



Amendments in Postal Ballot System

Why in News

Recently, the Law Ministry has **reduced the age limit for senior citizens** who opt for postal ballot in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.

Key Points

- Now, the **voters aged above 65 years or a Covid-19 suspect** can opt for postal ballot.
- Earlier, in 2019, the Law Ministry had **amended the Conduct of Election Rules to allow persons with disabilities** and those **who are 80 years of age** or above to opt for postal ballot during Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.
- Voters of Bihar will be the first to benefit from the amended rules, since Bihar will be the first state to have assembly polls after the coronavirus outbreak in India.

Postal Ballots System

- Ballot papers are **distributed electronically** to electors and are returned to the election officers via post.
- Currently, only the following voters are allowed to cast their votes through postal ballot:
 - **Service voters** (armed forces, the armed police force of a state and government servants posted abroad),
 - **Voters on election duty,**
 - **Voters above 80 years of age or Persons with Disabilities (PwD),**
 - Voters under **preventive detention.**
- The exception to the above-mentioned category of voters is provided under Section 60 of the **Representation of the People Act, 1951.**

Representation of the People Act, 1951

- This act provides for the **actual conduct of elections in India.** It deals with the following matters:
 - Details like Qualification and Disqualification of members of both the Houses of Parliament and the State Legislatures,
 - Administrative machinery for conducting elections,
 - Registration of Political parties,
 - Conduct of Elections,
 - Election Disputes,
 - Corrupt practices & Electoral offences, &
 - By-elections.

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