

Role of Election Commission & Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls



Context:

- The **Election Commission of India (EC)** has initiated a **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** of the electoral rolls in **Bihar** before the general elections for its **Legislative Assembly**.

- The **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** of electoral rolls has triggered a major **political controversy in Bihar**, where assembly polls are due later this year, with the opposition **INDIA bloc alleging that it was designed to "benefit the ruling NDA"**, a charge denied by the **Election Commission of India (EC)** that is carrying out the exercise.



1. What is the Special Intensive Revision (SIR)?

- The **Election Commission on June 24** issued a notification to begin a **door-to-door verification of Bihar's eight crore voters**.
- According to the process, **all voters in the state** are required to **sign enumeration forms, in duplicates, that come with their names, addresses and photographs printed, and return these with fresh photographs along with a valid proof of residence**.
- Those whose names were not in the **electoral rolls of 2003** will have to **provide additional documents**, a feature of the **SIR** that has been the main bone of contention.
- The **objective of SIR** is to ensure that the **names of all eligible citizens are included in the electoral rolls so as to enable them to exercise their franchise**.
- The revision is being carried out under **Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act (RP Act)**, which authorises the **EC to undertake special revisions** at any time for reasons recorded in writing.

- The **last intensive revision for Bihar** was conducted by the **poll panel in 2003**. The exercise is being executed by **one lakh Booth Level Officers (BLOs)**, **aided by four lakh volunteers and thousands of Booth Level Agents (BLAs)** nominated by political parties.
- The **EC has cited large-scale additions and deletions** in the **electoral rolls over the past 20 years**, driven by migration and urbanisation, as a **key reason for the fresh revision**.
- The Commission has also noted that the **presence of duplicate entries necessitates a clean-up**.
- Although the plan is to **extend SIR to the rest of the country**, the exercise is **currently being rolled out only in Bihar**, which heads to polls later this year.
- Unlike the **2003 revision where enumerators conducted house-to-house verification using printed voter lists**, the **2024 SIR** requires voters to proactively submit **enumeration forms to BLOs**.
- Electors registered as of **January 2003** do not need to submit additional documents beyond the **2003 roll extract**.
- However, voters added **post-2003 must furnish documentation** establishing their **date and place of birth**, along with that of their **parent(s)**, where applicable.

2. What is an electoral roll?

- **Article 324 of the Constitution** provides that the **superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls** for the conduct of elections to **Parliament and State legislature shall vest with the EC**.
- **Article 326** provides that every citizen **who is not less than 18 years of age** shall be entitled to be registered as a voter (elector).
- The electoral rolls are prepared by the **EC as per the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (RP Act)**.

- The electoral rolls are prepared by the ECI as per the provisions of the **Representation of the People Act, 1950 (RP Act)**.
- The rolls are prepared for every assembly constituency separately and the Lok Sabha constituency roll shall consist of the rolls of assembly constituency segments in the parliamentary constituency.
- There shall be for each State a **Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)**; for each district a **District Election Officer (DEO)**; for each assembly constituency an **Electoral Registration Officer (ERO)** and Assistant EROs to assist the ERO.
- These officers are designated or nominated by the ECI in consultation with the state governments.
- In addition, **Booth Level Officers (BLO)** are designated for the purpose of preparation, updating and revision of electoral rolls.
- **Section 16 of the RP Act** disqualifies a non-citizen from being enrolled in the electoral roll.
- **Section 19** requires that the person is not less than 18 years of age on the qualifying date and is ordinarily resident in the constituency.
- **Section 19** provides two additional conditions for being registered in the electoral roll –
 - (a) is not less than 18 years of age on the qualifying date which are the 1st days of January, April, July and October of the year; and
 - (b) is ordinarily resident in a constituency.
- **Section 20 of the RP Act** provides the meaning of the term ‘ordinarily resident’.
 - It specifies that a person shall not be deemed to be ‘ordinarily resident’ in a constituency simply because he/she owns or possesses a dwelling house in such constituency.

- However, at the same time, a person ‘temporarily absent’ from his/her place of residence shall continue to be ‘ordinarily resident’ therein.
- Persons who are –
 - ❖ (a) members of armed forces of the Union;
 - ❖ (b) armed police force of a state serving outside that State;
 - ❖ (c) employed by Government of India in a post outside India or
 - ❖ (d) holding a constitutional office declared by the President in consultation with the EC like President, Vice-President, Governor of a State, Ministers in Union or State council of ministers are considered, along with their spouse, to be ‘ordinarily resident’ in the constituency where they would have been ‘ordinarily resident’ but for such posting.
- Section 20A was added in 2010 to enable Non-Resident Indians who have shifted out of India, even for the long-term on account of education, employment or otherwise, to register and vote in the constituency in which their address according to their passport is located.



3. Why has an SIR been initiated?

- **Section 21 of the RP Act** deals with the preparation and revision of electoral rolls.
- It authorises the **EC to carry out a special revision** of the **electoral roll at any time** for reasons to be recorded.
- The **Election Commission** has noted that there have been **large scale additions and deletions to the electoral rolls over the last 20 years** due to rapid urbanisation and migration.
- This has increased the possibility of **duplicate entries in the roll**.

