



PIB Summaries 17 January 2022 | Legacy IAS

CONTENTS

1. Election Commission of India
2. Charging Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles
3. Purple Revolution

Election Commission of India

Focus: GS II- Constitution

Why in News?

The Election Commission of India held separate virtual meetings with the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Chief Secretaries and Health Secretaries of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, as also the Chief Electoral Officers of these five poll going States.

Highlights:

After considering the present situation, facts and circumstances as also the inputs received in these meetings, the Commission has directed as follows:



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- No road show, Pad-yatra, cycle/bike/vehicle rally and procession shall be allowed till 22 January, 2022. Commission shall subsequently review the situation and issue further instructions accordingly.
 - No physical rally of Political parties or candidates (including probable) or any other group related to election shall be allowed till 22 January, 2022.
 - However, the Commission has granted relaxation for the political parties to the extent that indoor meetings of maximum of 300 persons or 50% of the capacity of the hall or the prescribed limit set by SDMA will be allowed.
 - Political parties shall ensure the compliance of COVID appropriate behaviour & guidelines and Model Code of Conduct at all occasions during the activities connected with elections.
 - All remaining restrictions as contained in the Revised Broad Guidelines for Conduct of Elections, 2022 issued on 8 January 2022 shall continue to operate.

About Election Commission of India

- The Election Commission of India is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India.
- The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, and State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country.
- It is the Commission that decides the election schedules for the conduct of elections, whether general elections or by-elections.
- ECI decides on the location of polling stations, assignment of voters to the polling stations, location of counting centers, arrangements to be made in and around polling stations and counting centres and all allied matters.
- **In the performance of its functions, the Election Commission is insulated from executive interference.**
- Part XV of the Indian constitution deals with elections, and establishes a commission for these matters.
- The Election Commission was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950, hence it is a **constitutional body**. Article 324 to 329 of the constitution deals with powers, function, tenure, eligibility, etc., of the commission and the member.

Litigations against EC

- The decisions of the Commission can be challenged in the High Court and the Supreme Court of India by appropriate petitions.
- By long-standing convention and several judicial pronouncements, once the actual process of elections has started, the judiciary does not intervene in the actual conduct of the polls.



Structure of the Election Commission

- Originally the commission had only one election commissioner but after the Election Commissioner Amendment Act 1989, it has been made a multi-member body.
- The commission consists of one Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.
- The secretariat of the commission is located in New Delhi.
- At the state level election commission is helped by Chief Electoral Officer who is an IAS rank Officer.
- The President appoints Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners.
- They have a fixed tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme Court of India.
- The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from office only through a process of removal similar to that of a Supreme Court judge for by Parliament.

Issues with ECI

- **Flaws in the composition:** The Constitution doesn't prescribe qualifications for members of the EC. They are not debarred from future appointments after retiring or resigning.
- **No security of tenure:** Election commissioners aren't constitutionally protected with security of tenure.
- **Partisan role:** The EC has come under the scanner like never before, with increasing incidents of breach of the Model Code of Conduct in the 2019 general elections.
- **Political favor:** The opposition alleged that the ECI was favoring the ruling party by giving clean chit to the model code of conduct violations made by the PM.
- **Non-competence:** Increased violence and electoral malpractices under influence of money have resulted in political criminalization, which ECI is unable to arrest.

Charging Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles

Focus: GS-III: Industry and Infrastructure



Why in News?

The Union Ministry of Power has promulgated the revised consolidated Guidelines & Standards for Charging Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles (EV)

- The objective is to enable a faster adoption of electric vehicles in India by ensuring safe, reliable, accessible and affordable Charging Infrastructure and eco-system.
- This would also promote energy security and reduction of emission intensity of the country by promotion of entire EV ecosystem.

Electric Vehicles (EVs) and their need in India

- An electric vehicle, uses one or more electric motors or traction motors for propulsion. An electric vehicle may be powered through self-contained battery, solar panels or an electric generator to convert fuel to electricity.
- India has committed to cutting its GHG emissions intensity by 33% to 35% percent below 2005 levels by 2030 – replacing combustion engine vehicles with electric vehicles is a step in the right direction.
- According to a recent study by WHO, India is home to 14 out of 20 most polluted cities in the world. EVs will help in tackling this problem by reducing local concentrations of pollutants in cities.
- India imports oil to cover over 80 percent of its transport fuel. EVs can reduce dependence on imported crude oil promoting India's energy security.
- It will encourage cutting edge technology in India through adoption, adaptation, and research and development. EVs manufacturing capacity will promote global scale and competitiveness.
- The shift towards renewable energy sources has led to cost reduction from better electricity generating technologies. This has introduced the possibility of clean, low-carbon and inexpensive grids.
- Advances in battery technology have led to higher energy densities, faster charging and reduced battery degradation from charging. Combined with the development of motors with higher rating and reliability, these improvements in battery chemistry have reduced costs and improved the performance and efficiency of electric vehicles.

