Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine whether the constitutional office of the Lok Sabha Speaker has become vulnerable to partisan politics under the current anti-defection regime. What institutional changes are required to ensure the neutrality of the Lok Sabha Speaker in managing a polarised House?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Article 93, constitutional neutrality, Tenth Schedule, anti-defection, Speaker as adjudicating authority, partisan perception, Kihoto Hollohan, Keisham Meghachandra, independent tribunal, time limits, parliamentary conventions

Model Answer

The Lok Sabha Speaker occupies a constitutional position requiring impartiality in maintaining parliamentary discipline and protecting the rights of both the government and opposition. However, the anti-defection framework can create a perception of partisan vulnerability because the Speaker decides disqualification petitions under the Tenth Schedule.

The problem becomes more significant when the Speaker belongs to the ruling party and delays or expedites decisions on politically consequential petitions. Judicial interventions have emphasised that prolonged inaction can undermine the purpose of the anti-defection law.

Institutional reforms can strengthen neutrality. The adjudicatory role under the Tenth Schedule may be entrusted to an independent tribunal or a constitutionally protected mechanism. Alternatively, a fixed statutory time limit can be prescribed for deciding disqualification petitions, with transparent procedures and reasoned orders. A

convention requiring consultation with the Leader of Opposition and other floor leaders may also strengthen institutional trust.

The Speaker should additionally ensure equal opportunities for debate, committee representation and procedural participation.

Thus, the objective should not be to weaken the Speaker but to strengthen institutional safeguards that preserve impartiality, accountability and confidence in parliamentary democracy.

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