- The **Commission is constitutionally** obligated to ensure that only **citizens are enrolled in the electoral rolls**.
- Accordingly, the **EC has** decided to carry out an SIR for the entire country, **starting with Bihar**.
- The last such **SIR was carried out for Bihar in the year 2003**.
- Since the **Bihar Assembly** elections are due in **November**, the **EC has** presently laid down the guidelines for an **SIR** of the Bihar electoral roll with the qualifying date as **July 1, 2025**.
- During the **last SIR**, enumerators were sent for **house-to-house verification with a copy of the details** of the existing voters.
- However, in the **present SIR**, every **elector** will have to submit an **enumeration form to their respective Booth Level Officers (BLOs)**.
- For electors registered in the electoral roll as of **January 2003 (on the basis of the last SIR)**, no further documents are required to be submitted except the **extract of the 2003 electoral roll**.
- However, **electors registered after January 2003**, have to additionally submit documents for **establishing the date and place of birth for themselves and their parent(s)** as required.
- The schedule for the **current SIR** is provided in the following table.

Election revision

Table 1: Schedule for the SIR being undertaken in Bihar

S.No.	Activity	Timeline
1	Distribution and submission of pre-printed enumeration forms and scrutiny by BLOs with recommendation	25.06.2025 to 26.07.2025
2	Publication of draft electoral roll with names of electors who have submitted the enumeration forms	01.08.2025
3	Period of filing claims and objections	01.08.2025 to 01.09.2025
4	Decisions on enumeration forms and disposal of claims and objections by Electoral Registration Officers	By 25.09.2025
5	Publication of final electoral roll	30.09.2025

4. What is an ‘intensive’ revision, and how does it differ from other revisions?

Types of Revision	Description
Intensive revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intensive revision involves a full, fresh preparation of electoral rolls through house-to-house enumeration. • Enumerators visit every household to record eligible electors as of a qualifying date, without reference to existing rolls. • This is done when the ECI determines that the current rolls are outdated, inaccurate, or require complete rebuilding, typically before major elections or after administrative exercises such as delimitation of constituencies.
Summary revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second type of revision is a “summary” revision. • This is routine annual updating, in which existing rolls are published as drafts, and citizens file claims for inclusion, deletion, or correction. • There are no door-to-door visits.
Special revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A third type, “special” revision, is undertaken in exceptional cases such as missed areas, large-scale errors, or legal or political exigencies. • The ECI may, under Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, conduct a special revision using either summary or intensive methods, or a combination of both

5. What is the history of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in India?

- The concept of intensive electoral revision has evolved dramatically since **India's first general elections**, adapting to changing **demographic realities, technological advances, and shifting political landscapes**.

History	Description
Early Intensive Revisions (1952-1956)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous Electoral Roll Revision: SIRs were conducted in 1952–56, 1957, 1961, 1965, 1966, 1983–84, 1987–89, 1992, 1993, 1995, 2002, 2003, and 2004 in various parts of the country. • The earliest SIR implementations between 1952-1956 were driven by the practical necessity of creating reliable voter databases for India's nascent democracy.
Subsequent Early Revisions (1957-1966)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SIR implementations of 1957, 1961, 1965, and 1966 reflected the Election Commission's growing understanding of electoral administration complexities. • These revisions addressed issues identified in earlier implementations while accommodating India's rapidly changing demographic and political landscape.
Major Revisions of the 1980s (1983-84, 1987-89)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intensive revisions of 1983-84 and 1987-89 marked a significant evolution in SIR methodology and scope.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These implementations coincided with broader administrative modernization efforts and reflected increased sophistication in electoral management practices. • The 1983-84 revision was particularly significant as it occurred during a period of substantial political change and growing recognition of electoral integrity challenges. • This revision introduced improved verification procedures and more systematic approaches to handling disputed cases and appeals. • The 1987-89 intensive revision represented one of the most comprehensive electoral exercises undertaken since independence. • This multi-year process addressed accumulated discrepancies in electoral rolls while implementing enhanced quality control measures and standardized procedures across different states.
The 1992 Intensive Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1992 intensive revision served as a precursor to the major electoral reforms of the mid-1990s. • This revision identified significant problems with existing electoral rolls and provided momentum for more comprehensive reform initiatives, including the introduction of photo identity cards for voters.
The Historic 1993 Revision and EPIC Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1993 intensive revision became historically significant as it coincided with the introduction of Elector's Photo Identity Cards (EPIC).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was first introduced in 1993 during the tenure of the Chief Election Commissioner T. N. Seshan, marking a revolutionary change in Indian electoral administration. • The 1993 revision process facilitated the collection of photographs and biometric information necessary for EPIC production. • While the primary purpose remained electoral roll accuracy, the integration of photo identity card creation made this revision particularly comprehensive and technologically advanced for its time.
The 1995 Consolidation Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1995 intensive revision served to consolidate the innovations introduced in 1993 and address implementation challenges identified during the EPIC rollout. • This revision refined procedures for photo identity card distribution and improved systems for maintaining updated electoral rolls with photographic verification.
The 2002-2004 Intensive Revision Cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early 2000s witnessed a series of intensive revisions (2002, 2003, and 2004) that addressed accumulated challenges from the previous decade while incorporating technological advances in electoral administration. • The 2002 intensive revision marked the beginning of significant technology integration in electoral roll management.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This revision utilized improved database management systems, better coordination between different administrative levels, and enhanced quality control procedures.
The 2003 Comprehensive Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2003 intensive revision was particularly extensive, covering multiple states and addressing significant discrepancies that had accumulated despite improved routine maintenance procedures. • This is the first such intense revision in Bihar since 2003, indicating that the 2003 revision included comprehensive coverage of Bihar's electoral rolls. • The 2003 revision established new benchmarks for intensive revision methodology, incorporating advanced database management, improved inter-state coordination for handling migrant populations, and enhanced quality assurance procedures. • These innovations would later influence the design of contemporary SIR implementations.
The 2004 Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2004 intensive revision served primarily as a consolidation exercise, addressing issues identified during the 2002-2003 implementations and ensuring that improvements were systematically applied across all covered areas. • This revision refined procedures that would become standard in later intensive revision implementations.

