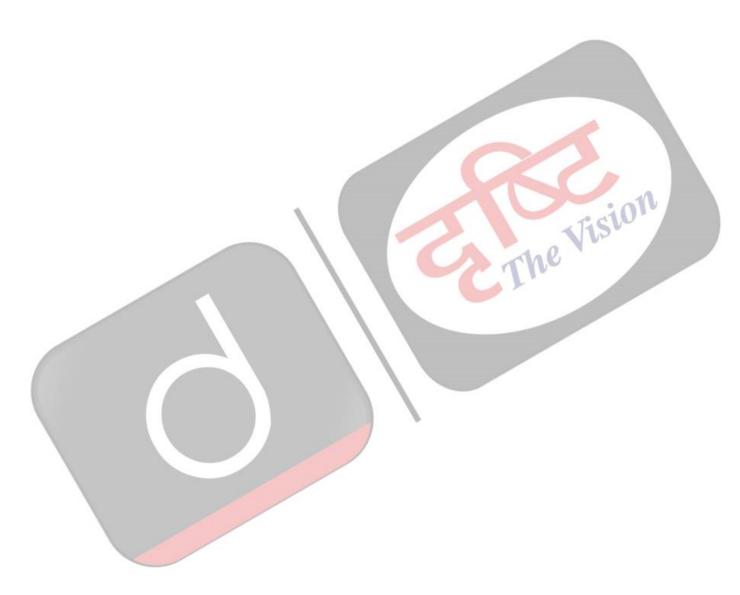


## **Electoral Reforms in India**

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# ELECTORAL ELECTORAL REFORMS IN INDIA

ELECTORAL REFORMS ARE CHANGES MADE TO IMPROVE THE ELECTION PROCESS AND ENSURE FAIRNESS.

#### Electoral Reforms Before 1996 -



- (1988): 61st Constitutional Amendment Act (1988): Lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 years
- Switched from individual colored ballot boxes to ballot papers, and later to EVMs
- Booth Capturing (1989): Provision for adjournment of poll or countermanding of elections in such cases
- Elector's Photo Identity card (EPIC) (1993): Electoral roll is the basis to issue EPIC to registered electors
- ECI- A Multi-member Body (1993): Election commissioners were appointed in addition to CEC

#### Electoral Reforms of 1996 -



- Time-limit for By-elections: Elections must occur within 6 months of any vacancy in a legislative house
- Listing of Names of Candidates: Contesting candidates categorized into 3 groups for listing
  - Recognised & registered-unrecognised political parties
  - Other (independent)
- Disqualification for Insulting the National Honour Act, 1971: Leads to election disqualification for 6 years upon:
  - Insulting the National Flag, Constitution of India or preventing the singing of National Anthem

#### Electoral Reforms After 1996



- Vote Through Proxy (2003): Service voters in Armed Forces & forces under Army Act can vote by proxy
- Allocation of Time on Electronic Media (2003): Equitable sharing of time on electronic media during elections to address the public
- Introduction of Braille Signage Features in EVMs (2004): To facilitate the visually impaired voters to cast their votes without an attendant

### Electoral Reforms Since 2010



- Voting Rights to Indian Citizens Living Abroad (2010)
- (9) Online Enrollment in Electoral Roll (2013)
- (9) Introduction of NOTA option (2014)
- VVPAT Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (2013): Introduction of VVPAT with EVMs to conduct free and fair elections
- Photos of Candidates on EVMs and Ballot Papers (2015): To prevent confusion in constituencies with namesake candidates
- Introduction of Electoral bonds (2017 Budget):
   An alternative to cash donations for political parties
  - (E) Declared as unconstitutional by SC (2024)
- (9) Launch of Electronic EPIC (2021)
- (9) Home Voting for People with Disabilities & Those Above 85 years of Age (2024)

IMPORTANT COMMITTEES/ COMMISSION		
Committees/ Commission	Year	Purpose
■ Tarkunde Committee	1974	By Jaya Prakash Narayan (JP) during the "Total Revolution" movement.
■ Dinesh Goswami Committee	1990	■ Electoral Reforms
■ Vohra Committee	1993	■ On the Nexus between Crime and Politics
Indrajit Gupta Committee	1998	■ State Funding of Elections
Second Administrative Reforms Commission of India	2007	Report on Ethics in Governance (Headed by Veerappa Moily)
■ Tankha Committee (Core Committee)	2010	■ To look into the whole gamut of the election laws & electoral reforms.



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