

Vote-from-Home Facility

written by iasexam.com | 25/03/2024



Context

In order to make the election process inclusive and handy, the ECI has, for the first time within the records of the Lok Sabha elections, prolonged its **'vote-from-home' facility**.

Background

- The 'vote-from-home' facility is solely reserved for the **Persons with Disabilities (PwD)** and senior citizens aged 85 and above.
- This decision would allow more than 85 lakh senior citizens and 88.4 lakh persons with disabilities to cast their votes by postal ballots.

Has 'Vote-from-Home' Facility been Tried Earlier?

- The facility was previously attempted during Assembly elections in select areas, allowing PwD, senior citizens and those affected by Covid-19 to vote from home.
- In the past 11 Assembly elections, the scheme has helped almost 3.30 lakh persons with disabilities and electors above 80 years.
- In the Karnataka Assembly Elections last year, nearly one lakh PwD and older electors, out of the total 18 lakh, had used the house balloting postal poll approach.

How can the Facility be Availed?

- Key to the system is Form 12D, that's a letter informing the **Assistant Returning Officer (ARO)** that the person might not be in a position to go to the polling station to vote.

- The form can be downloaded online from the ECI website or accumulated from the office of the representative district officer of a parliamentary constituency.
- Distribution of Form 12D has already started out in Tamil Nadu districts, as the State heads to the national polls on April 19.
- The form has to be filled and submitted within 5 days of notification of the polling date.

Multi Constituency Remote Electronic Voting Machine

- The Central government is also experimenting with remote voting for domestic migrants, according to a December 2022 press release.
- The Multi Constituency **Remote Electronic Voting Machine (RVM)** could allow people that migrate within the country for employment and opportunity (almost 450 million, as per the latest 2011 census) to vote for their home constituencies from remote locations.
- Internal migrants face challenges due to the brief nature of their lifestyles and livelihood.
 - Many are reluctant to get themselves enrolled multiple instances, unwilling to get names deleted from the electoral roll of domestic constituencies and facing an emotional disconnect with the locations they migrate to.
- If implemented, “it can lead to a social transformation for the migrants and connect with their roots,” the government stated.
- Should a senior citizen or a person with disability choose to go to the booth, the ECI has mandated officials to provide **Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF)** like ramps, wheelchairs, first useful resource and lavatories at polling stations.
- Measures, new and old, are being highlighted, consisting of provision of free transportation on poll day, appointment of State and District PwD icons, and Braille-enabled EVMs and EPICs.

Source: **The Hindu**

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Q. Right to vote and to be elected in India is a (2017)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>a. Fundamental Right</i> | <i>b. Natural Right</i> |
| <i>c. Constitutional Right</i> | <i>d. Legal Right</i> |

Ans – “c”