6. Why is the ongoing exercise in Bihar called a special intensive revision?

- The nomenclature “**Special Intensive Revision**” (SIR) indicates that the ECI is exercising its **discretionary powers under Section 21(3) of the 1950 law**, which permits it to **revise electoral rolls “in such a manner as it thinks fit”**.
- For this exercise, the ECI has adopted a hybrid approach — **combining door-to-door field verification** that is characteristic of an **intensive revision** with **elements of a summary revision**, such as the **reliance on existing electoral rolls** to distribute enumeration forms.
- What has set the ongoing SIR apart, however, is the **introduction of a new step** is the **requirement of documentary proof at the enumeration stage itself**.
- This is a striking departure from past practice.
- The “**special**” in this intensive revision in **effect signals its methodological flexibility**.

7. Why has the ECI undertaken this exercise at the present moment and why has Bihar been chosen for it?

- The **SIR is not limited to Bihar**. On **June 24**, the ECI announced that it would **carry out an intensive verification of electoral rolls** across the country.
- This would be the **first such exercise** in more than **two decades**, and the process has **begun with Bihar**, where **Assembly elections are due before November**.
- The ECI’s **stated reason** for the exercise is the “**significant change**” that has taken **place in the electoral rolls over time**, with **large-scale additions and deletions since the last intensive revision**.

- It has attributed these **changes to rapid urbanisation, increased migration for education and livelihood, and the practice of voters enrolling at a new address without ensuring** their names are deleted from the rolls of their previous residence, which can lead to duplicate entries.
- This situation, according to the ECI, **warrants an intensive drive to verify each person before they are enrolled as an elector.**
- Officials have also cited the **repeated complaints from political parties** including **allegations of manipulation of Maharashtra's electoral roll by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi** as a factor behind the **renewed push to clean up and standardise electoral rolls.**

8. How is the entire process of SIR conducted?

- The ECI has **delegated Booth Level Officers (BLOs)** to conduct **house-to-house verification.**
- This will include **door-to-door surveys by the BLOs** who will identify eligible or non-eligible voters.
- It has designated **Electoral Registration Officers (EROs)** to print pre-filled **Enumeration Forms** for existing electors.
- The **BLOs will distribute the enumeration forms** and collect them with supporting documents during their visits.
- These **forms will be available to download** on the **ECI website (or ECINET).**
- Alternatively, **electors can fill out and upload these forms** online along with relevant documents.
- To **enhance transparency while maintaining voter privacy**, the notification stated that the **documents used for verifying eligibility will be uploaded on ECINET.**
- They will be **accessible only to authorised election officials.**

- The **ECI has invited** active participation from **all political parties** and has urged them to appoint **Booth Level Agents (BLAs)** for every polling booth.
- This way *“discrepancies, if any, are resolved at the preparation stage itself, thereby reducing the instances of filing claims, objections and appeals.”*
- The **claims and objections** can be filed by **any elector or political party**.
- These complaints will be **assessed by the Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs)**.
- The **final electoral roll will be published by the ERO** after all **claims and objections** have been addressed.
- This electoral roll will be shared with **recognised political parties** and made **publicly accessible** on the **websites of the ECI** and the **Chief Electoral Officer**.
- The draft electoral rolls will go live on **1 August 2025**.

