



Election Laws

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1950

Articles 81 and 170 of the Constitution of India lay down the maximum number of seats in Parliament and in Legislative Assemblies of States and also certain principles to be followed in allocating seats in the House of People among the States and in the State Legislative Assemblies, but have left the actual allocation of such seats to be provided by the law.

Similarly, Article 171 of the Constitution of India lays down the maximum and minimum number of seats in the Legislative Council of a State, and also specify the various methods in which the seats shall be filled, but the actual number of seats to be filled by each such method has been left to be provided by law.

Therefore, the Representation of the People Act, 1950, was enacted to provide for the allocation of seats in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils of States.

In allotting seats in the House of the People to different States and in fixing the total number of seats in the Legislative Assemblies of different States, the population of each State as on 1st March 1950 was taken into account.

The Act also sought to confer on the President the powers to delimit, after consultation with the Election Commission, the various constituencies for the purpose of elections to fill seats in the House of the People and in the

Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils of States.

The Act further provided for the registration of electors for Parliamentary Constituencies and for the Assembly and Council Constituencies, and the qualifications and disqualifications for such registration.

A special provision has been included for relaxation of the residence qualification in the case of displaced persons who migrated before the 25th day of July, 1949, to India from the territory of Pakistan. The provisions have been made for the preparation of electoral rolls, the period of currency of such rolls, and the revision and connection of such rolls during such period in special cases.

Certain action was already taken by the Constituent Assembly Secretariat for the preparation of the electoral rolls for elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies of the States. A provision has accordingly been included in the Act for the validation of such acts.

Table 70.1 *Representation of the People Act (1950) at a Glance*

<i>Parts</i>	<i>Subject Matter</i>	<i>Sections Covered¹</i>
I	Preliminary	1–2
II	Allocation of Seats and Delimitation of Constituencies	3–13
IIA	Officers	13A– 13CC
IIB	Electoral Rolls for Parliamentary Constituencies	13D
III	Electoral Rolls for Assembly Constituencies	14– 25A
IV	Electoral Rolls for Council Constituencies	26–27
IVA	Manner of Filling Seats in the Council of States to be filled by Representatives of Union Territories	27A– 27K
V	General	28–32

Table 70.2 Schedules of the Representation of the People Act (1950) at a Glance

<i>Numbers</i>	<i>Subject Matter</i>
First Schedule	Allocation of seats in the House of the people
Second Schedule	Total number of seats in the Legislative Assemblies
Third Schedule	Allocation of seats in the Legislative Councils
Fourth Schedule	Local Authorities for purposes of Elections to Legislative Councils
Fifth Schedule	[Repealed]
Sixth Schedule	[Repealed]
Seventh Schedule	[Repealed]

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1951

The Representation of the People Act, 1950 did not contain all the provisions relating to elections but merely provided for the allocation of seats in and the delimitation of constituencies for the purpose of elections to the House of People and Legislatures of States, the qualifications of voter at such election and the preparations of electoral rolls.

The provisions for the actual conduct of elections to the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State, the qualifications and disqualifications for the membership of these Houses, the corrupt practices and other election offences, and the decision of election disputes were all left to be made in a subsequent measure. In order to provide for these provisions, the Representation of the People Act, 1951 was enacted.

Broadly speaking, this Act contains provisions relating to the following electoral matters:

1. Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of Parliament and

State Legislatures

2. Notification of general elections
3. Administrative machinery for the conduct of elections
4. Registration of political parties
5. Conduct of elections
6. Free supply of certain material to candidates of recognised political parties
7. Disputes regarding elections
8. Corrupt practices and electoral offences

Table 70.3 *Representation of the People Act (1951) at a Glance*

<i>Parts</i>	<i>Subject Matter</i>	<i>Sections Covered</i> ²
I	Preliminary	1–2
II	Qualifications and Disqualifications	3–11B
III	Notification of General Elections	12–18
IV	Administrative Machinery for the conduct of Elections	19–29
IVA	Registration of political parties	29A–29C
V	Conduct of Elections	30–78
VA	Free supply of certain material to candidates of Recognised political parties	78A–78B
VI	Disputes regarding elections	79–122
VII	Corrupt practices and Electoral offences	123–138
VIII	Disqualifications	139–146C
IX	Bye-Elections	147–151A
X	Miscellaneous	152–168
XI	General	169–171

DELIMITATION ACT, 2002

Articles 82 and 170 of the Constitution of India provide for readjustment and the division of each State into territorial constituencies (Parliamentary constituencies and Assembly constituencies) on the basis of the 2001 census by such authority and in such manner as Parliament may, by law, determine.

