Polity & Governance · GS - II

Critically examine the challenges facing the Election Commission of India in ensuring free, fair and transparent elections. Suggest measures to strengthen its credibility and institutional autonomy.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 21/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Article 324, institutional independence, appointment process, electoral rolls, EVM and VVPAT transparency, Model Code of Conduct, campaign finance, level playing field, accountability and public trust.

Model Answer

Introduction

The Election Commission of India (ECI), established under Article 324 of the Constitution, plays a central role in safeguarding electoral democracy. Its credibility depends on impartial enforcement, transparent procedures and public confidence.

Key challenges

- **Institutional autonomy:** Concerns over appointments, resources and perceived political influence can affect public confidence.
- **Electoral transparency:** Questions concerning EVMs, VVPAT verification and voter-list discrepancies require clear, evidence-based responses.

- **Unequal electoral competition:** Differences in campaign resources, misuse of official machinery and inconsistent action against violations can undermine a level playing field.
- **Enforcement gaps:** Delayed or inconsistent action on Model Code of Conduct violations may weaken deterrence.

Reforms required

The appointment process should inspire broad public confidence. The ECI should publish clear, timely explanations of decisions, strengthen electoral-roll verification, ensure consistent enforcement and improve transparency in political funding. Appropriate safeguards and independent audits can strengthen confidence in election technology.

Conclusion

A credible ECI requires both actual independence and visible impartiality. Transparent decision-making, consistent enforcement and institutional accountability are essential to sustaining free and fair elections.

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