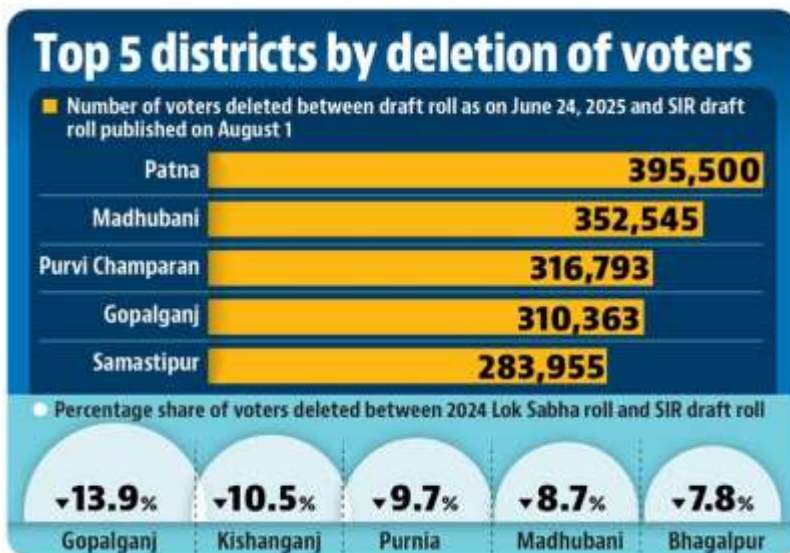
9. What are various pitfalls of Bihar's Special Intensive Revision (SIR)?



Issues of contention	Arguments for the SIR in its present form	Counter arguments against SIR in its present form
Process and time frame of the entire exercise	The SIR in 2003 without technological support was carried out in 31 days and it is the same time taken for this exercise with use of technology. There are more than 1 lakh BLOs, nearly 4 lakh volunteers and more than 1.5 lakh Booth Level Agents (BLAs) appointed by political parties who are working for smooth implementation of this exercise.	It is a humungous task that involves submission of forms by all eligible voters of close to 8 crore voters in Bihar that has never been done before. Further close to 3 crore voters would be required to submit documents establishing their date and place of birth for themselves and their parents. Despite the presence of so many field level workers, volunteers and agents there can be potential errors in inclusion and exclusion.
Exclusion of Aadhaar as a document for registration.	Aadhaar is a proof of residence and not of citizenship. The Aadhaar cards carry a disclaimer that it is neither a proof of citizenship nor of date of birth. Hence, in line with the constitutional requirements, Aadhaar has been excluded as a valid document. The list of valid documents includes widely held documents like caste certificates, family registers and land allotment certificates.	Aadhaar has become an omnibus identity card for all sections of the society, especially the under privileged who may not possess any other documents. Form 6 for inclusion of new voters as per the RER requires that Aadhaar be provided compulsorily unless the elector doesn't have one. It is mentioned as a proof of the date of birth and place of residence as per Form 6. These rules are made by the central government as per RP Act. It is only in the SIR guidelines that the ECI has added a new declaration with additional document other than Aadhaar for the purpose of establishing the date of birth and place of residence.
Exclusion of migrants from the electoral roll	The RP Act provides that only 'ordinarily residents' should be included in the electoral roll of a constituency. Migrants who have moved away for long periods of time on account of education or employment would be included in the electoral roll of their current residence as per provisions of the RP Act.	The RP Act provides that 'persons temporarily absent' do not cease to be 'ordinarily resident'. Many migrant workers shift to other places within the state or outside the state but return at regular intervals to their place of birth and upbringing. The families of such migrants may still continue to live in the same location where they would want to retain their right to vote. The ECI as recently as January 2023 had indicated its intention of providing remote voting facility for such migrant workers subject to technical feasibility and acceptance by all stakeholders.

Various Pitfalls	Analysis
Disenfranchisement Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 lakh names of voters deleted, many allegedly living voters wrongly marked as dead/migrated.

- The Election Commission of India has **uploaded the list of 65 lakh voters**, whose names were removed from the **Bihar draft electoral roll published on August 1** after the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise**.



महद्यक्षाओं की सूची, जिसके नाम 2025 तक विश्वर महद्यक्षा सूची में थे, लेकिन 01.08.2025 की इनफो रोल में शामिल नहीं हैं।

कोएनओ ने तालमेलिक धरो द्वारा नियुक्त कुछ मरीन मरीनों, अन्य धरो सहयोगी कर्मचारियों और अन्य अधिकारियों की सहायता के उन महद्यक्षाओं की विश्वसिद्धि सूची तैयार की है जिसके तालमेल प्रभाव नहीं हुए हैं। आमतौर पर व्यक्ति अपने आधार कार्ड की एक प्रति के साथ साधना द्वारा प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं।

विश्वर महद्यक्षा सूची

या

विधानसभा और भाग संस्था अनुसार सूची शामिल करने

विधान सभा

विधान सभा का नाम

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विधान सभा का नाम

Targeted Scrutiny of Marginalized Communities

- Many **reports and field observations** point toward a disproportionate focus on **Muslim-dominated localities, particularly urban slums and border districts.**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voters from these areas are being asked to provide repeated documentation, even if they've been on the rolls for years. • This targeted re-verification has led to fears of voter disenfranchisement on communal lines.
Lack of Transparency and Arbitrary Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The guidelines for the SIR have not been uniformly applied. • In many areas, BLOs (Booth Level Officers) have acted without proper training or oversight, leading to arbitrary deletions or unnecessary duplication of verification. • The absence of proper notice, inconsistent documentation demands, and denial of appeals have eroded public trust.
Political Weaponization of Electoral Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposition parties and civil society groups argue that the SIR is being used as a political tool to suppress the votes of communities perceived as anti-establishment. • In the run-up to elections, such selective deletions and verification drives can significantly influence outcomes in close contests, compromising the democratic process.
Administrative Burden and Harassment of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinary voters, especially the elderly, illiterate, women, and daily-wage workers-have found the process exhausting.

Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are made to visit offices multiple times, often without clarity on what documents are needed or why their names have been flagged. • This has caused a feeling of state harassment and exclusion, deepening the alienation of vulnerable groups.
Violation of Constitutional Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India's democracy is founded on universal adult franchise and equal treatment under the law. • The selective and opaque nature of the SIR process in Bihar appears to violate Articles 14 and 326 of the Constitution, which guarantee equality before law and the right to vote, respectively.
The exclusion of Aadhaar as a document for registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proponents of the SIR in its present form say that the Aadhaar is neither a proof of date of birth nor of citizenship. • The Aadhaar card itself carries a disclaimer stating that it can't be used as proof of citizenship. • Hence, in line with constitutional and legal requirements, the Aadhaar has been excluded as a valid document. • The list of valid documents include caste certificates, family registers and land allotment certificates.

Exclusion of migrants from the electoral roll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments for the SIR in its present form state that the RP Act provides that only citizens who are ‘ordinarily resident’ should be included in the electoral roll of a constituency. • Migrants who have moved away for long periods of time on account of education or employment would be included in the electoral roll of the constituency of their current residence as per provisions of the RP Act and the RER.
Ground Realities: Voices from the Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In districts like Kishanganj, Araria, and Purnia where Muslims and backward castes form a significant portion of the electorate there have been widespread reports of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Genuine voters being struck off the list without notice. ▪ BLOs visiting only Muslim households for re-verification. ▪ Conflicting instructions from local election officials. ▪ Fear among voters about losing their electoral rights. • Local civil society activists describe the process as “a soft form of disenfranchisement,” which undermines electoral justice without needing any formal legislative change.

Targeted timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is this being done only in Bihar and right before elections?
Youth scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voters born after 1987 must also furnish their parents' date and place of birth if the latter were not listed in 2003.
Fears over disenfranchisement and misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clause empowering EROs to decide on "claims and objections" has raised alarms, with opposition leaders fearing misuse.

10. What are the issues surrounding verification of Citizenship?

WHAT WILL SERVE AS PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP

In addition to the enumeration form, electors added to the rolls after 2003 will have to provide the following to prove their citizenship.

<p>■ Those born in India before July 1, 1987 will have to submit any document from the specified list to establish their date of birth and/or place of birth;</p> <p>■ Those born in India between July 1, 1987 and December 2, 2004, will have to submit an additional document establishing one parent's date and/or</p>	<p>place of birth; and</p> <p>■ Those born in India after December 2, 2004, will have to submit documents establishing date and/or place of birth of both parents.</p> <p>These categories are based on the requirements for acquisition of citizenship in the Citizenship Act, 1955</p>
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INDIANS BORN ABROAD will have to submit proof of birth registration by an Indian Mission abroad; and

CITIZENS BY NATURALISATION will have to submit their certificate for the registration of citizenship.

- One other issue that has been raised by the petitioners against the **SIR in the Supreme Court** is that this **process is turning out** to be a mechanism of **verifying the citizenship** of individuals by the **ECI**.

- According to the **Constitution and provisions of the RP Act**, it is **only citizens who are entitled to vote** in an election in India.
- However, **the requirement to submit proof of date and place of birth of not just the voters but also their parents, for persons enrolled after 2003, is a herculean task not just for the voters but also for the BLOs and EROs who need to verify them.**
- The **ECI is not the authority under law to establish the citizenship of any person**; this lies with the **home ministry**.
- The task of verifying the documents in such a short span to establish the **citizenship of voters enrolled after 2003**, roughly around **3 crore voters**, is of **gigantic proportions**.
- While non-citizens need to be **excluded from the roll**, **eligible citizens should not be wrongfully excluded due to non-submission of valid documents**.
- Till now, the **ECI has relied on Aadhar and self-declaration for enrolment of new voters**.
- **Rule 8 of the 1960 RER states that when the ERO, for the purpose of preparation of electoral roll requests information from the dwellers in a constituency, such persons shall furnish information called for therein to the best of their ability.**

11. What is the Election Commission's response?

- The **poll panel has maintained that the revision is lawful and constitutional**.
- It says the exercise is necessary due to **massive demographic shifts in the last two decades**.
- The **SIR was done between June 24 and July 25**.
- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** said on Sunday (August 24, 2025) that the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar** is on **schedule** even as the **Opposition intensified protests** against it.

- The poll body said it has **received documents from 98.2% of the 7.24 crore electors in the State in 60 days.**
- The **remaining 1.8% voters have eight days to submit the requisite documents** that were not provided during enumeration, and to rectify mistakes in the draft electoral **rolls published on August 1.**
- **Claims and objections**, along with documents, can be **submitted till September 1.**
- The poll panel said the **Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) and the Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AERO)** will take a **final call on the claims and objections received**, and they will **complete the verification of “eligibility documents” by September 25.**
- The **final electoral rolls** will be published **on September 30**, the **poll body** said in a statement.



