. ● The committee had concluded that agencies, including the CBI, IB, RAW, had unanimously expressed their opinion that the criminal network was virtually running a parallel government. 					
<p>Law Commission of India, in its 244th report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Law Commission of India, in its 244th report, said that instead of politicians having suspected links to criminal networks, as was the case earlier, it was persons with extensive criminal backgrounds who began entering politics. <div data-bbox="646 800 1243 1409" data-label="Figure"> <p style="text-align: center;">CMs WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF DECLARED CRIMINAL CASES</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">  Telangana K Chandrashekar Rao TRS Total Cases: 64 / Serious IPC Counts: 37 </td> <td style="width: 50%;">  Tamil Nadu MK Stalin DMK 47/10 </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">  Andhra Pradesh YS Jagan Mohan Reddy YSRCP 38/35 </td> <td style="width: 33%;">  Maharashtra Eknath Shinde SHS 18/1 </td> <td style="width: 33%;">  Delhi Arvind Kejriwal AAP 13/3 </td> </tr> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Law Commission said that in the 10 years since 2004, 18% of the candidates contesting either national or State elections had criminal cases against them. 	 Telangana K Chandrashekar Rao TRS Total Cases: 64 / Serious IPC Counts: 37	 Tamil Nadu MK Stalin DMK 47/10	 Andhra Pradesh YS Jagan Mohan Reddy YSRCP 38/35	 Maharashtra Eknath Shinde SHS 18/1	 Delhi Arvind Kejriwal AAP 13/3
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<p>Ram Nath Kovind Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The committee suggested 15 amendments including insertion of a new Article 82A and Amendment of Article 327. ● It was supported by the Election Commission in 1983 itself. 					
<p>TS Krishnamoorthy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Former Chief Election Commissioner of India (CEC) TS Krishnamoorthy has suggested a “National Election Fund” as an alternative. 					

15. Enlist some examples and case studies of election funding models from around the world?



Countries	Election Funding Process
United States of America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the United States, electoral funding is largely driven by private donations from individuals, corporations, and interest groups. Political Action Committees (PACs) and Super PACs can raise unlimited funds to support political candidates or causes, though with certain restrictions and disclosure requirements. The Citizens United Supreme Court decision in 2010 allowed corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts on independent political expenditures, further shaping electoral funding dynamics.
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the UK, political parties rely on a combination of public funding and private donations. Political parties receive public funding based on their electoral performance, known as "Short Money" for opposition parties and "Cranborne Money" for House of Lords opposition parties. Additionally, parties raise funds through individual donations, membership fees, and fundraising events, subject to certain regulations and transparency requirements.

France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the formation of the French Republic, the electoral funding architecture had a distinctly laissez-faire approach. • Business houses are prohibited from donations including corporations and other legal entities. • Due to introduction of state funding, subsidies, strict disclosure legislations, robust reporting of the donations to political parties by the media and the ban on corporate donations, they are perceived to be more honest and disciplined by the general public.
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16. What are some essential prerequisites for free and fair elections?

Prerequisites	Analysis
Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conduct of elections must be 100 percent accurate in enfranchising those who are constitutionally eligible and it must be 100 percent accurate in preventing those who are not eligible from exercising their franchise.
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All citizens should have full information about each step in the voting process. • They should be able to exercise their vote without any confusion or paucity of information. • “Where should I go, what ID must I carry, who will authorise me, what is my right?” • The answers to these questions must be universally known.
Non-partisan environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The election process and the media ecosystem should be neutral such that neither is anybody’s content suppressed nor is anybody able to get away with untruths.
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process should be transparent enough that multiple people can validate that it took place according to the rules and also validate that nothing untoward or illegal took place (such as bogus votes being cast, etc.).
Equality of Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system should not discriminate between candidates based on the size of their party or whether they run as an independent. • There should be no bar for any average citizen to fight an election.

- The most desirable outcome would involve **absolute integrity of polling, uncompromised security of devices, reliability of the counting and polling processes, and devices that deliver a result consistent with the intent expressed by the voters**.

