Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the constitutional importance of an independent and transparent appointment process for the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 27/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Article 324; electoral integrity; Anoop Baranwal judgment; 2023 appointment law; institutional independence; executive influence; transparency and accountability; electoral democracy

Model Answer

Introduction

The Election Commission of India (ECI), established under Article 324, plays a crucial role in ensuring free and fair elections. Its credibility depends significantly on the independence and transparency of its appointment process.

Constitutional significance

1. Electoral integrity: Impartial appointments strengthen public confidence in electoral rolls, election schedules, campaign regulation and the counting process.

2. Judicial intervention: In *Anoop Baranwal v. Union of India* (2023), the Supreme Court prescribed a selection committee comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India until Parliament enacted legislation.

3. Legislative framework: The 2023 Act subsequently established a selection committee comprising the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, or the leader of the largest opposition party where applicable. This framework has generated debate about executive influence and institutional autonomy.

Challenges and reforms

A transparent, merit-based process, clear eligibility criteria, reasoned procedures and stronger institutional safeguards can improve public trust. Parliamentary scrutiny and judicial review should remain available within constitutional limits.

Conclusion

An independent Election Commission is essential to representative democracy. Appointment procedures should protect impartiality while ensuring accountability and public confidence.

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