12. Is Bihar SIR in line with basic Constitutional Principles?

Aspects	Description
Universal Adult Suffrage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 326 guarantees the right to vote to every citizen aged 18+ without unreasonable restrictions. • SC in People's Union for Civil Liberties v. Union of India (2003) reiterated that the right to vote is statutory, but free and fair elections are part of the basic structure of the Constitution. • If SIR leads to mass exclusions or imposes unreasonable documentary burdens, it may undermine Article 326 and violate the principle of universal franchise.
Equality Before Law & Non-Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 14 (Equality) and Article 15 (Non-discrimination) prevent arbitrary state action. • If the process disproportionately affects marginalized communities, migrants, poor, or illiterate citizens, it risks violating the equality principle.
Rule of Law & Natural Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens cannot be arbitrarily deprived of their right to vote without due process. • SC in Indira Nehru Gandhi v. Raj Narain (1975) held that free and fair elections are part of the "Rule of Law" and the "Basic Structure".


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If voters are marked “dead” or “migrated” without notice and a fair chance to appeal, it would violate natural justice.
Role of the Election Commission (ECI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 324 gives ECI the power to supervise elections, and SC has repeatedly held it must act independently, fairly, and transparently. • SC in <i>Mohinder Singh Gill v. CEC</i> (1978): ECI’s duty is to ensure free and fair elections, not merely administrative convenience.

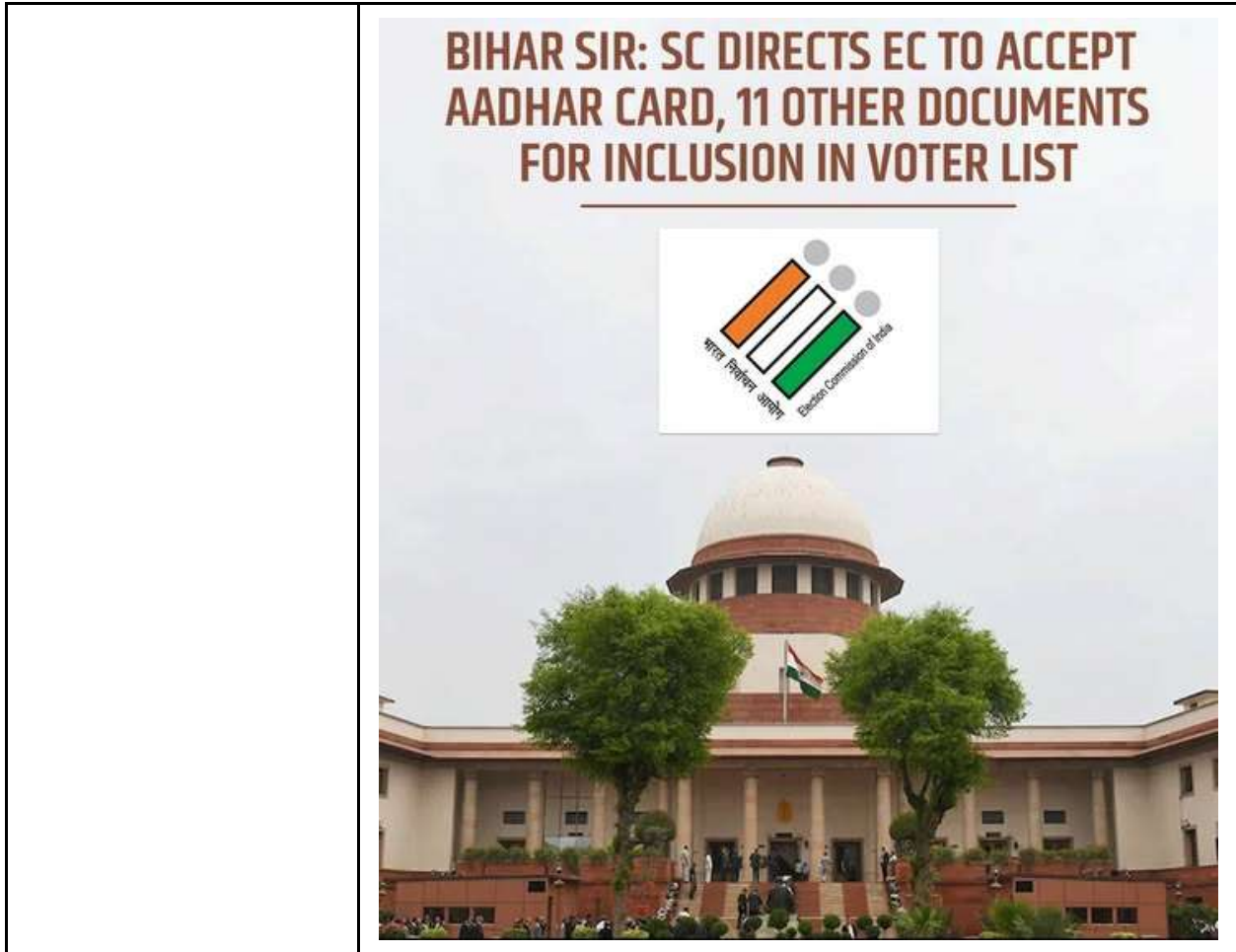
13. Highlight Supreme Court observation on Special Intensive Revision of Bihar's electoral rolls?

