Article 324 and Independence of the Election Commission of India

Discussion on the constitutional significance of Article 324 and institutional safeguards securing the autonomy of the Election Commission of India.

Article 324 of the Indian Constitution vests the superintendence, direction, and control of elections in the Election Commission of India.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- **Article 324** establishes the **Election Commission of India** (ECI) as an independent constitutional authority to ensure free and fair elections.
- The **Chief Election Commissioner** (CEC) is provided with security of tenure, similar to a **Supreme Court Judge**, and can only be removed through parliamentary impeachment.
- The **service conditions** of the Chief Election Commissioner cannot be varied to their disadvantage after appointment.
- Other **Election Commissioners** cannot be removed from office except on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner.
- The **Supreme Court of India** has consistently reinforced the autonomy of the ECI, emphasizing that free and fair elections are part of the **basic structure** of the Constitution.

DID YOU KNOW..!?

The Election Commission of India was established on **January 25, 1950**, which is celebrated annually as **National Voters' Day** since **2011**.

Originally a single-member body, the ECI was made a multi-member body consisting of **three commissioners** for the first time in **October 1989**.

The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) **Act, 2023** regulates their appointment process.

Under the 2023 Act, a **Selection Committee** consisting of the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister, and the Leader of the Opposition/Single Largest Party in Lok Sabha recommends the names.

Article 326 of the Constitution guarantees Universal Adult Suffrage, which was amended by the **61st Amendment Act of 1988** to lower the voting age from **21 to 18**.

Part XV of the Indian Constitution (**Articles 324 to 329**) deals with elections and establishes the electoral framework of the country.

The first Chief Election Commissioner of India was **Sukumar Sen**, who served from **1950 to 1958**.

REVISION FLASHCARD

Article 324 guarantees ECI's independence; 61st Amendment (1988) reduced voting age from 21 to 18.

Syllabus Relevance: High (Unit 5: Indian Polity - Election Commission)

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