Further, Articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution of India provide for re-fixing the number of seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People and Legislative Assemblies of the States on the basis of the 2001 census.

The present delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies is based on the 1971 census. The uneven growth of population in different constituencies in different parts of the country as well as within the same State as also continuous migration of people / electorate from one place to other especially from rural areas to urban areas have resulted in strikingly differing sizes of electoral constituencies even within the same State.

Therefore, the Delimitation Act, 2002³, was enacted to set up a Delimitation Commission for the purpose of effecting delimitation on the basis of the 2001 census so as to correct the aforesaid distortion in the sizes of electoral constituencies. The proposed Delimitation Commission would also re-fix the number of seats for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes on the basis of the 2001 census, without affecting total number of seats based on the 1971 census.

The Act sought to lay down certain guidelines as to the manner in which such delimitation would be undertaken. In the Act, the new Delimitation Commission was given the task of carrying out delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies. It had been specifically provided that the Delimitation Commission shall endeavour to complete the work within a period not later than July 31, 2008.⁴

The proposed delimitation would apply to every general election to the House of the People or to a State Legislative Assembly held after the final orders of the Commission are published and to every bye-election arising from such general election.

Table 70.4 *Delimitation Act (2002)*⁵ at a Glance

<i>Sections</i>	<i>Subject Matter</i>
1.	Short title
2.	Definitions
3.	Constitution of Delimitation Commission
4.	Duties of the Commission
5.	Associate members
6.	Casual vacancies
7.	Procedure and powers of the Commission
8.	Readjustment of number of seats
9.	Delimitation of constituencies
10.	Publication of orders and their date of operation
10A.	Deferment of delimitation in certain cases
10B.	Delimitation Commission's order with respect to the State of Jharkhand not to have any legal effect
11.	Power to maintain delimitation orders up-to-date
12.	Repeal

OTHER ACTS RELATING TO ELECTIONS

1. Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959⁶ declares that certain offices of profit under the Government shall not disqualify the holders thereof for being chosen as (or for being) members of Parliament.
2. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976 provides for the inclusion in, and the exclusion from, the lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, of certain castes and tribes, for the readjustment of representation of parliamentary and assembly

- constituencies.
3. Government of Union Territories Act, 1963.
 4. Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991.
 5. Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952⁷ regulates certain matters relating to or connected with elections to the offices of the President and Vice-President of India.

RULES RELATING TO ELECTIONS

1. Registration of electors Rules, 1960⁸ provide for the preparation and publication of electoral rolls.
2. Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961⁹ facilitates conduct of fair and free elections to the Parliament and State Legislatures.
3. Prohibition of Simultaneous Membership Rules, 1950.
4. Members of Lok Sabha (Disqualification on Ground of Defection) Rules, 1985.
5. Members of Rajya Sabha (Disqualification on Ground of Defection) Rules, 1985.
6. Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Rules, 1974.¹⁰
7. Members of Lok Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Rules, 2004.
8. Members of Rajya Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Rules, 2004.

ORDERS RELATING TO ELECTIONS

1. Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 provides for the specification, reservation, choice and allotment of symbols at elections in parliamentary and assembly constituencies, for the recognition of political parties in relation thereto.
2. Registration of Political Parties (Furnishing of Additional Particulars) Order, 1992 provides for furnishing of additional particulars by associations or bodies of individual citizens of India seeking registration as a political party with the Election Commission of India.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For the subject-matter of each section of the Representation of the People Act (1950), see Appendix-IX.
2. For the subject-matter of each section of the Representation of the People Act (1951), see Appendix-X.
3. The Delimitation Act (2002) was amended in 2003, 2008 and 2016.
4. Originally, the Act provided for a period of two years.
5. Earlier, the Delimitation Acts were enacted in 1952, 1962 and 1972.
6. This Act repealed the three earlier Acts, namely, the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1950; the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification Act, 1951; and the Prevention of Disqualification (Parliament and Part C States Legislatures) Act, 1953.
7. This Act was amended in 1974, 1977 and 1997.
8. Earlier, the Rules in this regard were made in 1950 and 1956. Both the earlier Rules were known by the same nomenclature i.e., the Representation of the People (Preparation of Electoral Rolls) Rules.
9. Earlier, the Rules in this regard were made in 1951 and 1956. Both the earlier Rules were known by the same nomenclature i.e., the Representation of the People (Conduct of Elections and Election Petitions) Rules.
10. These Rules repealed the earlier Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Rules, 1952.