- In early July, the **Association for Democratic Reforms, Swaraj Party member and activist Yogendra Yadav**, moved the **Supreme Court** under **Article 32**, challenging the **ECI’s notification**.
- They claim that the **SIR is arbitrary and violative of the universal right** to adult suffrage.
- The petitions note that the identification process shifts the burden of proof onto individual citizens, requiring fresh applications and documentary evidence of **citizenship by 25 July 2025**.

Key Aspects	Observation
Authority of the Election Commission (ECI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Supreme Court reaffirmed that the Election Commission has exclusive jurisdiction to decide when and how to conduct the SIR exercise.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It emphasized that voter lists must be periodically updated and that the current revision in Bihar appears to be inclusive and voter-friendly, not exclusionary
Concerns Over Timing & Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court took issue not with the SIR per se, but with its timing, pointing out the risk of disenfranchising voters ahead of impending elections, as exclusion after final lists are published makes judicial challenge difficult. • The Court also marked the list of 11 acceptable documents used for verification as non-exhaustive, urging ECI to accept widely used IDs (Aadhaar, EPIC, ration card) “in the interest of justice.
Transparency & Voter Protection: Publishing Deleted Names	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On August 14, 2025, the Supreme Court directed ECI to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish a district-wise, booth-level searchable list of approximately 65 lakh voters omitted from the draft electoral roll (published August 1), along with reasons for deletion. ▪ Display these lists online and at Booth Level Officer (BLO), block, and panchayat offices, with wide publicity. ▪ Accept objections backed by Aadhaar or EPIC to challenge omission.

	 <p>Supreme Court directs ECI to publish entire list of 65 lakh deleted names</p> <p>Supreme Court of India on Thursday directed the Election Commission of India to publish the entire list of 65 lakh deleted names on the website and also in front of BLO offices.</p>
<p>Accessibility for Excluded Voters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On August 22, 2025, the Court issued further directions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voters excluded from the draft roll can submit claims or objections online or physically via Aadhaar or any of the 11 documents suffice for inclusion. ▪ Booth Level Agents (BLAs) appointed by political parties must actively assist affected voters in filing claims. ▪ The Court expressed surprise at the lack of engagement by political parties in helping voters exercise their rights.



14. Highlight opposition's view on SIR?



- The **I.N.D.I.A bloc** decided to brand the **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** of electoral rolls as “**vote chori**” (vote-theft) and **equivalent** in other **Indian languages**, as parties geared to step up the **protest** against the exercise inside and outside Parliament.



- **Delhi Police** detained senior **opposition MPs**, including the Congress' **Rahul Gandhi** and **Priyanka Gandhi Vadra**, and Shiv Sena (UBT) leader **Sanjay Raut**, as their **protests over the Election Commission's 'collusion'** with the ruling BJP spilled over into the streets of central Delhi.
- The **Election Commission** said **30 MPs** could visit them but over **200** came marching.

