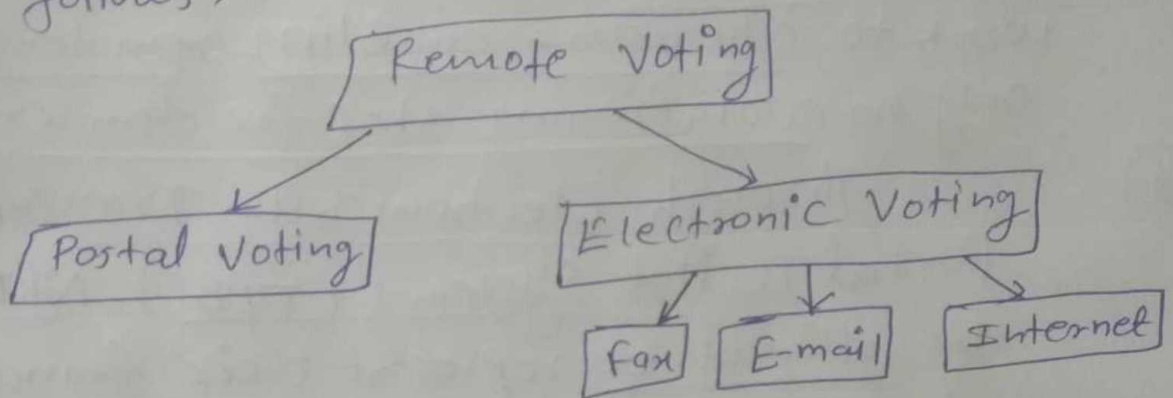


Q. Granting the remote voting for circalar migrants would ensure that the passive disenfranchisement by the Government of India is prevented. Elaborate.
30-12-2020

Answer:-

→ The Election Commission of India had set up a technical advisory group to develop a remote voting framework. We can classify remote voting channels as follows:



→ How remote voting prevented disenfranchisement of migrants?

→ ① Allowing circalar migrants - who alternate between their home Constituencies and distant places of work - to cast their vote remotely will not only secure their democratic right but also compel the democratic set-up to be more responsive to their needs.

② The freedom to access vote has been established by Supreme Court judgments, which guarantees the freedom of expression under Article 19(1)(a). However

for circular migrants & many other groups, has become restricted by the fact that this right can only be exercised through in-person voting, in their registered constituencies. Hence allowing migrants workers to access their vote through 'dynamic ballot' in "Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)" is a progressive step.

③ With the pandemic, the need for facilitating remote-access for almost everything - from work to education - enabling remote-voting is only an evolutionary step for democracy.

④ Through Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS), NRI would be allowed to represent their franchisement in the Election, by the Representation of People Act, 1951.

→ There will be Challenges specific to deployment of technology, remote voting will need a leap in terms of 'Connectedness' from what the current process allows.

→ To address the challenges of voter fraud/verification, integrating Aadhar-based biometric authentication with the process is something the ECI would do well to consider. Remote voting will ensure that passive disenfranchisement by state is also avoided.