- Such an outcome would inspire confidence that everyone has had a **fair and equal opportunity to be a voter, that the party holding executive power has not had undue influence on or gains from the process, and that the system has delivered a result that truly reflects the will of the voters.**

17. What is the relevance of the topic for UPSC CSE?

- **For Prelims:** Election Commission of India, One Nation, One Election, India's electoral landscape, Representation of the People Act 1951,, Law Commission of India, Model Code of Conduct, Election Commission, Electronic Voting Machines, 15th Finance Commission.
- **For Mains:** Historical Evolution of ONOE in India, Key Benefits and Challenges Related to One Nation One Election, Election funding, Electoral reforms

Some previous years prelims questions.

Q1. How many Delimitation Commissions have been constituted by the Government of India till December 2023? (2024)

- (a) One
- (b) Two
- (c) Three
- (d) Four

Ans: (d)

Q2. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. If the election of the President of India is declared void by the Supreme Court of India, all acts done by him/her in the performance of duties of his/her office of President before the date of decision become invalid.
2. Elections for the post of the President of India can be postponed on the ground that some Legislative Assemblies have been dissolved and elections are yet to take place.
3. When a Bill is presented to the President of India, the Constitution prescribes time limits within which he/she has to declare his/her assent.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: (d)

Q3. Consider the following statements in respect of election to the President of India. (2023)

1. The members nominated to either House of the Parliament or the Legislative Assemblies of States are also eligible to be included in the Electoral College.

2. Higher the number of elective Assembly seats, higher is the value of vote of each MLA of that State.
3. The value of vote of each MLA of Madhya Pradesh is greater than that of Kerala.
4. The value of vote of each MLA of Puducherry is higher than that of Arunachal Pradesh because the ratio of total population to total number of elective seats in Puducherry is greater as compared to Arunachal Pradesh.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: (a)

Some previous years mains questions.

- Q1. Discuss the 'corrupt practices' for the purpose of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Analyze whether the increase in the assets of the legislators and/or their associates, disproportionate to their known sources of income, would constitute 'undue influence' and consequently a corrupt practice. **(2025-10 Marks)**
- Q2. Examine the need for electoral reforms as suggested by various committees with particular reference to "one nation-one election principle. **(2024-10 Marks)**
- Q3. Discuss the procedures to decide the disputes arising out of the election of a Member of the Parliament or State Legislature under The Representation of the People Act, 1951. What are the grounds on which the election of any returned candidate may be declared void? **(2022-15 Marks)**
- Q4. Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in the light of the evolution of the Model Code of Conduct. **(2022-10 Marks)**

Some questions from this year and previous years interview transcripts.

Board Anuradha Prasad mam:

- Election Commission is being criticized by opposition by saying it is biased.
- Do you agree with it?

Board Sheelvardhan sir:

- In Mumbai municipal corporation election, 60 seats went without opposition.
- What is your take is it good for a democracy?

Board Suman Sharma mam:

- What Electoral reforms would you suggest in the current election mechanism?

Board Suman Sharma mam:

- If you are asked to choose between One Nation One Election and Waqf Bill , which one will you choose and why ?

Board Lt gen Raj shukla sir:

- One nation one election - Do you support or oppose?

Board Suman Sharma:

- You are an electronics engineer.
- Tell me whether EVM can be hacked?
- Should state sponsored elections be promoted?
- What should be done regarding criminalization of politics?

Some questions for QUIZ.

Q1. Consider the following features:

1. Qualifications and disqualifications of voters
2. Allocation of seats to Lok sabha
3. Delimitation of constituencies
4. Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of the houses.
5. Deals with the registration of political parties.

How many of the above features are part of the Representation of People's Act, 1951?

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) Only four
- (d) All five

Ans: (a)

Some questions for POLL.

Q1. Do you believe in the merit of allegations made by the INDIA alliance on Bihar SIR?

- (a) YES
- (b) NO
- (c) Can't say.

Q2. Do you think the Election Commission of India is independent in its functioning?

- (a) YES
- (b) NO
- (c) Can't say.

- Q3. Do you think the Election Commission of India is fully independent in conducting elections?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.
- Q4. Can free and fair elections be ensured without a strong and autonomous Election Commission?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.
- Q5. Do frequent electoral reforms strengthen democracy in India?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.
- Q6. Is the use of money power the biggest threat to free elections in India?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.
- Q7. Do you believe voter awareness is more important than strict election laws for ensuring fair elections?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.
- Q8. Should the Election Commission of India be given more powers to disqualify candidates?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.
- Q9. Should stricter action be taken against fake news during elections?
- (a) YES
 - (b) NO
 - (c) Can't say.

