

NOTA in Rajya Sabha Polls

Why in news?

\n\n

Supreme Court refuses to stay the exercise of NOTA option in the Gujarat Rajya Sabha elections.

\n\n

How Rajya Sabha members are elected?

\n\n

\n

- Open ballots are used in the Rajya Sabha elections.

\n

- These elections follow a proportional representation system based on the single transferable vote.

\n

- Unlike the general elections to the Lok Sabha, which are conducted with secret ballots (or votes) and based on the first-past-the-post principle.

\n

\n\n

What is NOTA?

\n\n

\n

- None of the above is a ballot option in some jurisdictions or organizations, designed to allow the voter to indicate disapproval of all of the candidates in a voting system.

\n

- It is based on the principle that consent requires the ability to withhold consent in an election, just as they can by voting “No” on ballot questions.

\n

- The idea behind the use of NOTA is to allow the voter to register a “protest” vote if none of the candidates is acceptable to her for whatever reason.

\n

- While NOTA votes are tallied, the candidate with the highest number of votes polled is declared elected irrespective of the NOTA total.
- \n

\n\n

What are the issues with NOTA in Rajya Sabha polls?

\n\n

- NOTA is restricted to direct elections, while this is a case of indirect election on proportional representative by means of single transferable vote.
- \n

\n\n

- In the case of the Rajya Sabha elections, the vote allows for the preferential ordering of candidates.
 - If an MLA chooses NOTA, the vote is rendered ineffective.
- \n

\n\n

What are the supporting views on NOTA?

\n\n

- The principle of a protest vote remains the same even if these are indirect elections.
 - The presence of the NOTA option for the legislator allows the possibility of a protest vote against the party high command for choosing candidates who are not agreeable to her, without having to choose candidates from opposing parties.
 - The party high command can issue a whip for a Rajya Sabha candidate, but anti-defection law provisions do not apply, and a defiant MLA is not disqualified from membership of the House.
 - Therefore, instead of struggling against the democratisation of indirect elections, through reforms such as the NOTA option, parties would be better off relearning the art of floor management.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n

