

## Revision of Electoral Rolls in J&K

### Why in news?

The J&K Chief Electoral Officer announced that anyone who is living ordinarily in J&K can avail the opportunity to get enlisted as a voter in the Union Territory.

### Why are electoral rolls being revised?

- The ECI is working on fresh electoral rolls in J&K after the J&K Delimitation Commission carved out 7 new Assembly constituencies in the UT under **Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**.
- Jammu now has 43 seats against 47 in Kashmir.
- After the abrogation of **Article 370**, the Representation of the People Act 1950 and 1951 is applicable in J&K.
- It allows ordinarily residing persons to get registered in the electoral rolls of J&K, provided he/she gets their name deleted from the electoral roll of his/her native constituency.
- **Eligible voters**
  - The non-locals including employees, students, labourers or anyone living in the state.
  - The armed forces personnel from other states who are posted at peace stations in J&K can also get their names added in the voter list.
- The requirement of domicile is not necessary for outsiders to get enlisted as voters.



### How were the J&K electoral rolls revised prior to 2019?

- Prior to August 5, 2019 when J&K had special constitutional powers, the Assembly electoral rolls in the State were drawn up according to the Jammu & Kashmir Representation of the People Act 1957.
- As per the act, **only permanent residents of J&K** were eligible to get registered in the Assembly rolls.
- To get voting rights, Permanent Resident Certificate and domicile certificates had to be shown.
- Several residents from west Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, who had migrated to J&K and were living there had no voting rights in Assembly elections till August 5, 2019 but were able to vote in the parliamentary elections.

### Why has the ECI announcement caused an uproar?

- **Non-local voter issue-** J&K's main regional parties have expressed concerns that the move will open the floodgates and turn locals into an electoral minority.
- **Rigged election-** The move was compared with the 1987 rigged elections in J&K, which resulted in mass militancy in Kashmir in 1990s.

## References

1. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-what-is-the-controversy-around-the-revision-of-electoral-rolls-in-jk/article65790630.ece>
2. <https://www.pratidintime.com/top-stories/non-locals-residing-in-jk-can-now-vote-in-assembly-polls>