Revised consolidated Guidelines & Standards for Charging Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles (EV):



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- These guidelines are exhaustive and include provisions for
 - a) Individual owners of Electric Vehicles
 - b) Public Charging Stations (PCS).
 - **Central Nodal Agency:** Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) shall be the Central Nodal Agency for rollout of EV Public Charging Infrastructure

 - **Any individual/entity** is free to set up public charging stations without the requirement of a license provided that, such stations meet the technical, safety as well as performance standards and protocols laid down under the guidelines as well as norms/ standards/ specifications laid down by Ministry of Power, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and Central Electricity Authority (CEA) from time to time.

 - **Technology agnostic Charging Standards:** The guidelines have been made further technology agnostic by providing for not only the prevailing international charging standards available in the market but also the new Indian charging standards.

 - **Land at promotional rates for installation of PCS through a Revenue Sharing Model:** In order to address the challenge of making a charging station financially viable in the period of growth of Electric Vehicles, a revenue sharing model has been put in place for land used for the same.

 - **Timelines for providing connectivity for the installation of Public Charging Station (PCS) :** Timelines have been prescribed as per the Electricity (Rights of Consumers). Accordingly, PCS shall be provided connection within seven days in metro cities, fifteen days in other municipal areas and thirty days in rural areas. Within these timelines the distribution licensees shall provide new connection or modify an existing connection.

 - **Tariff for supply of electricity to EV Public Charging Stations:** The tariff for supply of electricity to Public EV Charging Stations shall be a single part tariff and shall not exceed the “Average Cost of Supply” till 31st March, 2025. The same tariff shall be applicable for Battery Charging Station (BCS). The tariff applicable for domestic consumption shall be applicable for domestic charging.

 - **State Governments to fix the ceiling of Service charges:** As electricity is being provided at concessional rates and also considering the fact that subsidy is being provided by the Central/State Governments in many cases for setting up Public Charging Stations, the State Government shall fix the ceiling of Service Charges to be
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charged by such Charging Stations.

- **Open Access:** Any Public Charging Station/ Chain of Charging Stations may obtain electricity from any generation company through open access.
- **Database of Public EV Charging Stations:** Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) shall create and maintain a national online database of all the Public Charging Stations in consultation with State Nodal Agencies (SNAs).
- **Network Service Providers:** Public Charging Station will be required to tie up with at least one online Network Service Providers (NSPs) to enable advance remote/online booking of charging slots by EV owners.
- **Location of Public Charging Stations:** To alleviate the range anxiety of the potential EV owners, guidelines provides that at least one Charging Station shall be available in a grid of 3 Km X 3 Km. Further, one Charging Station shall be set up at every 25 Km on both sides of highways/roads. For long range EVs and/or heavy duty EVs like buses/trucks etc., there shall be at least one Fast Charging Station with Charging Infrastructure Specifications every 100 Kms, one on each side of the highways/road located preferably within/alongside the Public Charging Stations

Purple Revolution

Focus: Prelims, GS-III: Agriculture (Technological advancements related to Agriculture)

Why in News?

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, Minister of State Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions,



Atomic Energy and Space, said that "Purple Revolution" is Jammu & Kashmir's contribution to "Start-ups India", an initiative that was launched in 2016.

What is Purple Revolution (Under Aroma Mission)?

- Under the Aroma mission - First-time farmers were given free lavender saplings and those who have cultivated lavender before were charged a nominal amount.
- The Aroma mission aims to support domestic aromatic crop based agro economy by moving from imported aromatic oils to homegrown varieties.
- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu (IIIM Jammu), the two bodies are mainly responsible for making purple revolution under the Aroma Mission a success.
- Apart from being in sync with government policy of doubling farm incomes by 2022, lavender cultivation also provided employment to the district's women farmers thus gave impetus to inclusive growth.

More about Aroma Mission

- The CSIR Aroma Mission is envisaged to bring transformative change in the aroma sector through desired interventions in the areas of agriculture, processing and product development for fuelling the growth of aroma industry and rural employment.
- The nodal laboratory is CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow. The participating laboratories are CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur; CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu etc.
- The mission will promote the cultivation of aromatic crops for essential oils that are in great demand by the aroma industry.
- It is expected to enable Indian farmers and aroma industry to become global leaders in the production and export of some other essential oils on the pattern of menthol mint.
- It aims to provide substantial benefits to the farmers in achieving higher profits, utilization of waste lands and protection of their crops from wild and grazing animals.
- The scientific interventions made under the Aroma mission project would provide assured benefits to the growers of Vidarbha, Bundelkhand, Gujarat, Marathwada, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and other states where farmers are exposed to frequent episodes of weather extremes and account for maximum suicides.

Uses and Products of Lavender



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- Main product is Lavender oil which sells for at least Rs. 10,000 per litre.
 - Lavender water, which separates from lavender oil, is used to make incense sticks.
 - Hydrosol, which is formed after distillation from the flowers, is used to make soaps and room fresheners.
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Legacy IAS Academy