**RAISE YOUR VOICE
AGAINST**

VOTE चोरी

GIVE A MISSED CALL TO
965 0003 420

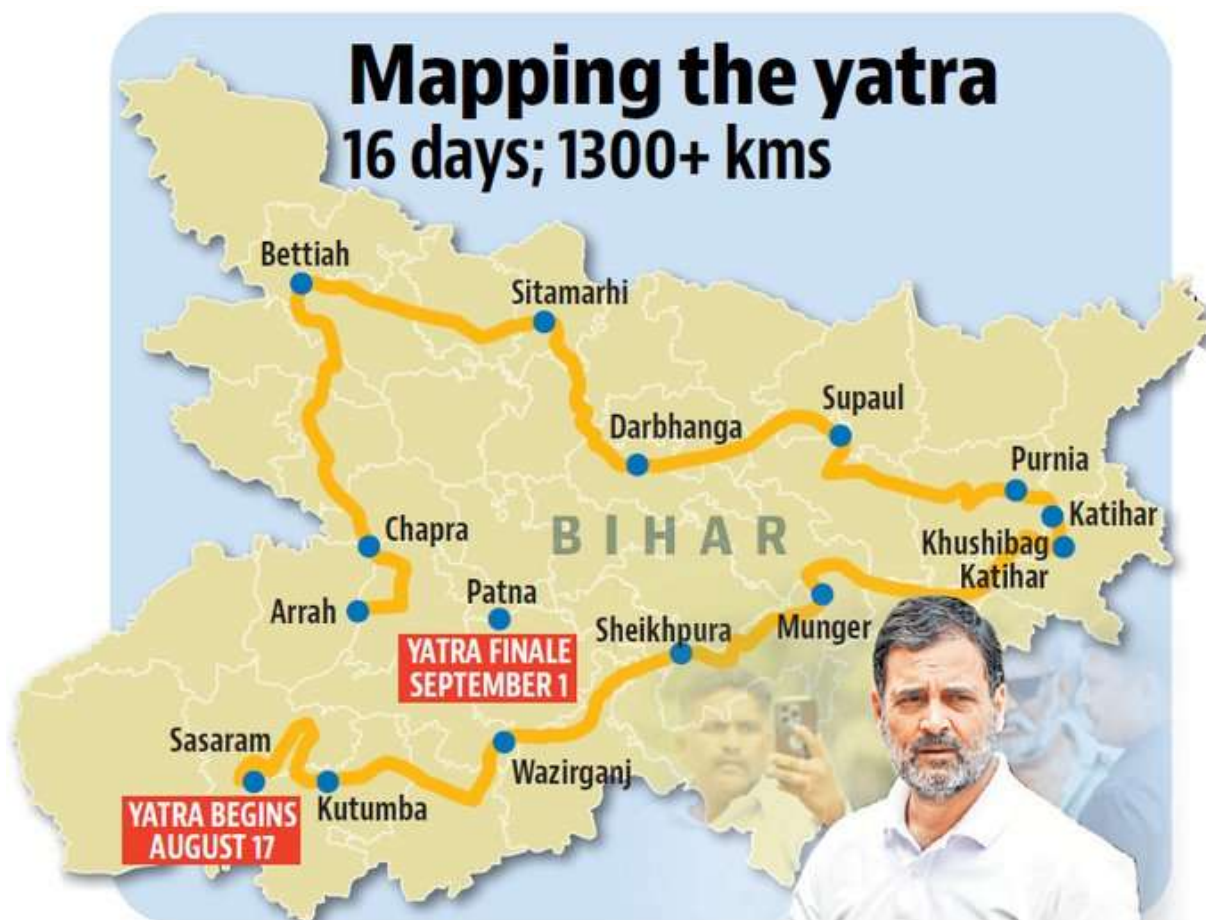
TO FIND THE PROOF OF VOTE CHORI!
OR
SCAN THIS QR CODE



**JOIN OUR FIGHT
IN DEFENDING DEMOCRACY!**



- Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** launched '**Vote Adhikar Yatra**' to highlight the alleged assault on the people's right to vote through the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar.



15. 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.

16. 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.**

17. 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.**

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

Administrative Functions	<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▪ Returning Officer▪ Electoral Registration Officer• It regulates the campaign expenditure per candidate of all political parties without any discrimination.
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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.

19. 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

- **Chief Electoral Officer (CEO):**
 - 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):**
 - The ERO is responsible for preparing electoral rolls for each constituency, with an appeal process now involving the District Magistrate.



- **Returning Officer (RO):**
 - The RO manages constituency elections and declares elected candidates.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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.
Schedules in RPA, 1950	<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.

20. 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. • 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.
Election offence covered under RPA	<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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Election expenses	<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.
Provisions Related to Political Parties	<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.
Section 126 of the RPA, 1951	<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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These declarations have to be made by MPs within 90 days of taking their seats in Parliament.
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21. What can be the way forward?

- To provide an analogy, **the inclusion of an ineligible name in the electoral roll is like a guilty person going scot-free**, while the exclusion of an **eligible voter is akin to one innocent person suffering**.
- Both these prospects would be a **blight on democracy**.
- Therefore, electoral rolls should be **thoroughly checked and verified**.

Way Forward	Analysis
Completion of the exercise without errors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, the proposed timelines for the completion of such a mammoth exercise are stretched. • The EC should ensure that adequate safeguards are put in place for the completion of the exercise without errors. • The BLAs should actively participate to prevent errors of omission or addition.
Ensuring Inclusivity in the Documentation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondly, the exclusion of Aadhaar from the list of valid documents can create issues for many, especially the underprivileged. • After considering the ground realities during the first phase of the enumeration, the EC should adequately tailor the process, during the claims and objections phase, to ensure that no

	<p>eligible citizen is excluded due to their inability to produce any document from the list of valid documents.</p>
<p>Look into the migrants Plight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finally, migrant workers should not be removed from the rolls as that can result in significant deletions. • Many such migrants have exercised their right to vote in the place of their birth/upbringing as per their choice and should continue to do so. • It is pertinent to note that as per the amendment of the RP Act in 2010, non-resident Indians who have shifted out of India, even for the long term on account of employment, education or otherwise, are entitled to register and vote in the constituency in which their address as per passport is located. • The issue of duplicate voter IDs for the same person in different constituencies should be addressed through Aadhaar seeding for which the EC had begun its consultative process in March 2025.

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

- **For Prelims:** 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 Suman Sharma mam:

- What two changes you would like to bring in the present electoral system.

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 mam:

- 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. Manner of filling the seats
5. Preparation of electoral rolls

How many of the above features are part of the Representation of People's Act, 1950?

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

Ans: (d)

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.

