ELECTION COMMISSION

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Introduction

- Constitutional body for overseeing the election process in India.
- Article 324.
- All India Body.
- Superintendence, direction, and control of elections to President, Vice President, Parliament, and State legislature.

Composition

- Single-member body from 1950 to 1989.
- 3 member body since 1993. (1 Chief Election Commissioner and 2 other election commissioners).
- The number of additional election commissioners is fixed by the President.

Qualification for EC membership

- Not prescribed by the constitution.
- The terms of the members are not specified as well.

Independence provisions

- Security of tenure.
- The removal process is the same as a supreme court judge.
- Service conditions can't be varied to a disadvantage.
- Other election commissioners can be removed only on the recommendation of the chief election commissioner.

Role and functions

- Preparation of electoral rolls.
- Notify the dates and schedule of the election.
- Grant recognition to political parties.
- Register political parties.
- Can cancel polls in booth capturing, violence.

Limitations

- It has no power to de-register a political party.
- Reforms have been pending for a long.
- Model code of conduct must be given statutory status.
- Retiring election commissioners must be debarred from further appointments.

Miscellaneous

- The chief election commissioner and the other 2 election commissioners have equal powers.
- They receive salaries equal to the supreme court judge.
- In case of a difference of opinion, the matter is decided by the majority.
- They hold office for a term of 6 years or until they attain the age of 65 years.