Medieval History · GS - II

“The independence of the Election Commission of India is essential for ensuring free and fair elections in a democracy.” Examine the constitutional safeguards for its independence and discuss the challenges to its credibility.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 13/10/2026	GS - II	Medieval History

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Article 324; constitutional status; appointment process; security of tenure; removal of CEC; conditions of service; level playing field; transparency; political neutrality; institutional accountability; electoral reforms.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Election Commission of India (ECI) is a constitutional body established under Article 324 of the Constitution. Its independence and impartiality are essential for conducting free and fair elections and maintaining public confidence in democratic institutions.

Constitutional Safeguards for Independence

1. Constitutional Status: Article 324 vests the ECI with the superintendence, direction and control of elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of President and Vice-President.

2. Security of Tenure: The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed only through a process similar to that applicable to a Supreme Court judge. Other Election Commissioners cannot be removed except on the recommendation of the CEC.

3. Statutory Appointment Framework: The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners are appointed by the President under the applicable constitutional and statutory framework, including the 2023 legislation governing appointments.

4. Electoral Oversight: The ECI supervises electoral rolls, election schedules, recognition of political parties and enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct within its jurisdiction.

Challenges to Credibility

Concerns may arise regarding perceptions of political influence in appointments, inconsistent enforcement of electoral rules, delays in addressing complaints, campaign finance transparency and the spread of misinformation during elections. Even the perception of partiality can weaken public trust.

Way Forward

A transparent and credible appointment process, timely publication of decisions, consistent enforcement of electoral rules, stronger disclosure requirements and effective grievance redressal can improve institutional trust. Parliamentary oversight and public scrutiny should reinforce accountability without undermining the Commission's autonomy.

Conclusion

An independent and accountable Election Commission is indispensable to India's democratic framework. Strengthening transparency, impartiality and institutional safeguards can help ensure that electoral outcomes reflect the genuine will of voters.