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ECI's Special Summary Revision (SSR)

Internal Administrative Reorganisation

Special Summary Revision (SSR) – Latest News

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of electoral rolls in six States and Union Territories following the completion of the third phase of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

Simultaneously, it has issued a revised work-allocation order to strengthen administrative oversight of its Information Technology (IT) division amid concerns over the centralisation of electoral roll management.

Special Summary Revision (SSR) of Electoral Rolls

Objective: To ensure accurate, inclusive and updated electoral rolls by enrolling eligible voters, particularly young and first-time electors.

Key Features and Timeline

Coverage: Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Odisha, Sikkim, Chandigarh and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

Advance enrolment: Eligible citizens who will attain 18 years on April 1, July 1 and October 1, 2027, can submit advance applications.

Polling station rationalisation: Rearrangement of polling stations must be completed by November 20.

Draft electoral rolls: Scheduled for publication on November 30.

Claims and objections: Accepted from November 30 to December 30.

Disposal of claims: To be completed by January 16.

Final electoral rolls: Scheduled for publication on January 21, 2027.

Chief Secretaries have been directed to ensure adequate manpower and administrative resources for the exercise.

Safeguards Against Arbitrary Deletions

To prevent wrongful exclusion of voters:

Applications for deletion involving repeated or multiple entries must undergo field verification.

Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) must personally cross-check deletions exceeding 2% of electors at a polling station.

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Furnishing Aadhaar details in Forms 6 (new enrolment) and 8 (correction, shifting or replacement of EPIC) remains voluntary.

No application for voter enrolment can be rejected merely because the applicant has not provided Aadhaar details.

Significance: These safeguards seek to balance electoral roll accuracy with the constitutional principle of universal adult suffrage under Article 326.

Delay and Transparency Issues

Concerns

The delay in conducting SSR in States where SIR had been completed became a point of disagreement within the ECI.

Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi reportedly raised concerns, including difficulties faced by citizens attaining voting age in registering themselves.

Changes Made

A significant transparency-related change is the provision of readable PDF copies of draft and final electoral rolls, without elector photographs, free of cost to political parties, alongside physical copies.

Candidates will also be provided alphabetically arranged readable PDF electoral rolls in electronic storage devices on payment at the time of elections.

Significance

This partially addresses the Opposition's demand for machine-readable electoral rolls to facilitate comparison with previous lists and identify anomalies.

Earlier, the ECI had expressed concerns that providing such data could compromise electoral roll integrity and enable manipulation.

ECI's Revised Work Allocation and IT Oversight

Background

The ECI's internal functioning came under scrutiny following a work-allocation order that reassigned IT and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) responsibilities.

The order placed Director General (IT) Seema Khanna's work directly under the Election Commission, removing the earlier layer of oversight by a Deputy Election Commissioner (DEC).

Election Commissioners objected to the order, arguing that it had been issued without the Commission's approval.

They raised the matter with Cabinet Secretary T. V. Somanathan, citing concerns over administrative functioning and access to electoral management systems.

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Concerns Regarding Centralisation

The ECI's IT division manages two important digital platforms:

- *ECINet: Facilitates citizen engagement and participation in the electoral process.*
- *ERONet: Supports election officials in managing electoral registration and related processes.*

The two Election Commissioners reportedly expressed concerns that field-level officers were not receiving adequate access to ERONet, potentially resulting in the centralisation of electoral roll management.

Revised Work Allocation

The latest order seeks to reaffirm the existing oversight structure:

- *Senior DEC Pawan Kumar Sharma has been assigned responsibility for IT/ICT.*
- *DG (IT) Seema Khanna will route files concerning these functional divisions through the Senior DEC.*
- *The ECI maintains that the revised arrangement reflects a unanimous decision and that the DG (IT) has always reported to a DEC-level officer.*
- *The earlier order was reportedly never implemented following the joint direction issued by the two Election Commissioners.*

Additional Administrative Changes

The revised order also assigns responsibilities to the newly appointed DEC Prakash Rajpurohit:

- *Election planning, Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and delimitation have been assigned to him, among other subjects.*
- *He will support Senior DEC Maneesh Garg on election planning.*

Significance for Electoral Governance

- *Electoral inclusiveness: Timely revision and advance registration can reduce the exclusion of young and first-time voters.*
- *Transparency and accountability: Readable electoral rolls facilitate scrutiny by political parties and improve public confidence in electoral processes.*
- *Institutional accountability: Clear reporting structures and collective decision-making within the ECI are essential for maintaining institutional integrity and preventing excessive administrative centralisation.*

Important Legal and Constitutional Provisions

- *Article 324: Vests the superintendence, direction and control of elections in the ECI.*
- *Article 326: Provides for elections based on universal adult suffrage.*

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Topic For Group Discussion (GD) And Lecturette For SSB Interview

Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1950: Provides the statutory basis for the preparation and revision of electoral rolls.

Democratic principle: Electoral integrity requires both the inclusion of every eligible voter and the exclusion of ineligible entries, without arbitrary disenfranchisement.

